

# NIGHT SHIFT

Veterans of the Supernatural Wars



By Jason Vey  
and Timothy S. Brannan

# WE ARE THE NIGHT SHIFT.

We alone stand against the vampires, werewolves, and  
Things that Go Bump in the Night.  
We know the things that prowl the shadows, the monsters  
that feed on the innocent.  
We have seen something weird. We control something  
weird. We create something weird. We study something  
weird. We are the things that weird things fear.  
We are the weird.  
We are the Night Shift, and we are all that stands  
between you, and the end of all that you know.

**Night Shift: Veterans of the Supernatural Wars** is an urban fantasy  
roleplaying game of chosen ones, witches, survivors, and Something Weird.

In its pages, you will find:

- Eight brand new character classes, built for taking on the creatures of the night
  - A customizable Supernatural character race
  - A new system powered by classic old-school mechanics
    - Four complete Night World mini-settings
    - A complete bestiary
  - Rules for magic, psychic powers, and super science
- Everything you need to play except paper, pencils, dice, and friends!

**The New Class of Old School takes on urban fantasy!**

**...are you game?!**

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## **Veterans of the Supernatural Wars™**

An urban fantasy role playing game of Chosen Ones, Witches, Survivors and  
Something Weird

By  
Jason Vey and Timothy S. Brannan

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## Veterans of the Supernatural Wars

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This work is dedicated to my sister, Sara Fielder, my best friend and worst enemy, because she deserves it.

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Reader discretion is advised.

**Disclaimer:** Several vampires were staked, burned, tied on rooftops at dawn, and otherwise turned to ash in the making of this book for research purposes. No Chosen Ones were harmed in the process.

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## THE MIRROR

Lily stared into the mirror, wanting that reflection more than anything to be hers again. She pulled the brush through her hair, tenderly smoothing the tangles in those living waves. Her hair was one of the two parts of her that continued to change and grow even still, which she could style and personalize. Only she couldn't really see it to make it her own once again. All she could see was that face, that face looking back at her, and know that the face there in the mirror, with the contented half-smile, would never, ever be hers again.

She looked at the brush, examined the strands caught within the bristles. They were still growing darker. She'd reached chestnut, now, and would soon be entirely black. It kept growing, but changing color, ever darkening. When at long last all of the light had gone from her hair, what then? Would her waves then straighten as well, until the tresses that all of her life had been her pride and joy were nothing but plain, iron-straight, and black?

Some people, she supposed, considered such straight black hair beautiful, but not her. It didn't help that she was fairly certain that the lifelike sheen that once filled her tresses was dimming as the color faded away. Fifteen years ago, in London, she used to ridicule all of the "Gothic" club kids lurking the streets at night with their self-important depression and black hair and frilly black evening clothes. Now and quite against her will, she was becoming just like them. And there was nothing she could do about it...not a bloody thing.

Lily glared back at the mirror, her reflection's head snapping up in response. The curls there were still red—flaming, vibrant, alive. The curls there would always be red. For a brief moment she caught the almost imperceptible upturning of one corner of the reflection's mouth in a derisive sneer; just a fraction of a moment, then it was gone.

"Stop it," Lily hissed. "You're mocking me."

She slammed down her brush and strode across the room to her closet, then jerked a robe off the rack, which she threw over her shoulders. Any ounce of desire to look upon herself as she once was, vanished in a sudden fit of disgust.

Lily tied the robe loosely about her waist, and smoothed the pink satin down, then walked to the window to gaze out over the lights of Los Angeles below. The City of (lost) Angels, her new home in America. The lights there upset her almost as much as her reflection. They were cold, artificial, and dead, just like her. Her real self was there behind her, forever imprisoned inside a simple pane of glass.

"You mock me," she whispered. "You mock me."

*Then stop me,* her own voice rang back in her head. *Put an end to it.*

Lily spun back to the mirror, and wondered for a split second if the scowl there was really hers, or a mockery.

*But you can't,* the voice continued. *You can't do it. You want to. You want to hate me so much, but it isn't me you hate, is it?*

Lily backed into a corner, slid down the wall, and drew her knees to her chest. This was a losing battle every time, and she was growing insensitive even to the moments of melodrama that always overcame her. She wept, and wished for at least the bitter taste of tears she could no longer shed to give her some comfort.

"No," she whispered at last, "I don't hate you."

As she spoke, Lily found her gaze drawn to the heavily curtained canopy bed against the far wall. It was a lovely piece of furniture, oak, with intricate carvings

running up the four posts and molding in the shape of roses running the outline of the headboard and footboard. Unlike most beds of the sort, the drapes weren't of a sheer or translucent material; rather they were of thick velvet that blocked out all outside light, and view. Right now, Lily was thankful for that.

*Stop lying to yourself, her voice chided. That's not the object of your hatred, either.*

"Shut up!" Lily cried. "Shut up!" She grabbed a balled up sweater from the floor next to her and hurled it at the mirror. The sweater bounced off harmlessly, but knocked a bottle of perfume to the floor, where it shattered and instantly filled the room with a smell so sweet it was pungent.

*See? You can't do it. Why not throw a shoe? Anything heavier, more solid would do the trick, wouldn't it? You won't, though, because if you did, you'd somehow miss, and you know it.*

"Quiet! Please..."

*You still don't understand. I can't be quiet. An audible sigh sounded in Lily's mind, and in that Lily had yet one more thing to lament. Every night we go through this. I don't have a choice, Lily. Just as you can't shatter the tie, neither can I cease to act as shadow to you.*

Lily buried her face in her knees and with dry eyes, wept.

\* \* \*

"Lily? Lily! Snap out of it, girl!"

The hard crack of Miranda's hand roused Lily from her stupor and she gradually came to the realization that she had no idea how long she'd been sitting there.

"Miranda? Didn't hear you come in."

"Of course not. You were sitting here staring into space like a dead woman."

Lily shot Miranda a look that could shatter glass. Miranda, in turn, rolled her

eyes. "You know what I mean."

Lily pulled herself off the floor. "I must look a fright."

Miranda gave Lily's cheek a playful pinch. "I just love that British accent. Oh, sweetie, you're ice cold! How long has it been?"

"A few days. I was...occupied." As she said this, her gaze wandered to the bed.

Miranda cocked an eyebrow and made her way over. Lily said nothing, just turned to gaze out the window again. Miranda pulled aside the velvet curtain on the bed and pursed her lips. "I see. Martin?"

Lily nodded, but didn't look at Miranda and didn't say anything. Miranda didn't really need confirmation anyway.

"Lily, by the look of things it's been at least a couple of days. You've been sleeping with that in your bed? That's kind of morbid, don't you think? I mean, at least put him in the closet, or the bath tub..."

Lily shrugged. "Please, Miranda. I really don't need a guilt trip, all right?"

"Guilt trip? Why would I give you a guilt trip?"

"Look at what I've done! Isn't that against some sort of rule or something? Some Law broken?"

"Sweetie, you've read too many books. Almost everyone does it eventually. Besides, he was an asshole."

"Everyone?"

Miranda knew what Lily was asking. "Yeah, Lily. Everyone. The guy that made me, Jimmy, he taught me what I needed to know, just like Martin taught you. Sure, he got possessive. They all do, for some reason. What're you gonna do? They're men. Anyway, one day the desire to do it overcame me, and I couldn't fight it, so I just gave in."



"And what did you do to him?"

Miranda cocked her head sideways, examined the body in the bed. "Looks like pretty much the same thing you did. Course, I was a little neater about the hole I left in Jimmy's chest. What did you do with it? Flush it? Throw it out the window?"

"I ate it."

"Okay, now that's a little extreme. I—"

Then Miranda noticed the open bureau. "That's never been open before when I've been over. Wait...Lily! You have a mirror? For God's sake, why?"

"I've kept only one. I shattered the rest years ago. Take a look, you'll see why."

Miranda made her way to the bureau, pulled the swinging door aside, so she could see the mirror, and gasped. "Oh, Lily. You never told me."

"It was his fault, Miranda. He made me do it."

"He made you?"

"Yes. He took me by the shoulders, turned me about, and made me look. I presume he thought he was giving me some sort of gift. He was wrong."

"He damn well was. Jesus, most of us are lucky enough to have our first exposure be on some store security camera. Hell, even walking past an ATM machine will do it; they've all got cameras in them. How did he manage to keep you intact?"

"Because I was here when he found me."

"You mean he didn't make you?"

"No, he didn't make me. And I've no idea how he came to be in my house when I became this thing."

"Enough with the self-pity already. Could've been any number of things. He could've been trailing you. Maybe he'd picked you out earlier that night, or

another night. Maybe he smelled it. I don't know. Guess it doesn't matter, now, does it? So if he didn't make you, then how?"

Lily held up her hands to show Miranda the ugly scars crisscrossing her wrists. "They still bleed occasionally, right after I've fed."

"A suicide? Fuck me," Miranda said. "I always thought that whole thing about suicides becoming like us was a myth!"

"Well, it's not."

"But why?"

"I'd rather not get into it. Perhaps some day, but not now. She talks to me, you know."

"She who? You mean...?" Lily pointed at the reflection, incredulous.

"Yes, her. She talks to me. She won't let me alone, and I can't break the mirror, Miranda. I just can't break it."

"I don't know what to say. Probably wouldn't help to tell you how beautiful you were."

"Doesn't bother me much."

"You're still beautiful, Lily. Just in a different way, now. More exotic."

"My hair is turning black. I have to paint my nails every day because they're gray, now."

"Yeah, that happens. I get my hair dyed every few months. I know, I know. I can't go to a beauty parlor because of the whole reflection thing. I have a vessel who does it for me." She walked over to Lily and stroked the chestnut mane. "I could dye yours for you, if you want me to." Their faces were inches apart, and Lily could smell the vitality on Miranda's breath, the warmth there. Miranda hadn't waited for her, and the sensations brought the sudden thirst to the surface.

Lily managed a smile. "Not now. I'm cold. And thirsty."

Miranda grinned. "Sounds like a plan, girlfriend."

Lily looked at the flush in Miranda's cheeks, the sheen in her hair. "But you've already been out on the town this evening."

Miranda rolled her eyes in mock innocence, wiped the corners of her mouth. "You never showed at the club. I got impatient. It was just a snack. There's always room for dessert."

Lily turned to select an outfit from the closet and settled on a typically Goth regalia: black vinyl dress, fishnets, thigh-high boots, velvet choker, chain belt and bracelet to finish it off. If she absolutely *had* to look Gothic, she could at least have fun with the role.

"You know, Miranda, you could break it for me."

"Sorry, Sweetie. I can't. None of us can. I wish I could help you."

Lily sighed. "Bloody Hell; I thought not. It was worth a try. What time is it?"

"Only about eleven. We've got lots of time."

"Splendid."

After a few moments, Lily sat on the edge of her bed, not even looking at Martin's body. It had been three nights; by morning the body would be completely dissolved, so it was nothing to worry about. She pulled her boots on and stood, her arms out to the side. She spun around like a model in a punk fashion show, and grinned.

Miranda laughed and put on a bad mockery of Lily's accent. "Darling, you look fabulous." She gave a golf clap and winked. "Let's go hunting."

The two girls made for the door. Almost as an afterthought, Lily turned back and swung shut the doors on her bureau, to cover the mirror. The last thing she heard was her own voice in her mind, saying *I'll be waiting when you get back, Lily.*

"Yes," Lily answered. "I'm sure you will."

\* \* \*

The club Lily and Miranda chose was jumping that night. The band on stage was loud and obnoxious, and yet with a complexity and subtlety to their music that made them truly original. And the singer!

He was akin to a cult leader in the thrall he held over the audience.

There was charisma there, and power. Lily was drawn to him right away.

From the moment she and Miranda walked into the club, Lily couldn't take her eyes away from the incredible specimen, and for the first time in the ten years she'd been a child of the night, she was tempted by a mortal.

Miranda picked up on the vibes, and as Lily ran her tongue over her teeth, Miranda laid a hand on her friend's arm. "Lily," she said, "You can't."

"Why not, Miranda? He's exquisite!"

"Think about what you did to Martin, Lily. You want that to happen again? You *can't* make him. You and me, we made a bargain the night we met, five years ago. I made you promise, remember?"

"I remember. I never understood why."

"I'd hoped that now you would."

"I suppose I do. But I *want* him! I could make him a vessel. What if I just did that?"



"He'd make a good vessel, I'll give you that. These guys are really up-and-coming. They're going places, and fast. See that guy over in the corner? The one who doesn't fit in?"

Lily tore her gaze from the vocalist and scanned the indicated area. Almost immediately she caught sight of a middle-aged man in a gray pinstriped suit and a purple tie (how fashionable).

"I see him."

"He's a Sony Record exec. They're getting signed, or I'm alive."

Lily turned, put her finger under Miranda's chin, and gave Miranda a playful peck. "Love, you are as alive as anyone I've known."

"You know what I mean."

"I know. How exciting for them. I still want him."

"Just so you don't make him. Vessel him all you like, but remember, sweetie. We're black widows, and that's all there is to it. But if you really want to torture someone..." she nodded at the corner opposite from the record exec, where a young man in a motorcycle jacket, red silk shirt, and skin tight black jeans sat staring rather intently at the two women.

"Oh, a hunter," Lily grinned. "How passé. And so obvious about it!"

"Right," Miranda said. "Either he's a rank amateur or he's really good. Either way, I don't think we need to get involved with a hunter. Let's skedaddle."

Lily smiled, suddenly, and Miranda didn't like what she saw there.

"Lily, sweetie, you're going to get yourself killed!"

"Don't worry about me, darling. You just do me a favor and find out where this band is playing tomorrow night. I'm going to have that singer." She sighed. "My first real

vessel." And with another peck, Lily sauntered into the crowd, directly towards the hunter.

"Lily, you'd better call me tomorrow!" Miranda called after her, then added under her breath, "or I swear I'll get an Ouija board and haunt your ass." Then she fluffed up her platinum blonde hair, smoothed her crimson blouse and black miniskirt, and scanned the crowd. "Oh, well, alone again. Let's see...there has to be someone here of the right vintage. There we go. He'll do nicely."

\* \* \*

Lily got halfway to the table, her expressionless gaze locked with the hunter's the entire way, then suddenly veered off towards the ladies' room. She wasn't ready quite yet. She needed to freshen up a bit, first.

A few moments and a bite later, Lily once again approached the hunter's table and without waiting for an invitation, sat down and crossed her legs. She flashed a smile at him that was designed to melt any man's defenses away, and was certain she saw just a tiny bit of his resolve fade under that smile. At least, she hoped she did.

The hunter was obviously shocked at her boldness, and stammered for a moment before managing to say, "Uh...can I buy you a drink?"

"Of course you may; that's why I came over, isn't it?"

He flagged down a bar maid and shot Lily a questioning look. She smiled again. "Wine. Red."

The hunter took a deep breath, obviously trying to collect himself, and leaned back in his chair. He picked up a beer from the table and took a long pull, straight from the bottle.

"Now do you really think that's wise?" Lily said, clicking her tongue. "Drinking on the job. Dulls the reflexes, if I remember

correctly.”

“I have no idea what you’re talking about,” he said, his gaze never wavering from hers.

So it was to be this kind of contest of wills, was it? That was fine with Lily. She leaned forward over the table, deliberately positioning herself so that just enough cleavage showed to get his attention. “Let’s be frank, shall we?” she said. “You know what I am.” To emphasize the point, she flashed another smile at him, this time unleashing her more deadly attributes with it. “And I,” she added, “know exactly what you are.”

“Do you, now?”

“Oh, yes.” She leaned back in her chair again as her wine arrived. Just to hammer the point home that she wasn’t what he was used to, she lifted the glass in a silent toast, and drained it. He tried not to appear surprised. “What’s the matter?” she said. “Not used to that?”

“Not exactly, no.”

“What’s your name?” she said with just an edge of *push* in her voice.

“Ben,” he answered reflexively, and looked suddenly uncomfortable. He was a new one. Lily almost felt sorry for him. Almost.

“Well, Ben,” she replied. “I’m Lily. And your job tonight is going to be very, *very* easy.”

“H-how so?” He was in full stutter mode, now, just the way Lily wanted it. This was her game, and she was pretty sure Ben was aware of it.

“It’s simple. And you can relax; I’m not going to fight you. In fact, I’m even going to take you back to my *lair*. I’ve got a proposition for you.”

“Really? And what’s that?”

“Well, my dear. You hold off killing me,

and I don’t kill you, and I show you a little secret that isn’t commonly known about my kind, and you then have an ace-in-the-hole against others like me in the future.”

“And you’d do this why?”

“A few reasons, actually. Do you know how old I am? Oh, and please, be truthful,” she pushed.

“No. I just singled you and your friend out tonight.”

“I’m old. Very old. Older than you can imagine,” she lied. “And speaking of my friend, that’s another thing. After you’ve finished with me, you let Miranda go. Your word.”

Ben seemed uncomfortable.

“Your word, Ben. What I shall show you tonight will allow you to hunt without ever having to face my kind in combat. Now that’s an offer you can’t refuse, I think.”

“You could make me give you my word,” Ben said.

“Yes, but if I did that, you wouldn’t be bound by it, would you? You don’t get off that easily with me.”

Ben looked at the band for a minute before responding. “Fine. You have my word. But this better be good.”

She smiled. “I’ll even let you make love to me, if you like, before we finish our business.” She moved around to sit next to him and nuzzled her nose in his neck, flicked her tongue out once, and whispered, “Have you ever made love to one of us, Ben?”

He swallowed. Hard. “No.”

“You can’t imagine what it’s like. No mortal can, unless they’ve experienced it for themselves.”

Ben stood, firmly enthralled. “Let’s go.”

\*\*\*

*Passion.*

*Lust.*

*Blood.*

It was true; Ben had never known anything like the lovemaking Lily showed him. He tried to resist, God almighty he tried, but she pushed him and as hard as he fought, there was just something about her. All the others he'd faced, hunted, killed...none of them had the sway over him that this one did. He even removed his crucifix when she requested it, and she didn't even push with the request.

Lily was satisfied, feeling Ben's thoughts and emotions. It had indeed been a long time since she'd been with a mortal. The lovemaking had connected them, as it always did in such circumstances. They were of one mind, now. She even managed to restrict herself to just a tiny taste of him. After all, it wouldn't do to kill him before she was through with him, would it?

Thankfully, Martin's body had dissolved entirely before she'd gotten home with Ben. That blessing saved a lot of explanation and clean up work. The sun was coming up; she could sense it. But she just lay, cradling Ben in her arms. He was sobbing like a baby.

"I love you," he whimpered.

"Yes, yes, I know," she said. And with a final soft push she ordered him, "now sleep until tonight. We'll finish then."

As Lily felt the little slice of true death wash over her with the coming of dawn, the last thing she heard was her own voice: *I don't know what you're planning, Lily, but you know I'm going to have to make you pay for it. Why must you force this upon us?*

Lily gave herself over to Dawn's Death, a contented smile upon her lips.

\* \* \*

It was well after sunset by the time Ben felt the gentle calling at the edge of his

consciousness that guided him back to the world of the living. She hadn't made him; of that he was certain. But the sleep! Ben felt certain he knew what it felt like to be dead, now. It wasn't pleasant, and he didn't like it.

Lily was no longer in bed next to him, but he could hear her calling him in his mind. He swung his legs over the side of the bed and parted the curtains.

She stood at the window, naked, smoking a cigarette. She was talking to someone, although there didn't appear to be anyone else in the room. Thinking aloud, perhaps? Either way, Ben decided to sit and admire her for a few moments. Last night's episode would make him stronger in the future, he decided, if he could go through with what he knew he had to do. He loved her, but it was because she made him love her. She had to die. She had to die because he loved her.

"Wouldn't you like to know?" Lily was saying, but not to Ben. "Oh, dear Lily, you'll find out soon enough."

Ben climbed out of bed and walked up behind her. He wrapped his arms around her waist and pulled her close. She closed her eyes and rested her head back against him.

"Good evening, love," she said.

"I can't let you make me, Lily."

"Make you?" she laughed. "I wouldn't dream of it."

Lily turned to face him, and he was immediately lost in her mysterious, vacant eyes. "We had a deal, didn't we?"

"Yes," he said. "We did."

"Can you do it, Ben? Will you go through with it?"

Ben was shocked. "You don't want to go on," he said in sudden, shocked realization.

She smiled at him, a sad and lonely

smile, regret for all she had lost and was about to lose. "Not like this, no. Not like this. Can you do it, love?"

Ben took a deep breath. "I can do it. Show me."

She smiled wider. "Look behind you."

Ben turned and was immediately aghast at the sight before him. There, inside the bureau on the opposite wall, was a mirror. And in the mirror was a reflection of him, and of Lily, only it wasn't Lily. Her almost-straight chestnut hair was a vibrant red in the mirror, and curly. Those deep gray eyes were a vibrant green, and her porcelain complexion was ruddy and freckled.

"Is that...?"

"It was me, once." She said, and as she said it Ben noticed the expression in the mirror take on a horrified expression. Then he *heard* it! He heard it speak!

*Lily*, it begged, *Please don't do this.*

"It's too late," Lily whispered. "It has to be done."

Ben looked between the two Lily's, astounded. "Do all of you...?"

"The first reflective object we pass in front of after the change, Ben, steals our souls forever. That was me, as a human. And that is the death of me. You can destroy me, Ben. You can destroy me without bloodshed or violence, and you can give me peace." She turned him back to look directly in his eyes. "Can you do that for me, darling? Can you give me peace?"

Ben pursed his lips. He loved her, and if this was what he had to do...

"I can do it," he said.

He walked to the bureau and picked up her hairbrush. For some reason Ben couldn't quite comprehend, he knew that using the hairbrush was poetic, and he raised it high. The reflection took on a look of absolute and utter horror.

*Stop him, Lily!* it begged. *Stop him! Without me...*

"I know," Lily whispered. "I know."

"You were truly a beautiful woman," Ben said, and brought the brush down. The mirror shattered with a resounding crash, and Lily actually drew in a single, sharp intake of breath, like the death sigh of an expiring terminal ward patient. But there was no thud of a body striking the ground. Ben turned, surprised, to find Lily standing inches from him.

"Thank you," She said.

"You...you said that—"

"I said I didn't want to exist like that. You've taken away my pain, my regret. Now, *love*, I can exist as I was meant to. An unapologetic predator. And look! You get the privilege of being my first guilt-free meal."

Ben didn't even feel her teeth penetrate his throat as the blackness closed in.

\* \* \*

Lily picked up the phone and dialed Miranda's cell.

"Hello, Darling. It's Lily. Oh, yes, I'm fine. Did you find out where that band is playing tonight? Wonderful. Listen, love, I need your help. Yes, I've a body soiling my bedroom. Could you? Thank you so much; you're a dear. And then, I've a singer to seduce. Hmm? The mirror? Oh, that. Yes, the mirror, love, is broken."



## INTRODUCTION: LIFTING THE CURTAIN

### JASON'S INTRODUCTION

"Dude, why aren't we writing this game?"

That's how this whole thing started. I had done a blog describing how old school fantasy mechanics could be used to mimic the tropes of a certain high-school-set, wildly popular urban fantasy horror TV series from the 90s. Tim immediately messaged me online and said the above. I hem-hawed at first, thinking (correctly) that I had way too much on my plate to take on a whole new core game design, with a whole new core system design.

Then, as I am always prone to do, I started making notes as an academic thing. How would this work? How could it be handled? The next thing I knew, I was sending the bones of two full chapters to Tim, with character classes and system design. Then, we were off to the races and **Night Shift: Veterans of the Supernatural Wars** was born.

Not only has this game come out better than I could've hoped, it's become the vehicle to launch Elf Lair Games to the status of a full, traditional offset-print publisher with a successful Kickstarter campaign. I'm not going to lie—I'm running headfirst into territory that I had no idea how to navigate. So far the learning curves have been sharp, but manageable, and I really look forward to getting this into the hands of gamers everywhere.

The game is also set to unveil the new house system for Elf Lair, which we have dubbed the Oldschool Generic Roleplaying Engine System (O.G.R.E.S.), and which will be used to power most of our games moving forward. For fans of Cd8 and O.R.C.S., however, fear not: those systems will also continue to be supported, and indeed, conversion rules for using this game with O.R.C.S. are included in the appendix.

As I write this, the book has been completed and laid out. This is the final portion of the book to be penned, and as I do so, we are in the throes of the COVID-19 global quarantine. Traditionally the gaming industry has been somewhat recession-proof and as a business owner, I'm hoping that bears out. But we all face an uncertain future, and the biggest concern is that people stay healthy and safe. I'm thinking every day about all my friends, family, and fans, and I dearly hope you are all well. I also hope that this game brings you some semblance of escape and joy in a hard time in our world civilization.

### TIM'S INTRODUCTION

Jason and I met online while we were both working as freelancers for Eden Studios. We soon discovered we had seen a bunch of the same TV shows, movies and had read a lot of the same books. We working together on *WitchCraft*, *Buffy*, and *Angel* and were playtesters on each other's respective projects of *All Flesh Must Be Eaten* and *Ghosts of Albion*. We also discovered we both had a love of old-school games.

Don't get me wrong; we both love newer games too and have written a fair share of material for some very new games. But old school gaming was what we enjoyed.

We often chatted about how in a perfect world we would have game of modern supernatural, urban horror, but with the mechanics we enjoyed the most. No slight against anything else we ever worked on, just a way to have our cake and eat it too.

So. We started baking. There are a lot of ideas here in **Night Shift**. Some might look of feel familiar if you read our respective blogs. Or have played our other games. We wanted everything here to feel like the games we have been playing for years but still be something new.

I hope we have accomplished that.

This game has been an absolute blast to create. Even the days where I sat in front of my computer and thought to myself, "what the hell am I going to say about a magical high school?" now seem like part of the adventure.

I hope you now can enjoy this as well.

### WHAT IS NIGHT SHIFT?

Welcome to **Night Shift: Veterans of the Supernatural Wars!** This book is a roleplaying game of chosen ones, Witches, Warlocks, Survivors, veterans, and Something Weird. It's built to allow you to handle just about any kind of urban fantasy, horror, or modern supernatural campaign you can imagine. From high school kids facing down horrors from the mouth of hell in their school's basement to a post-apocalyptic world overrun by demons, from a kitchen sink setting focused on a supernatural investigations agency to a world where the Fey walk among us, it's all possible here.

We hope that this game fulfills a hole in the old-school and even modern gaming community for an RPG that will offer you the ability to play your favorite books, movies, television shows, and graphic novels as well as worlds of your own imagination, through intuitive, fast-playing, and simple mechanics.

### Why Night Shift: Veterans of the Supernatural Wars?

The title is a reference to the fact that most supernatural horrors are thought to prowl the nights. They exist in the shadows of our everyday world. Daytime is built for people; the night is built for monstrous predators, and the people that stand against this encroaching horror, work the Night Shift.

The second part of the title is two-fold. It's addressing the idea that the battle against the darkness is indeed a war, albeit



one that may never end. It's also a Deep Purple reference, and Tim and I decided that if you can make a Deep Purple Reference, you should.

## WHAT THIS BOOK CONTAINS

This book is broken down into chapters designed to allow a quick reference to any aspect of the rules you need. The chapters are broken down as follows:

**Chapter One: Character Creation** shows you how to make characters for Night Shift, and at the same time helps you to gain an understanding for what the numbers on the page mean, and how they will work for you.

**Chapter Two: Fighting the Forces of Darkness** contains the core of the O.G.R.E.S. system. It outlines exactly how to play the game, the three basic mechanics that power the system, and how to use them in game. This chapter also includes optional bolt-on mechanics for things like sanity and skills. It discusses three different levels of "grit" you can add to your game to scale it from raw survival horror to full-on cinematic heroism.

**Chapter Three: The Arts Arcane** contains the full magic system for the game, including spellcasting, exorcism, wizardly duels, and a complete list with descriptions of the spells of **Night Shift**.

**Chapter Four: Earth After Dark** is the Game Master's section. It discusses how to adjudicate the rules; how to build adventures, campaigns, and worlds, and how to deal with the players at your table, from handling sensitive issues to deciding what options to include.

**Chapter Five: Creatures of the Night** is the bestiary for the game. Here you'll find several options for granting experience to advance characters based on the horrors they defeat, and statistics for some of the most classic and common horrors they might have to face down, from vampires

and werewolves to demons and doppelgangers.

**Chapter Six: Veterans of the Supernatural Wars** introduces a complete post-apocalyptic setting dealing with the forces of Hell completely overrunning the world, and the New World Order secret societies that have emerged from the shadows to help humanity fight back.

**Chapter Seven: The Nocturnumverse** is a kitchen sink modern urban horror/urban fantasy setting that deals with people who work for a supernatural detective agency attempting to beat back the forces of darkness.

**Chapter Eight: Generation HEX** is a setting that deals with a specialized school for Witches and wizards, and the dangers and adventures they face as they go through their courses to take their place in the magical world.

**Chapter Nine: Ordinary World** is a setting which deals with the way supernatural creatures deal with trying to incorporate into a world that is not built for them. Do they hide in the shadows or do they risk their very existence by revealing themselves? The choice is up to your players. .

**Chapter Ten: Night Spots** reveals a number of locales you can drop into almost any setting which can enhance the supernatural in your game, from a supernatural mental health therapy agency to a strange bar that is Halfway between Here and There, to the mystical Library of Alexandria and beyond.

**The Appendices** offer a list of recommended reading, and conversion notes to other Elf Lair Games products as well as using this game with a range of other Old School style games.

## TEXT CONVENTIONS

Most text conventions in this book should be self-explanatory. It has been laid out to be as easy to absorb the information as humanly possible, so you can get up and

playing quickly. Here are a few things to keep in mind about our language, layout, and text.

### Boxed Text

When you see text in shaded boxes like this, this is additional, tangential, or detail-oriented text that falls outside the norm, but which may be useful in specific situations. For example, a set of boxed text may give you information on how to alter the rules to make a game more cinematic or grittier.

### Dice Codes

When you see the letter "d" followed by a number, that represents a die of that many sides. Thus, a d6 means a 6-sided die, a d20 means a 20-sided die, etc. If you see a number before the "d," that represents the number of dice to roll—2d8, then, means, "roll 2, 8-sided dice."

When you see the term "percentile dice," "d%," or "d100," that means roll 2, 10-sided dice, and read them as a percentage. Many dice sets these days come with a die that is marked as tens (so it will read 00 to 90) as well as one simply marked 0 to 9. In this case read the tens die first. Otherwise, simply use two dice of different colors and denote a tens die before rolling.

For example, if you throw percentile dice and they come up with the tens die at 90 (or 9, if you don't have a die marked with tens) and the ones die at 3, that's a 93. If the dice come up as 00 (or 000), that's not zero, but 100. Otherwise, 00 or 0 means zero. So your total range is 01 to 00 (or 100).

### Gender Conventions

Once upon a time, the male pronoun was used as a generic gender-neuter in writing. This is no longer the case. We have made every effort in this game to use actual gender neuter pronouns (they, for example) when possible. Where we have not done so, we've tried to mix up the genders evenly, so

you'll encounter "she" as often as "he." We have no wish to favor any gender over another, and feel that just like the genre it represents, **Night Shift** should be an inclusive game.

### Measurements

We understand that we live in a global world and more countries use the metric system than the Imperial system. That being said, we are in the United States and quite simply are not as good with the metric system as we are with Imperial. As such, Imperial measurements are used throughout the book.

If you live in a nation that uses the metric system, there are close approximates you can make through quick calculations. A mile is technically 1.609 kilometers, but you can simply multiply by 1.5 or 1.6 to get close enough for play. A kilogram, likewise, is technically 0.4536 pounds, but you can simply divide pounds in half for a very rough equivalent for play. You'll find that in the vast majority of situations, it's not necessary to be 100% precise.

### Metric Conversions

For those who want exact measurements, here are a few common conversions to keep in mind:

**1 centimeter:** 0.3937 inches

**1 meter:** 1.0936 yards

**1 kilometer:** 0.6214 miles

**1 hectare:** 2.4711 acres

**1 liter:** 2.113 fluid pints or 1.7598 pints (3.7854 liters to the gallon)

**1 gram:** 0.0353 oz.

**1 kilogram:** 2.2046 lb. (0.4536 kg to 16 oz or 1 pound).

**1 long ton:** 1.0160 tons



## WHAT IS A ROLE PLAYING GAME?

A role playing game is at its heart just a more advanced version of playing pretend when you were a child, or a different take on shared storytelling like you might do around a campfire. The difference is, there are rules in place to adjudicate situations that are otherwise unclear. Everyone remembers playing cops and robbers as kids, and the argument takes place where one kid yells, "I shot ya!" and the other responds, "Nuh-uh! I dodged!" or, "Nuh-uh! I got body armor!"

Role playing games offer rules to determine whether or not you shot the bad guy, and whether or not he's wearing armor (and what effect that armor has).

A role playing game, or RPG for short, needs at least two players to work properly, though more are preferable, with anywhere between five to seven being generally considered optimal. The roles and responsibilities of each player at the table are as follows.

### Player Characters

Every player except one will control a single character in the overarching story. These Player Characters, or PCs, will consist of statistics on a piece of paper that determine how strong, fast, smart, willful, charismatic, and tough they are in addition to the probability that they can do things like hit with a sword, fire a gun, pick a lock, etc. As a player, you can have your PC try anything you want in the context of the story, within their listed physical and mental limits.

### The Game Master

The remaining player is called the Game Master, or GM. That player controls everything in the entire game world (and indeed the game universe) that's not one of the PCs. That means the weather on any

given day, what the local DJ says on the radio, the policies of the government, the actions of secret societies, and even the acts of God in the game.

The GM also controls all the characters that aren't PCs. These are called non-player characters, or NPCs. They're the bartender at your favorite watering hole, the delivery guy that shows up at your door, the science teacher at the high school, and even the monsters you have to fight.

### The GM's Responsibilities

The core job of the GM is to create the world around your players and give them conflict and challenges to overcome. That doesn't mean that the GM is the enemy of the PCs. In fact, the real job of the Game Master is to ensure that everyone at the table has a great time.

The GM should challenge your characters, give them a sense of danger and of living in a thriving, vibrant world, but shouldn't get mad or frustrated when the PCs manage to pull off an awesome feat. In fact, that means the game is going right!

When it comes to creating adventures, the GM can either buy pre-written episodes (which we hope to produce on a regular basis for **Night Shift**) or make up their own. If you get to know the system well enough, you'll be able to use story ideas and even pre-published modules from any number of games, converting them easily to this game for use with your heroes. Some guidelines on creating adventures will be found in **Chapter Four: Earth After Dark**.

### The Ongoing Game

As your game progresses, the GM will award experience points that the players will use to advance to higher levels of power and proficiency, getting gradually better at all the things they do. They in turn will garner notoriety and experience within the game world, tackling ever

greater challenges, and even, sometimes, beating back the forces of darkness to avert the Apocalypse itself...at least, until the next one comes along!

### How Do I Win?

There's no winning or losing an RPG. Technically, I suppose, you could lose if your character dies, but even then you get to just make a new character and jump right back into the story. There may even be ways for your deceased character to come back from the dead. After all, it happens in movies and TV, so why not in the game?

The rewards of playing an RPG are the experience of telling an epic, ongoing tale, and surviving against the challenges the GM throws your way as long as possible. This is a cooperative game that only ends when the players all decide it's time to bring the story to a close.

Throughout the game, your huge story called a campaign or series will be broken up into smaller stories called adventures, modules, or episodes. Each will have a beginning, middle, and ending unto itself. Episodes may or may not play a part in the greater story, but they give you a sense of accomplishment, completion, and closure as well as continuation.

### EXAMPLE OF PLAY

Our game consists of four players, a GM and 3 PCs. The GM is Tony and the players are: Sarah, who is running a Chosen One (a powerful character built to fight evil monsters); Nick, who is playing a Survivor (a normal person who has seen enough to gain survival skills against the forces of darkness), and Aly, who is playing a Witch (an actual spellcasting powerhouse).

Let's join them as they approach a nest of vampires they've tracked to the city's slums.

**Tony (GM):** You approach the rundown, abandoned tenement in the low rent district.

Even though it's mid-afternoon, the streets in this area of town are deserted. Fortunately for you, it's a sunny day, though the tenement is all boarded up.

**Sarah (Chosen One):** No approach like the direct approach! I throw open the door and stride in, bathed in sunlight.

**Tony:** You grab the door but it doesn't budge. It's been locked from the inside.

**Nick:** Saw that coming! I just picked up a nifty set of lockpicks online. I've been wanting to try this out.

**Tony:** Okay, you try to pick the lock. What's your percentage?

**Nick (checks his sheet):** Says my lock picking is only 30%. Ugh. Well, might as well give it a go. (throws dice). Crap! 43.

**Tony:** That's over your percentage chance, so you can't find the tumblers. The lock remains secure.

**Nick:** Can I try again?

**Tony:** Not in this case. The lock is just beyond your ability right now.

**Aly:** I step forward and crack my knuckles. I got this. I cast my *knock* spell.

**Tony:** Make your casting check.

**Aly:** Let's see...I have a base 75% chance, and that's a first level spell, which reduces it by 5. So 70%. (throws dice). Yeah! 50! That means it goes off right away!

**Tony:** There's an audible click, and the door swings open.

**Nick:** Why didn't you lead with that?

**Aly:** I wanted you to feel like you were being useful.

**Tony:** So what now?

**Sarah:** I move in, ready for a fight, but staying in the sunlight.

**Tony:** Okay, you move in. (he throws a die behind his screen, checking to see if

what he's got in store surprises Sarah. He rolls 1d6 and gets a 2, indicating surprise). You're utterly shocked when something dives right at you through the shaft of light, yowling in pain as it does so.

(He rolls an attack roll for the vampire; the result is a 15. Adding the vampire's hit dice and Sarah's armor class to the roll, the vampire beats its target number and hits) The body knocks you into the shadows. You take (rolls a d6)...3 points of damage.

**Sarah:** Ow! That hurt, fang-boy! Hope that was your best shot, because it's gonna be your last.

**Tony:** Four other vampires step out from the shadows. It's time to roll for initiative to see who goes first. Everyone throw a d6.

...and the game progresses from there.

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**Jason Vey** has been writing stories as long as he can remember, from superheroes to swords and sorcery to space ships to Gothic horror. Telling tales that evoke emotion in other people is his passion. To date, he has published one novel, which is currently out of print but he hopes will be back in print soon! He is working on a few other novels as he finds time between the busy schedule he keeps at his day job as a Senior Web Content Writer, and as a game designer.

Jason cites George Lucas, Robert E. Howard, Gene Roddenberry, Stan Lee, and the heavy metal band Iron Maiden as the core elements that made him the geek he is today. In fact, his earliest memory is seeing the original Star Wars (before it was called A New Hope) in the theater when he was three years old.

He has been gaming since the age of five, where he experienced Advanced Dungeons & Dragons the year it debuted. Jason has played and run more gaming systems than he can count, and has contributed books,

articles, and source material to such companies as Palladium, Eden Studios, Misfit Studios, Goodman Games, and others. His current home is Troll Lord Games, where he is the sole author (currently) and line developer for Amazing Adventures and the line developer for the TLG 5e line, as well as a contributor to a number of Castles & Crusades products, including the Castle Keeper's Guide and the World of Aihrde.

Jason has celebrated his 29th birthday way too many times over, and lives in Pittsburgh, PA with his wife Julie and two furry feline children, Seamus and Finnegan. He spends too much time getting irritated with social media, watching Star Wars, Star Trek, and the Marvel Cinematic Universe, or playing guitar and bass in his living room. One of his favorite things to do is attend conventions, cosplay, and meet fans.

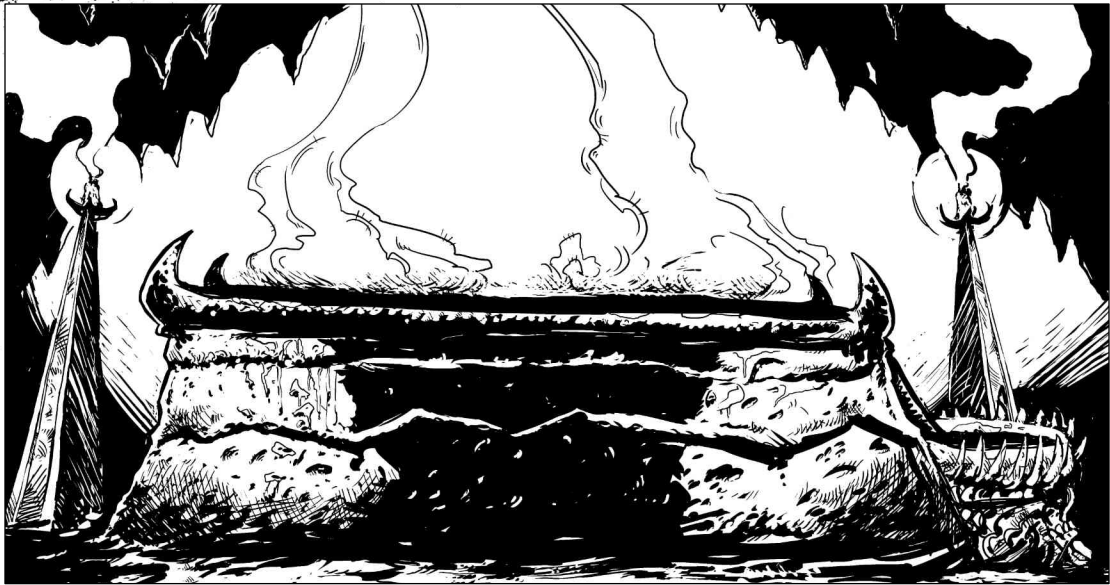
**Timothy S. Brannan**, like Jason, has been gaming and writing forever. He started gaming in the last part of 1979 when he borrowed a friend's *AD&D Monster Manual* and never looked back. He started his very first Witch character class soon after and began publishing them online starting in 1999.

For reading he started out in fantasy, moved over to dark fantasy, and finally to horror where he has remained for years. Citing H.P. Lovecraft, Clark Ashton Smith, Stephen King, and Christopher Golden among his favorites. In truth there are far more than can be mentioned here.

He has developed game material for Eden Studios, Misfit Studios, Wizards of the Coast, Green Ronin and more. Currently he splits his time with his own label, *The Other Side Publishing*, and his day job where he develops college curriculum for many schools.

Tim lives in the suburbs of Chicago with his wife Natalie, two fantastic sons, Liam and Connor, and for reason he has not figured out, three rabbits, Amy, Rory and Simon. He participates in the October Horror Movie Marathon every October and writes compulsively on his blog, *The Other Side*.





## CHAPTER ONE: THE CHOSEN FEW

The first step in playing *Night Shift* is to create a player character: the eyes through which you see, the ears through which you hear, and the hands through which you act in the imaginary game world created by the Game Master. This character is nothing more than a collection of statistics on paper, but they become an avatar for you, and the role that you play in the worlds of *Night Shift*.

Role playing games are an exercise in shared storytelling, and the actions that your character takes will help to shape the grand tale of adventure, heroism, tragedy, loss, and accomplishment that you and your friends are telling. What's more, one of the best ways to understand the rules of a role playing game is to build your character and see how the numbers all come together on the page.

To create a character, you'll need a character sheet. You can find one at the end of this book, or you can simply use a piece of notebook or graph paper and organize

the statistics however you like. The process is quite easy and is done in a step-by-step format. The steps to character generation are as follows:

1. Generate ability scores
2. Record ability bonuses
3. Note primary, secondary, and tertiary abilities
4. Choose a race (human or supernatural)
5. Choose a class
6. Choose an alignment
7. Note language slots and choose languages
8. Choose a background
9. Equip your character

Let's break down each step in more detail.

### ABILITY SCORES

There are six ability scores (also called "attributes") that serve as the primary indicators of your character's physical, mental, and emotional strengths and

weaknesses. These abilities are: Strength (Str), Dexterity (Dex), Constitution (Con), Intelligence (Int), Wisdom (Wis), and Charisma (Cha). Each defines an essential aspect of your character, and will be used to make checks whenever some aspect of game play is in question.

What each ability score represents is as follows:

**Strength** is the raw, physical might your character can exercise, as well as an indicator of their prowess in physical, melee combat. It is the Prime Requisite for Chosen Ones and Veterans, who also add strength bonus to all attack and damage rolls for melee combat (the only classes to do so). In general, the maximum amount of weight your character can carry is 15 times their strength score.

**Dexterity** represents coordination, agility, and reflexes. It's an indicator of how good you are in ranged combat. It is the Prime Requisite for Survivors, and serves to improve defense of Chosen Ones, Veterans, and Survivors. Chosen Ones, Veterans, and Survivors also add Dexterity bonus to strike with ranged weapons. These classes are the only ones to apply Dexterity to combat in these ways.

**Constitution** is your physical toughness, your resistance to harm, and an indicator of the amount of punishment you can suffer before dying. All characters add their Constitution bonus to their rolled hit points at every level.

**Intelligence** represents your character's mental acuity, level of learning capability, capacity for logic and reasoning, and their general I.Q., as outdated as the term may technically be. It is the prime requisite for Sages and Inventors, and affects their spell casting rolls. It also plays a role in speaking, reading, and writing languages. All characters gain one language per point of Intelligence bonus, except for Sages, who gain one language per *point* of intelligence.

**Wisdom** is your character's common sense, willpower, and perceptiveness. It is used to check any time a character needs to push through a situation with sheer force of will, to see if they pick up on social cues, sense deception, notice danger, hear noises, or spot something hidden. It's also the Prime Requisite for Theosophists, Witches and Warlocks, is used to determine how many spells they know at first level, and affects their spell casting checks.

**Charisma** is a combination of physical beauty, charm, animal magnetism, and raw force of personality. It is the Prime Requisite for Psychics. It is often used to resist mind-affecting drugs and magic that attempts to overcome the personality of the character, or to make rolls to charm or influence others. Note that just because a character has a high charisma, doesn't necessarily mean they are physically beautiful, and just because they have a low charisma, doesn't necessarily mean they are ugly.

A character can be drop-dead gorgeous, but off-putting or crass. Likewise, they can be homely or unattractive, but have a stark animal magnetism or leadership quality that can't be ignored. In the end, what your character looks like is entirely up to you, and Charisma represents more than just looks.

## Determining Ability Scores

Ability scores are expressed in a range from 3-18 and each will have an associated ability bonus. There are different methods for determining ability scores. At the beginning of the game, the GM chooses one of these methods, and all players use the chosen method to generate scores.

**Method I:** roll 3d6 for each ability score, in order, for Str, Dex, Con, Int, Wis, and Cha. After scores are recorded, the Prime Requisite may be raised to a maximum of 18 by reducing another ability score by 2 points for each 1 point the Prime Requisite is raised. This method is best for gritty games that skew towards an average, with



heroes excelling in their prime requisite area and having one or more in which they have measurable weakness. It tends to create very dynamic characters.

**Method II:** Roll 4d6, keeping the best three results, and arrange the resulting scores to taste. This method tends to generate higher powered heroes, who are much more customizable.

**Method III:** the GM assigns a "point buy" system, deciding what they want the average score to be for player characters, and assigning that number times 6 in points. Under such a system, no ability score should be allowed to go beyond 18.

### Record Ability Bonuses

After you've generated ability scores, you'll need to record the ability bonus for each score. Ability bonuses use the same table, regardless of the ability in question, and are determined by the score itself. Consult the table below:

**Table: Ability Score Bonuses**

Score	Bonus
3	-3
4-6	-2
7-8	-1
9-12	0
13-15	+1
16-17	+2
18-19	+3
20	+4

### Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Abilities

Your character has three categories of abilities. The first, or *Primary Ability*, is the Prime Requisite of your character class. If you change classes later, your primary ability does not change; it always stays the Prime Requisite of the first class you choose.

You then choose two other abilities, which are *Secondary Abilities*. The three remaining scores are *Tertiary Abilities*.

These abilities each have an associated "Check Bonus." The Check bonus for your Prime Requisite starts at +2, and improves by +1 for every three levels (+3 at level 3, +4 at level 6, etc.). Your Secondary Abilities have a check bonus of +1 at level 1, and improve by +1 per 4 character levels (4, 8, 12, etc.). Finally, your tertiary abilities have no bonus at first level, and improve by +1 per every 5 levels (5, 10, 15, etc.). The *Check Bonuses by Level* table illustrates the progression.

**Table: Check Bonuses by Level**

Level	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
1	+2	+1	0
2	+2	+1	0
3	+3	+1	0
4	+3	+2	0
5	+3	+2	+1
6	+4	+2	+1
7	+4	+2	+1
8	+4	+3	+1
9	+5	+3	+1
10	+5	+3	+2
11+	+1/3 levels	+1/4 levels	+1/5 levels

### Ability Checks

At certain times in the game, you will be required to make an ability check to determine your success at a task you wish to attempt. To make an ability check, you will roll 1d20, add your ability bonus, your level-based check bonus, and any miscellaneous modifiers, and attempt to reach a score (Difficulty Class, or DC) of 20.

For example, a first-level character with Strength 15 (+1) as a Prime Requisite (check bonus +2), attempts to lift a heavy gate. Since the gate is fairly heavy, the GM rules that it's a difficult task and there are no modifiers to the roll. He rolls a d20 and comes up with a 14. Adding +1 for his

Strength and +2 for his Prime Requisite check bonus, he gets only a 17 total, not enough to lift the gate. If the gate were well-oiled and relatively lightweight, the GM might rule that he gets a +3 situational bonus to the check, which would have resulted in a 20, a success.

### Re-Checks

Generally speaking, a failed roll cannot be re-checked; it simply means that your character cannot accomplish the task at hand. The GM may, under certain circumstances and at their discretion, allow additional checks, but there should always be some sort of consequence or increased difficulty for trying again.

For more on ability checks, and how they work in game, see **Chapter 2: Rules of Play**

## CHARACTER RACE

The term “race” has a sometimes unpleasant connotation in today’s society. In this context, we aren’t talking about cultural or human races. We are using the term in an old-school fashion, and referring to actual *species*. We are using the term because it is recognizable to players of the games that inspired these rules, but it is important to stress that *all humans are equal, and race does not matter in terms of human relations or capabilities in this game*. If the term makes you uncomfortable, it’s perfectly fine to substitute “species,” if you prefer.

There are essentially two “races” from which you can choose in *Night Shift*. The first is human, and will comprise the majority of characters in the game. Humans gain no special benefits nor drawbacks, and choose a class to move forward as normal.

The second is Supernatural, and this represents the entire gamut of mythological,

legendary, and horrific creatures. Players who wish to portray a werewolf, vampire, succubus, fey, or other such creature will choose this race, which provides a number of benefits and drawbacks as follows:

### Supernatural

You are a supernatural creature of some type—either a fey, vampire, werewolf, or other creature of non-human stock.

When you choose this race, you gain +3 to any one ability score. This can raise that ability as high as 20, but no higher. As such, if you apply this to an ability that is already at 18, that ability is raised to 20, and the extra point is lost.

In addition, decide what kind of supernatural creature you are, and pick one power from the Witch/Warlock arcane powers list (p. 27) which defines that character. A shapeshifter, for example, would have the *shapeshifting* power, while a living vampire or succubus might have the *incubus/succubus* power. Whatever type of supernatural you choose, you may not be undead. Players wishing to portray vampires will be “living” vampires, separate from the undead creatures of the night.

You may use that power once per day per three character levels you possess, and the power improves as standard. *Incubus/succubus*, for example, still deals 1d6 damage per two character levels.

If the player wishes, they may choose a new power whenever their existing power would improve, gaining that new power at character level 1. Thus, a character with shapeshifting would, at level 3, gain it twice per day. They may choose instead to pick up a life drain attack. They will now have two abilities, with each at first level of experience. When they reach level 6, they can choose to improve one of these two abilities, or pick up a third, to have three powers, all at level one ability. GM approval is always required to pick up a

new power and players must always track the effective levels of any given powers they possess.

In addition, you heal much faster than the normal person, regenerating your Constitution bonus in hit points every hour, in addition to the normal rate of healing (see **Chapter 2: Fighting the Forces of Darkness**).

You have 1d8 hit points, plus your Constitution bonus.

You have no bonus to hit, but you gain +3 to saving throws against all supernatural attacks, magic, and spells.

Your melee attacks are considered supernatural for the purposes of overcoming the immunity that certain supernatural creatures have to normal weapons.

Other limitations may be imposed at the GM's discretion—shapeshifters, for example,

may either gain an additional form every 3 levels, may be restricted to the form they choose at character creation, or may be required to accrue additional experience points as a supernatural for every additional form they choose. This will depend upon the setting, character concept, and perceived game balance issues.

You may not choose a character class until you have accumulated 3,000 XP. At this point, you transition into a normal character class, beginning at 0 XP in that class and progressing normally. You may not choose Witch/Warlock, psychic, or Theosophist as a character class; these classes are exclusive to humans. You may, however, be any other character class available in your game.

### Alternate Monster Characters

An alternate version of creating supernatural characters can be found in **Chapter 5: Creatures of the Night**. In this method, the player simply applies the special and other supernatural abilities of one of the monsters in that chapter (including any weaknesses they might have) instead of simply customizing their supernatural race as here. This method still carries an XP penalty of 2,000 to 5,000 XP depending on the power of the monster chosen, and requires careful collaboration with the GM to maintain play balance. It can, however, grant a more "fully formed" monster character, and often one that will gain abilities as they increase in level.

## CHARACTER CLASS

Next, choose your character class. There are eight character classes available in *Night Shift*: The Chosen One, the Inventor, the Psychic, the Sage, the Survivor, the Theosophist, the Veteran, and the Witch/Warlock. Of these, only humans may choose the Witch/Warlock. Depending on your setting, some classes may be restricted for rarity, or may be altogether unavailable. Consult your Game



Master for information on which classes may be limited or not available before making your choice.

Your character class defines your character's relationship to the supernatural, and the skills they've developed to deal with a world where things that go bump in the night are real, and the boogeyman really is in the closet or under the bed. In brief, classes can be defined as follows:

**Chosen One:** I am the weird thing that other weird things fear.

**Inventor:** I make something weird.

**Psychic:** I sense and control something weird.

**Sage:** I study something weird.

**Survivor:** I saw something weird.

**Theosophist:** I see weird dead things.

**Veteran:** I hunt something weird.

**Witch:** I am something weird.

Study the character classes and decide which one works best with your character concept. Then, write down the abilities that class grants on your character sheet.

## CHOSEN ONE

In just about every urban fantasy series, there's one person that is chosen to stand up and do battle with the forces of darkness. This character has powers beyond the norm. They're a strong fighter, physically tough, and are custom-built to take on the creatures of the night. Sometimes it's one girl in a generation. Sometimes it's a jerk with a big chin and one-liners. Sometimes it's a youngster who has spent their whole life training for the day when the demons come out to play. It could be a young ex-con given a mysterious key by a stranger in a bar.

The possibilities are endless, but whether they embrace, accept, or deny their calling, one thing is certain. These are the Chosen Ones.



In general, there will only be one Chosen One in any given group or series. They have a great deal more power than most other character classes (save perhaps high-level spell casters), but they also advance far more slowly, so there is a trade off.

### Series with Multiple Chosen Ones

While a common trope in literature, films, and TV is to have a single "Chosen One" character, there may well be series that have multiple Chosen Ones. There's nothing in the rules to prevent this, and if the GM has an idea for a campaign that involves a Chosen Few, or even a Chosen Many, there's nothing wrong with this. Just be sure to check with the GM before creating more Chosen Ones than the series can handle.

Chosen Ones have the following game statistics:

**Hit Dice:** d8

**Weapons and Armor:** Any weapons, may not wear armor

**Saving Throws:** +1 to all saving throws; plus 1 per 3 levels gained (Levels 4, 7, 10, etc.)

**Increased Abilities:** Chosen Ones add +3 to Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution (Choose one). This can raise the associated ability score to a maximum of 20. If the +3 would raise it higher than 20, the extra points are lost.

**Brutal Warriors:** Chosen Ones gain an improved AC and improved combat damage according to their class chart, below. For damage dice, the Chosen One rolls the indicated number of dice in addition to any normal damage dice, keeping the highest value. When multiple bonus dice are dealt, this also increases the number of dice held to be equal to the listed number or the weapon code, whichever is higher. Thus, if the Chosen One's damage is 1d6 and they are attacking with a weapon that also has a 1d6 code, they roll 2d6, keeping the better result. If the Chosen One's damage is 2d6, and they attack with a 1d6 weapon, they roll 3d6, keeping the best 2.

**Melee Combat:** Chosen Ones add their strength bonus to melee combat attack and damage rolls.

**Stunning Blow:** An attack roll that exceeds the minimum score to hit by 5 or more has a 75% chance of stunning the opponent for 2d6 rounds. Stunned characters are immobile and unable to act for the first round of being stunned; thereafter, they suffer -4 to all actions (and -20% to class abilities) and can only move at half speed.

**Killing Blow:** An attack roll result of unmodified, "natural" 20, or any score that exceeds the minimum score to hit by 8 has a 25% chance of instantly killing a foe. Such blows, if they do not kill, still allow a roll for stun.

**Supernatural Attacks:** The melee attacks of a Chosen One are always considered to be supernatural for the purpose of overcoming a creature's immunity to normal weapons. Starting at fifth level, a Chosen One treats archaic ranged attacks (ranged attacks that aren't from guns) as supernatural for this purpose.

**Difficult to Surprise:** Starting at 3rd level, Chosen Ones are only surprised on a result of 1 on a 1d6. At 5th level, they are surprised on 1 on 1d8, and at 7th level, they are surprised on 1 on 1d10. If the creature is exceptionally silent, such as a Survivor moving silently, or a creature that is supernaturally quiet, double surprise chances.

**Improved Defense:** Chosen Ones with a Dexterity of 15 or greater reduce opponents' chances to hit them, imposing a penalty of -1 per point of Dexterity above 14.

**Ranged Combat:** Chosen Ones add their Dexterity bonus to ranged attack rolls.

**Survivor Skills:** At 2<sup>nd</sup> level, Chosen Ones gain the open locks, find traps, move silently, and hide skills of a Survivor of 2/3 their level (round down). They can also climb as a Survivor but their base chance to do so is only 50%, plus 5% per two levels (See Survivor for more information).

**Mental Resistance:** At 6th level, Chosen Ones have a 90% resistance to mind-affecting spells and powers, including (but not limited to) spells and abilities such as ESP, mind control, hypnosis, and charm.

**Regeneration:** Starting at 3rd level, Chosen Ones regenerate damage equal to 1/3 their Chosen One Levels, rounded down, per hour. Supernatural creatures who are Chosen Ones use either their Constitution-based regeneration or their Chosen One regeneration, whichever is greater.

**Table: Chosen One**

Level	HD	AC	No. of Attacks*	Bonus Dmg Dice	Attack Bonus	XP
1	1	9	1	1	+1	3,000
2	2	8	1	1	+1	6,000
3	3	8	1	1	+2	12,000
4	4	7	3/2	2	+2	20,000
5	5	6	3/2	2	+2	40,000
6	6	5	2	2	+3	80,000
7	7	5	2	3	+3	150,000
8	8	4	5/2	3	+3	275,000
9	9	3	5/2	3	+4	550,000
10	10	2	3	4	+4	800,000
11+	+1	2	3	4	+4	+250,000

\*Attacks/Rounds (3/2=3 per 2 rounds: 1, then 2. 5/2=2, then 3.)

## INVENTOR

The inventor is a genius who excels at creating items using super-science. These men and women can build just about anything to suit any situation or need, so long as they have the equipment available. The equipment they build is referred to in game as a *device*, and forms the core of their abilities.

In most modern urban fantasy games, inventors are able to build the devices they do because of some sort of mysterious or otherworldly force. Perhaps they live on a dimensional portal to Hell, whose leeching energies allow them insights and their technology to function in ways that normal



people could never achieve. Perhaps they are just that far ahead of normal tech. One of the core elements of the inventor, however, is that their devices function *only for them*. The genius and the curse of the inventor is that most can never market their ideas to the general public, so they turn their ingenuity either inward, seeking to use it for evil purposes, or outward, battling those who would do harm to others.

To become an Inventor, the character must possess an Intelligence score of 13 or better. Inventors have the following class abilities:

**Hit Dice:** d6

**Weapons and Armor:** Inventors can use any form of weapon or armor.

**Saving Throws:** Inventors gain +3 to Intelligence and Wisdom saving throws.

**Devices:** Devices are the inventor's stock in trade. They are built in game using *science points*, which the inventor gains as they rise in levels. Inventors begin with 2 plus their Intelligence bonus in science points. Thereafter, at each level, the inventor gains 1d6 additional science points (or a flat 3 points, if the players and GM agree). These points may be spent immediately or banked towards larger devices in the future.

To build a device, the inventor chooses a spell effect as a starting point. They then work with the GM to conceptualize and modify the spell's effects to suit the device they wish to create. Imagine, for example, that an inventor wishes to create a scanner that detects body heat. There is no spell that precisely matches this ability, but something like *detect magic* is certainly close in what it does—it detects a radiant energy that we know as magic. So the inventor tells the GM she wishes to create an infrared scanner based off of the *detect magic* spell, except that it will detect heat signatures when pointed in a certain direction.

The cost of a device is its effective spell level, based on the maximum spell level of an equivalent Witch/Warlock. Thus, the infrared scanner based on *detect magic* costs 1 science point to create, since it doesn't seek to enhance the effects of the spell upon which it's based—it just detects a different type of energy.

Alternately, consider the inventor who wishes to create a directed energy weapon that fires homing plasma bolts based off of *magic missile*. This would be a 1-point device, but he wants a weapon that fires 3 missiles per use, a more powerful version. Since three missiles are granted at 8th caster level, and the maximum spell level for an 8th level Warlock is 4th, it is assumed this version of *magic missile* is a 4th-level spell. The device would cost 4 science points to create.

**Limits on Use:** Generally speaking, devices created at base level using level 1 or 2 spell effects can be used at will with no limits. Devices created from levels 3 and above may be used but once per day, per extra science point spent. Spending additional science points allows additional uses; 1 use per point spent, to a maximum of 5 points, after which it may be used with impunity. Thus, the blaster above using a 4th-level *magic missile* slot can be used once per day and then needs to recharge. If the inventor spends 5 science points, it can be used twice, 6 points 3 times, etc. If the inventor spends a total of 9 science points (4 for the blaster plus an additional 5) he can use it as often as he likes, with no restrictions and no recharge necessary.

The GM is always within their rights to further limit gadgets based on game balance—having a device that can continually heal lost hit points with no restrictions, for example, could unbalance the game. It is within the GM's purview to rule that even though *cure light wounds* is a first-level spell, it can only be used once per day, and there is no cap for unlimited use.

Likewise, no matter what the spell effect might be, there should always be some chance for failure. In the case of damaging devices, there should *always* be an attack roll. Automatic-hit effects like *magic missile* may gain a +5 to attack, but the attack roll should still be in place. For effects like *lightning bolt*, which affect everything in a line or area, the saving throw may replace the attack roll.

This system leaves a lot of room to customize effects—does the inventor raise a device's effective level or daily usage? If an inventor increases the daily usage to unlimited, but then increases the power level, it reverts to limited per-day usage, requiring the difference then be spent in science points to again reach the max-level-plus-5 required for unlimited use.

Finally, an inventor should *never* call their device by its spell name. If they do, the device *automatically fails to work*. They don't have a magic missile device, but a homing blaster pistol.

**Instant Gadgets:** In addition to their suite of permanent devices, the inventor has a pool of points they can use to produce "instant gadgets." These are devices that they can put together in seconds from bits and pieces of equipment they carry with them.

Instant gadgets may be produced only using level 1 or 2 effects, and last for one single scene of play, at which point they break down. The GM will let you know when a scene ends.

The inventor has a pool of Ingenuity Points they can use to produce Instant Gadgets equal to half their level (minimum 1, round down). Producing an instant gadget requires one full round to assemble the device and a Science! check (see below), modified downward by 10% for a level 1 instant gadget or 20% for a level 2 instant gadget.

A failed roll means the points are lost and the gadget fails to function. This pool

of points refreshes each new Episode of play. The GM will let you know when you have completed an Episode.

**Science!** is the primary ability of the Inventor. They are experts in everything from biology to chemistry to experimental physics and more. Whenever a science-based question arises in game, the Inventor may attempt a Science! check to come up with a solution, based on scientific principles or a gadget they can produce. The base chance for such a check is 50% at first level, and the percentage increases by 5% per level thereafter.

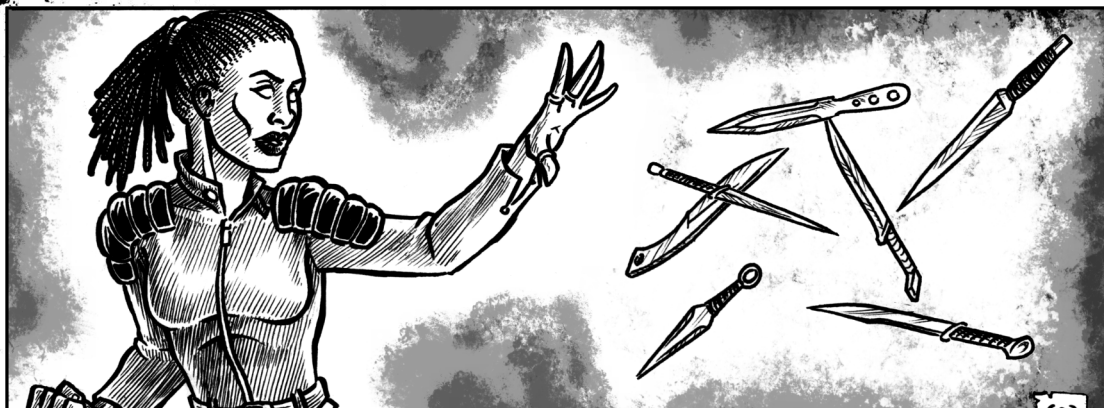
Science! is a very open-ended ability. It can be used to jury-rig repairs on a device, hack a computer or electronic security system, or come up with a brilliant idea based on careful analysis of a situation. In addition to the GM calling for Science! checks, the Inventor should feel free to ask the GM at any given time if they can use Science! to come up with an idea or attempt to solve a conundrum.

As with any class ability, the GM may modify the chance of success by 5% per level of the challenge up or down (see **Chapter 2** for more on how class ability checks function).

**Table: Inventor**

Level	Hit Dice	Attack Bonus	Ingenuity Points	XP
1	1	+1	1	2,500
2	2	+1	1	5,000
3	3	+2	1	10,000
4	4	+2	2	20,000
5	5	+2	2	40,000
6	6	+3	3	80,000
7	7	+3	3	150,000
8	8	+3	4	300,000
9	9	+4	4	600,000
10	10	+4	5	850,000
11+	+1	+4	5	+250,000





## PSYCHIC

Psychics are men and women who have strange and mysterious abilities that come from the power of their own minds. These are ESPers, clairvoyants, psychokinetics, telepaths, biokinetics (those who can heal with mental energy, who can control their environment and the biorhythms of others, who can push their bodies to seemingly unnatural levels), and more.

Psychics are poorly understood by science and the mystic arts, and are often feared and mistrusted by just about everyone (including other psychics) as a result. Their origins are as clouded in mystery as their abilities. Some say they were created by post-war programs like MKULTRA and its Soviet "psychotronics" counterpart under the NKVD. Others point out that psychic phenomena were known and documented centuries earlier, and represent an untapped stage of evolution in mankind. Wherever they come from, however, they represent the untapped potential of the human mind.

To become a psychic, a character must possess both Wisdom and Charisma scores of 13 or better. Psychics have the following class abilities:

**Hit Dice:** d6

**Weapons and Armor:** Small, light weapons such as knives, clubs, slings, bows, short swords, hand axes and the like, armor up to (and including) Kevlar vests

**Saving Throws:** Choose either Wisdom or Charisma. You gain +3 to all saves with that particular ability.

**Psychic Powers:** At first level, and at every multiple of 3 thereafter (3, 6, 9, 12, etc.), a psychic chooses a new psychic power. Each new power they gain begins at first level, and improves by 1 level per level gained by the psychic. Thus, at sixth level, a psychic will have one power at 6th level proficiency, one power at 3rd level proficiency, and one power at 1st level proficiency.

To use this power, they must (unless otherwise noted in the individual power) make a psychic power check at the level of the power. Thus, the 6th level psychic above, would activate their 1st level power as though they were a first level character.

To make this check, throw percentile dice. A power has a base 15% chance to activate at first level, and improves by +5% per level thereafter. This check is modified by their Wisdom and Charisma scores—their total Wisdom and Charisma bonuses, added together and multiplied by 5, adds to their base chance to activate psychic power.

*For example:* A psychic has a 15% chance to activate a first-level power. If the psychic has a Wisdom bonus of +1 and a Charisma bonus of +3, this adds 20% ( $3+1=4 \times 5=20$ ) to their activation, for a total of 35% chance to activate. At third level, the base chance increases to 25%

(+5% per level for levels 2 and 3 each) so the psychic would have a 45% chance to activate. Attacking then requires a standard attack roll, using the Psychic's Wisdom bonus.

Abilities work as described under each individual power, and some advanced uses of powers impose a penalty to activation and/or a bonus to the target's saving throw.

**Psychic feedback:** Psychic powers are dangerous and unreliable. If a psychic rolls 90 or greater on percentile dice, regardless of whether the power succeeds or fails, they suffer 1 die of damage from psychic feedback and mental overload, are stunned for one round (unable to take actions), and likely exhibit bleeding from the nose, ears, or eyes. They also lose access to the power until they get a full night's sleep, unless they succeed at a Wisdom or Charisma saving throw. Some advanced power usage may increase the chance for psychic feedback (and even the damage and consequences suffered from it)

**Supernatural Attacks:** All damage dealt by psychic powers is considered supernatural in nature for purposes of overcoming damage resistance.

**Danger Sense:** Psychics have a basic "sixth sense" that warns them of danger in the surrounding world. They can only be surprised on a roll of 1 on 1d8.

**Supernatural Power:** Psychics choose one power from the Witch/Warlock Arcane Power list, which they use exactly as a Witch/Warlock of their individual level.

### Psychic Powers

**Bio-Feedback:** The psychic can heal damage, both damage that they have suffered and that inflicted upon others. Healing requires an activation roll, and the amount of damage healed is equal to 1d8 per three levels of the power.

This power can also be used to inflict psychic harm on others, requiring a psychic activation roll, followed by an attack roll, using the psychic's Wisdom bonus instead of

their Strength or Dexterity bonus, and a Hit Bonus as though the psychic were a Veteran. See **Chapter 2** for more information on Hit Bonus. Damage is a base 1d6 plus Wisdom bonus at first level. At fifth level, roll 2d6, keeping the better of the two. At tenth level, roll 3d6, keeping the best of the 3, and at 15th level, roll 4d6, keeping the best of the 4. At 20th level, the power does a flat 6 damage (plus Wisdom bonus).

**Body Control:** Body control allows the psychic to control their basic bodily functions, increasing their abilities and capabilities as they need. With this ability, they can increase their speed by double. They can increase any ability score by 1d6 per 4 levels of the power. They can grant themselves bonus temporary hit points at the same rate as ability score increases. Other effects may be possible, at the GM's discretion, and using these as a guideline.

The power lasts for 1 minute per level of the power, and each additional boost requires a new activation roll at a cumulative -10% penalty to the power. No individual ability may be boosted more than once at a time. Thus, the psychic cannot boost strength twice, but they can boost strength, dexterity, and constitution, though the second boost would reduce the power activation chance by 10% and the third by 20%.

**Domination:** Domination is, quite simply, mind control. Like psychometry, the easiest way to adjudicate this is to use existing spells as an example. Any spell that controls or directly affects the actions of another can be thus mimicked, from *suggestion* and *command* to *charm person* to *hold person* to *confusion*, *feblemind*, or, naturally, *domination*. The mechanics are the same as with telemagery (see below), with first level spells using the base level of power, and each level of effect above first reducing the power by 5%. Any use of this power allows for saving throws just as the spell being mimicked; if the spell being mimicked doesn't allow a saving throw, use of this power to mimic that spell does allow

for a Charisma save. The specific spells that can be mimicked are left to the discretion of the GM.

**ESP:** ESP, or *extrasensory perception*, is the ability to sense things that cannot be sensed with the normal five senses. This includes psychic disciplines such as clairvoyance, clairaudience, sixth sense, etc. In general, a separate roll is required to activate this power for each "virtual sense" the character wishes to enact. For example, to see into another room requires a check for clairvoyance; hearing what's going on in the room requires a separate check for clairaudience. Each additional sense maintained at the same time results in a cumulative -10% to the power check. Thus, if activating both sight and sound, as above, the roll to activate clairvoyance would be at normal ability, and the roll to activate clairaudience would be at -10%.

The range of this power is 100 feet at first level proficiency and doubles with each additional level; thus, 200 feet at second level, 400 feet at third level, 800 at fourth, and so on. Range can be extended, but results in a -10% to the power per double the range increment, cumulative. Thus, a first level character who wishes to increase their range to 800 feet is increasing the power by 3 doubling increments (200, 400, and 800), or -30% to the activation roll.

The ability lasts for 1 minute per level of the power.

ESP also carries a sixth, or danger, sense with it. Characters who possess ESP are normally surprised only on a roll of 1 on 1d10, and if there is a remote chance of active detection of danger, the GM should secretly roll a power check using the character's base power before any ability checks are made (see **Chapter 2** for more information on ability checks and class abilities):

**Empathy:** Empathy is similar to telepathy, but revolves around emotion rather than thoughts. Empaths can read the

emotional state of others, which can lead them to know when someone is lying, when they are aggressive, etc. The range is the same as the range for telepathy (see below). In general, empathy is used against a single target; otherwise the onslaught of emotions gets to be overwhelming for the reader.

With this power, two other abilities are possible. First, the empath can set up an empathic bond with a number of willing recipients equal to three times their Wisdom bonus. While this empathic bond is active (which is permanent unless the empath decides to end it), all members will be constantly aware of the emotions of the others, as well as having a vague awareness of where they are (base direction and relative distance), no matter how far apart they are. Second, the empath can attempt to control the emotions of others, implanting any emotional state they desire. Victims are entitled to a Wisdom saving throw to resist.

**Psychokinesis:** Psychokinesis (PK) refers to the control over a specific element or type of energy. There are a number of different types of psychokinesis, with the most common being:

- *Telekinesis* (earth, or the physical world);
- *Pyrokinesis* (fire);
- *Electrokinesis* (electricity);
- *Cryokinesis* (cold).

The effects of this ability are standardized: when this ability is selected, choose a type of PK (telekinesis, pyrokinesis, etc.) When you use the ability to attack, damage is of the type chosen (fire for pyrokinesis, bludgeoning or by weapon for Telekinesis, etc.), as is the way in which manipulation works and what's possible.

**Damage:** Damage from attacks is standard: 1d6 just as though it were a weapon, plus the Wisdom bonus of the psychic. At 5th level, roll 2d6, keeping the better of the two. At 10th level, roll 3d6, keeping the best of the three, and at 15th,

roll 4d6, keeping the best of the four. At 20th level, attacks simply deal 6 points of damage, plus Wisdom bonus.

*Manipulation of Objects and Elements:*

The size or mass of an element that can be manipulated and the range of the power is dependent upon the Wisdom of the psychic. For example:

- *Telekinetics* can manipulate objects as though their Wisdom was their Strength score.
- *Pyrokinetics* can manipulate fires to a maximum of 1 square foot per point of Wisdom, growing an existing fire by that much total, at the rate of 1 foot per round, or reducing the size of a fire by that much per round (effectively extinguishing it if the size reaches zero feet). They can create fire from nothing, but the first round the fire is simply the size of a match or candle flame. They can also use fire and heat to deal damage with a range equal to 5 feet per point of Wisdom.
- *Electrokinetics* can cast lightning or manipulate electrical devices within a range of 5 feet per point of Wisdom
- *Cryokinetics* have the ability to lower temperature to a maximum of two degrees below freezing per point of Wisdom, and can do so by 5 degrees per round, or can use extreme cold to deal damage to foes, as standard, with a range equal to 5 feet per point of Wisdom.
- Other forms of psychokinesis may be available, as may additional effects for those listed above, with their specifics and effects at the discretion of the GM and using these guidelines as examples.

Different types of psychokinesis can be selected as different powers.

**Supernatural Attacks:** This psychic power does not require an activation roll to use. It is always active and always works. The psychic's melee and ranged attacks

with weapons are supernatural in nature, for the purposes of affecting creatures that are immune to non-supernatural attacks.

**Telemagery:** Telemagery is the ability to create illusions with the power of the mind, tricking others into seeing what you want them to see. The easiest way to adjudicate this power is to use descriptions of appropriate or similar spell effects as examples, reducing the base power level by 5% per level of the spell being used above first.

For example, *invisibility*, a second-level spell effect, reduces the power by 5%. Just about any psychic illusion can be created, from a glamour that changes one's appearance to entire illusory landscapes, mimicking the exact effects of spells, with the caster level equal to the power level. Anything the psychic invokes with this ability is entirely *illusory* in nature. Thus, if the psychic, for example, chooses to summon an animal, that animal is simply an illusion, and any time it interacts with any physical object or attacks another, onlookers can make a saving throw (Intelligence, if not otherwise noted in the spell) to see through the illusion, and thus be able to completely disregard it. Illusions can neither be seen nor recorded by cameras or artificial, non-living sources.

**Telepathy:** Telepathy encompasses the disciplines of mind-reading, mind-probing, and the ability of telepathic communication with others. In general, it can be used to *read thoughts*, as per the spell. It can also be used for telepathic communication with others. The maximum range is 100 feet at first level, doubling at each level thereafter as with the range for ESP, and the psychic can communicate with a number of willing subjects equal to three times their Wisdom bonus at once. Projecting thoughts into an unwilling mind nets the recipient a saving throw, and the telepath may not control another's mind; that is the province of *domination*.

**Temporal Senses:** Temporal senses allow a psychic to sense the past, present, and future. It provides the same danger/sixth



sense as ESP, and allows the psychic to see into the distant past as well as the immediate and distant future, read the history of objects, and more. When looking backwards, the psychic can only see the immediate area (their current line of sight) and can go back up to a number of years equal to their Wisdom modifier. This number increases by five every level of the power.

Psychometry, or Object Reading, is also possible with this power. The range of time in the past is the same as with post-

cognition, above, but instead of the immediate line of sight area, the psychic gets impressions of the object being read—its history, past users, where it has been, etc.

Looking forward, or precognition, is trickier, as nothing is certain in the future. Any future the psychic sees could change instantly with a single person anywhere in the world making the wrong choice at any point along the timeline. Thus, while the range of time is the same as postcognition, the further one looks, the less likely their vision is to be accurate.

Seeing just a round or two in the future is possible, however, and with a successful check (requiring one melee round to concentrate), the psychic can gain an extra Fate Point (see **Chapter 2**) that they can spend at any point within the next 10 minutes, for any reason (even Providence Smiles, if they have already done so). They can only possess one such point at a time, and they can only use this ability once per

day. If Fate Points are not in play for the game, this power still grants one and all of its associated uses.

In all cases with this power, the GM is the final arbiter of exactly what is seen, and visions both past and future can be hazy and somewhat indistinct. The GM is well within their rights to limit the information granted with this power to prevent it from being a game breaking ability.

### Table: Psychic

Level	Hit Dice	Attack Bonus	Experience
1	1	+1	1,500
2	2	+1	3,000
3	3	+1	6,000
4	4	+2	12,000
5	5	+2	25,000
6	6	+2	50,000
7	7	+2	125,000
8	8	+3	250,000
9	9	+3	500,000
10	10	+3	950,000
11+	+1	+3	+250,000

### Sage

The Sage is the mystical expert, the possessor or curator of a vast occult library who always has the knowledge to back up the group's efforts, and to train them in their pursuits. They may be a member of a secret society that is dedicated to aiding against the forces of darkness. They may simply be an occult bookstore owner who has seen too much and decided to turn their knowledge to helping the forces of light. They could be part of a singular, destined pair who are fated to come together, reincarnated life after life, to battle the minions of evil.

Of course, not all Sages are of goodly bent. There are dark forces in the world, and some turn their occult knowledge to chaotic and evil pursuits, seeking to raise

dead gods, deal with demons, and sit at the right hand of a resurgent Old One.

The three things all Sages have in common is that they are highly knowledgeable about the occult, they have the ability to influence others, and they have magical and practical abilities to back up their knowledge. They are in many ways a Jack (or Jill)-of-all-trades and they can be invaluable to any group of supernatural hunters.

Sages have the following class abilities:

**Hit Dice:** d6

**Weapons and Armor:** All weapons, Armor up to and including Kevlar vests

**Saving Throws:** +3 to saves against spells and magical effects. Saves improve by +1 every 4 levels.

**Survivor Skills:** A Sage has the ability to Hide in Shadows, Move Silently, Open Locks, Bypass Traps, and perform Sleight of Hand as a Survivor at half their level, rounded down.

**Mesmerize Others:** The Sage may attempt to mesmerize others with the sound of their voice. So long as they continue talking and take no other actions, the victim may become unable to do anything but sit and listen, enraptured. This ability may be used once per day, per level of the Sage, and the base chance to mesmerize is 10% per level of the Sage. All creatures that can hear the Sage whom the Sage wishes to be affected by the ability, will be affected. Creatures with at least 5 hit dice, however, reduce the chance of success by 10% plus 5% per hit die above 5. Thus, a 10 HD monster reduces the chance to mesmerize by 35% (10% at 5 HD, plus 5% each for HD 6, 7, 8, 9, 10). Thus, if a group of listeners have different hit dice, some may be mesmerized, while others may not. The Sage rolls only once and each listener adjusts the total based on their individual hit dice (or character levels).

**Suggestion:** While mesmerizing a creature, the Sage can attempt to implant

a suggestion into the creature's mind. The creature is entitled to a Wisdom saving throw against spells to resist the suggestion. If it succeeds, it is no longer mesmerized and is aware of what has happened to it. For some reason that none have yet discerned, Chosen Ones suffer -5 to save against a mesmerizing suggestion.

**Lore:** The Sage is a master of arcane and occult knowledge, and have access to occult libraries, tomes, and a wealth of knowledge on magic, legends, mythology, forbidden knowledge, etc. At first level, the Sage has a 10% chance of knowing some fact about any given situation, creature, legend, myth, location, item, etc. This chance is modified by the Sage's intelligence score, so that a Sage with a 15 Intelligence has a base 25% Lore. The percentage further increases by 10% per level of the Sage beyond first. In some cases, at the GM's discretion, the Sage may need to consult their books to find the necessary information. This could take substantial time, depending on how rare the knowledge is. In addition, the rarity of knowledge could reduce the chances of success by anywhere from 10 to 100%. Again, this is left to the discretion of the GM, but GMs are warned not to make finding knowledge so onerous as to make this core ability of the Sage worthless. The Sage *should* be the source of important knowledge that helps to move the story forward.

**Languages:** The Sage speaks, reads, and writes one language for each point of intelligence they possess. Beginning at 3rd level, the Sage gains the Read Languages ability of a Survivor, which is only required after the Sage has expended all of their available language slots.

**Spells:** The Sage is a dabbler in arcane spellcasting. Their class table outlines the number of spells at each level that they may prepare each day for use. As Sages have access to occult libraries and vast stores of arcane knowledge, they are not restricted in the spells they know and can

prepare any spell of a level they are able to cast. This gives them an advantage over Witches and Warlocks, who are restricted to the spells in their personal grimoire or book of shadows.

To cast a spell, the Sage's player throws percentile dice. The base chance to cast a spell is 50%, plus 5% per level of the Sage. Thus, a first-level Sage has a base 55% chance to cast a spell. This percentage is penalized by 10% per level of the spell (thus, a second level spell imposes a penalty of -20%). Casters are limited in the level of spell they can cast as indicated on their spells per day table.

If the player beats the base percentage chance to cast a spell by 10% or more, the spell goes off immediately. If they succeed at less than a 10% margin, the spell effect is delayed by one round. If a Sage's base chance to cast a spell is over 100%, there is no roll needed to cast; the spell always works at immediate effect.

For example, a first level character has a 45% chance of success in casting a first level spell. If they achieve a result of 35 or less on the d% check, the spell goes off immediately; if the result is 36-45%, the spell's effect is delayed by one round. At tenth level, the Sage would have a 90% chance to cast a first level spell, with an 80%



chance of immediate effect. By twelfth level, the Sage can cast first level spells without the need for a check, and they will always take effect immediately.

See **Chapter 3** for rules on spellcasting.

**Table: Sage**

Level	Hit Dice	Attack Bonus	XP	Spells			
				1	2	3	4
1	1	+1	1,000	-			
2	2	+1	5,000	1			
3	3	+1	10,000	2			
4	4	+2	15,000	2	1		
5	5	+2	25,000	2	2		
6	6	+2	50,000	2	2	1	
7	7	+2	125,000	3	2	1	
8	8	+3	250,000	3	3	1	
9	9	+3	500,000	3	3	3	1
10	10	+3	950,000	3	3	3	2
11+	+1	+3	+250,000	4	3	3	2

## Survivor

Survivors are, for the most part, normal people who have been thrust into a life they never asked for, and a world where the most horrific monsters from their darkest dreams and stories of childhood boogeymen are, in fact, real, out there, and hunting. Even worse, it seems like once you're aware those things are real...*they come for you*. There's no escape from the shadow world—once you look into it, it looks back into you, and you're now a part of it. If the Veteran goes looking for trouble and takes the fight to the forces of darkness, the Survivor finds that trouble comes for them, when mostly they just want to live a normal life.

Such characters have to find a way to survive, and for the most part, they do so by mastering the arts of becoming *unseen*. They learn to be stealthy, to spot tricks and traps before they are sprung, to perform acts of sleight of hand, and to strike from the shadows. They learn how to take advantage of their own mundane nature to do battle with the forces of darkness...mostly so they can get behind a Veteran or Chosen One.

Survivors have the following class abilities:

**Hit Dice:** d4

**Weapons and Armor:** Knives, daggers, small clubs, and other light weapons, and armor up to (and including) Kevlar vests.

**Saving Throws:** +3 vs. death attacks and area effects (explosions and the like); All saves improve by +1/5 levels. With any saving throw that would normally allow for half damage on a success, the Survivor takes no damage on a success.

**Improved Defense:** Survivors with a Dexterity of 15 or greater reduce opponents' chances to hit them, imposing a penalty of -1 per point of Dexterity above 14.

**Ranged Combat:** Survivors add their Dexterity bonus to ranged attacks in combat.

**Stealth Skills:** Survivors have learned to be stealthy and get by without being seen. This allows them to battle in the face of the forces of darkness. The skills they possess are: Open Locks, Bypass Traps, Sleight of Hand, Move Silently, Hide in Shadows. Base chance of success for each of these skills is listed below. Skills improve by 10% per level of experience. A failed attempt means the task cannot be completed; no repeat attempt is allowed.

- *Open Locks:* 15%
- *Bypass Traps:* 10%
- *Sleight of Hand:* 20%
- *Move Silently:* 20%
- *Hide in Shadows:* 10%

**Failed Checks:** A failed check to hide, move silently, or perform a feat of sleight of hand does not automatically mean detection. Observers with between 0 and 3 hit dice have a 1 in 6 chance of detecting the failed stealth. If the observer has more than 3 hit dice, for each level or hit die of the potential observer, there is a 5% chance they will detect the Survivor on a failed check; otherwise, the attempt succeeds regardless of a failed roll.

**Climbing:** Survivors are adept at clambering over obstacles to escape pursuit. At first level, they have a 70% chance to climb an object such as a wall, fence, or other vertical surface, and can do so at their full speed, even going up objects otherwise too sheer for most people to climb. For every 2 levels of experience, this chance increases by 5%, so that by 10th level, the Survivor has a 95% chance to climb any surface.

**Danger Sense:** Survivors have a keen ability to sense danger, whether by hearing the slightest sounds, spotting something out of place, or just sensing something is wrong. The base chance to sense danger is 1-2 on 1d6 at first level. This chance increases to 1-3 at 3rd level, 1-4 at 7th level, and 1-5



at 10th level. A successful Danger Sense check always gives warning that something bad is about to happen, with any other appropriate information ("you hear whispering around the next corner," for example); this also means the Survivor can make preparations against the danger, and cannot be surprised.

**Perception:** In addition, Survivors are extremely perceptive, able to notice things that others cannot, hear noises in the dark, and generally take advantage of keen senses. At first level, the Survivor has a 40% chance to make use of their sensory abilities, which can function automatically (the GM instructs a roll) or at will (the character actively attempts to search an area, listen at a door, etc.). This ability increases by 5% per level.

**Sneak Attack:** A Survivor attacking from stealth or from behind an enemy gains +4 to attack, and the attack deals double damage. Such attacks are also considered to be supernatural for the purposes of overcoming damage immunity to mundane attacks. For every four levels the Survivor attains (including first), the damage multiplier increases by one; from levels 4-7 they deal 3x damage, from 8-11 they deal 4x damage, etc. A Survivor can sneak attack if the opponent is unaware of their presence, or if they are battling the same enemy as another ally and can as such maneuver into a vulnerable spot. Sneak attacks can be ranged, but only if the Survivor is within 30 feet of their target.

**Read Languages:** By 3rd level, a Survivor has picked up enough knowledge to have an 80% chance to read any language they encounter.

**Ritual Magic:** By 10th level, the Survivor may cast spells by performing rituals. Such a spell requires 10 minutes per spell level to perform, and requires detailed instructions from a grimoire or book of shadows. If the spell in question is above 5th level, there is a 20% cumulative chance per level above 5th that it



will backfire (See **Chapter 3** for information on spell backfires). Otherwise there is a flat 50% chance of success, modified downward by 5% per spell level.

**Table: Survivor**

Level	Hit Dice	Attack Bonus	XP
1	1	+1	1,200
2	2	+1	2,500
3	3	+1	5,000
4	4	+2	10,000
5	5	+2	20,000
6	6	+2	40,000
7	7	+2	80,000
8	8	+3	150,000
9	9	+3	300,000
10	10	+3	500,000
11+	+1	+3	+200,000

## Theosophist

There are people in the world with an unique connection to the supernatural, unlike that shared by Witches, Sages or psychics. These are women and men with a direct connection to the world beyond, to the life we get after we shed the mortal coil. They are the men and women who can see, channel, summon, and control the spirits of the dead. These people, who in the past have been known as spiritualists and necromancers, prefer to be called Theosophists.

While they may refer to themselves as necromancers in private, Theosophists are aware of the negative connotation of the term, and rarely use it in polite company, as they are fully aware that it will mark them as some sort of evil sorcerer, when in truth they are anything but. Most Theosophists—the term comes from an esoteric religious movement established by the Russian spiritualist Helena Blavatsky—would give up their abilities if they could. After all, constantly being plagued by visions of the dead is not conducive to a healthy or sane lifestyle.



There are those, however, who choose to embrace their abilities. Some use their power to fleece the public as “psychic mediums,” while others use it to bring peace to the restless dead, and still others as champions against the forces of darkness.

Theosophists have the following class abilities:

**Hit Dice:** d6

**Weapons and Armor:** Light weapons and armor only

**Saving Throws:** +3 to all Wisdom-based saves; Saves improve by +1 per 4 levels.

**See Dead People:** Theosophists can always sense and see the spirits of the dead who linger in the space between worlds. If there is a ghost present, the Theosophist will know it's there and can see it. In addition, the ghost can always speak to the Theosophist, and the Theosophist cannot “shut off” this communicative ability. This means that they, the rare people with this

ability, are constantly harassed by local spirits for one reason or another.

**Turn Undead:** The Theosophist, due to their powerful connection with the spirits of the dead, can have a measurable effect on corporeal undead as well. The Theosophist may, as an action, focus their energy and will, issuing a censure that drives away or even destroys the corporeal undead. The base percentage chance to do so is 20% for an undead of less than one hit die, such as an animated skeleton, and increases by 10% per level of the Theosophist. This chance is reduced by 10% per hit die the undead has—a 1 HD creature, thus, reduces the base chance by 10%, while an 8 HD vampire reduces the base chance to turn by 80%. In addition, undead that are intelligent may attempt a saving throw to resist the turn attempt.

If the Theosophist succeeds in their check, and the creatures fail any allowed saves, the creatures flee as far from the Theosophist as possible for 1d4 minutes. If a creature cannot flee, it cowers in a corner as far away as it can. If such creatures are attacked, the turning is broken and the creatures may act as normal. If the Theosophist is more than 4 levels higher than the targeted creature's hit dice, the creature must succeed at a saving throw or be destroyed and turned to dust. This save is penalized by the Theosophist's levels.

Only one group of undead may be targeted at a time, with the lowest hit dice gaining priority—thus, if a Theosophist faces a group of skeletons, zombies, and wights, the skeletons are targeted first, followed by the zombies (requiring a second turn attempt), then the wights (requiring a third turn attempt). Up to 2d6 undead can be targeted per turning attempt.

**Summon the Dead:** Theosophists can attempt to summon spirits of the dead to their location. The base percentage chance to do this is 15% at first level, plus 10% per level thereafter. The Theosophist adds +5% per point of Wisdom bonus to this chance.

In order to be summoned, a spirit must not have moved on to an afterlife—if they are in Heaven, Hell, or another world where they have been taken to eternal reward or punishment, they cannot be summoned. Only those spirits that are restless and still wander the world or are trapped between worlds may be thus summoned.

**Channel the Dead:** Theosophists may channel dead spirits, allowing the spirit to possess their body temporarily, to speak through them. While possessed in this manner, the Theosophist is only vaguely aware of what the spirit does with their body. Worse, the spirit has access to both its own knowledge and that of the Theosophist, allowing unscrupulous spirits to try and masquerade as the Theosophist.

To expel a spirit that is unwilling to leave when requested, the Theosophist must force it out. The base chance to do so is 5% plus the Theosophist's Charisma score. This chance increases by 5% per level of experience. An unwilling spirit will fight back; the GM should assign a power level of the spirit from 1-10. The Theosophist's percentage chance to expel the spirit is reduced by five times the spirit's power level. If this reduces the Theosophist's chances to 0% or less, they cannot force the spirit out, though a character with access to spells such as *Dismissal* can force the spirit out through an exorcism. There may also be other, ritualistic, options to exorcise a spirit, but this is left to the discretion of the GM.

This ability may also be used to perform exorcisms, but when exorcising another possessed person, each successful use of Channel the Dead deals 1 die of damage to the spirit, while each failed use requires the Theosophist to make a Charisma save or suffer 1d6 damage from the spirit's psychological assault. When the spirit is reduced to 50% or less of its maximum hit points, it must succeed at a saving throw or be expelled. This saving throw is at a -1 penalty for each prior save against being

expelled that it has made. Spirits reduced to 0 hit points in this manner are destroyed; as such, many will choose to flee (voluntarily failing a save) before this occurs.

**Spell-Like Abilities:** The Theosophist gains spell-like abilities related to their command of spirits and death. These are summarized in the character advancement table and detailed below. Spell-like abilities do not require material components, though they may, depending on the nature of the ability, require somatic and verbal components (pointing, commanding, censuring, etc.) at the discretion of the GM.

**Command the Dead:** Theosophists have the power as they grow in experience to command the spirits of the dead, and even, at more powerful levels, corporeal undead such as zombies and ghouls. There are stories of very powerful spiritualists who could command intelligent undead like vampires, but this requires astounding power. At first level, the Theosophist may use *Command* (against spirits only) and *Protection from Undead* as spell-like abilities, once per day each, plus one per day per three levels gained. At level three, the Theosophist may use *Death Knell* and *Suggestion* (against

spirits only) once per day, plus one per day per three levels gained. At level eight, the Theosophist may *Charm Spirit* once per day (as Charm Monster, but only against incorporeal undead), plus once per day per three levels gained. At 10<sup>th</sup> level, these abilities work on corporeal undead.

**Life Drain:** At level 7, the Theosophist gains the ability to use *Vampiric Touch* as a spell-like ability, once per day. They may use this ability an additional time per day for each three levels after 7. At level 10, they may use this ability at a range of up to 50ft, but doing so takes up two daily uses of the ability.

**Slay the Unliving:** The Theosophist, at level 9, gains the ability to use *Undeath to Death* as a spell-like ability. They may do this once per day, plus once per day for every three levels beyond 9.

**Call the Reaper:** This destructive ability is gained at level 10. The Theosophist can cast *Finger of Death* as a spell-like ability, once per day. At level 15, they may do this twice per day, and at level 20, they may use this ability three times per day.

**Taste the Grave:** Theosophists have an unique control over the connection of a person's spirit to their body. Starting at

**Table: The Theosophist**

Level	Hit Dice	Spell-Like Abilities	Attack Bonus	XP
1	1	Command, Protection from Undead (1/day each)	+0	1,500
2	2		+0	3,000
3	3	Death Knell, Suggestion (1/day each)	+0	6,000
4	4	Command, Protection from Undead (2/day each)	+0	12,000
5	5		+1	25,000
6	6	Death Knell, Suggestion (2/day each)	+1	50,000
7	7	Vampiric Touch (1/day), Command, Protection from Undead (3/day each)	+1	125,000
8	8	Charm Spirit (1/day)	+1	250,000
9	9	Death Knell, Suggestion (3/day each), Undeath to Death (1/day)	+1	500,000
10	10	Vampiric Touch (2/day; 50ft range for 2 uses), Command, Protection from Undead (4/day each), Finger of Death (1/day)	+2	950,000
11+	+1	Charm Spirit (2/day)	+2	+250,000

level five, the Theosophist may, as an action, force another to succeed at a Charisma saving throw (or, in the case of monsters, simply a saving throw). If they fail, the victim experiences an out of body moment. Their body collapses to the ground as their spirit floats above. They may take no actions for one round and are considered completely incapacitated for that time.

In addition, the Theosophist may force a spirit to depart from a dying body, or they may attempt to hold a spirit in place that is trying to flee. In the former case, the victim, who must be at or below 0 hit points, simply dies with no saving throw. In the latter, the victim, who is at or below 0 hit points or suffering from poison or another debilitating condition that normally results in death, gains a Constitution save to remain alive for each round that the Theosophist maintains concentration. They add the Theosophist's Wisdom bonus to this saving throw in addition to their own Constitution bonus.

## VETERAN

The Veteran is a character with formal training, whether it's monster hunting, military, survivalism, or any other means of actual drilled combat. Such characters could be police, federal agents, military, mercenaries or come from a wide range of backgrounds. What marks them is that they know how to handle themselves in a fight, and that these are the ones who go looking for it. Never one to run from conflict, the Veteran takes the fight to the enemy.

Veterans can become involved in the supernatural in any number of ways. Some are members of secret societies who were raised and trained from childhood, training to battle the creatures of the night. Others are members of mundane (or even extraordinary) everyday occupations that saw something they can never forget. Some have lost people to vampires, demons, or ghosts. Others are actively recruited by



hunter agencies or individual groups. The possibilities are endless. One thing they are not, however, are ordinary men and women. They have formal, intensive training in the use of weapons and tactics.

Veterans have the following class abilities:

**Hit Dice:** d8

**Weapons and Armor:** Any

**Saving Throws:** +1 to all saving throws. Saves increase by +1 per 3 levels.

**Combat Expertise:** Veterans get one attack per level against enemies with 1 hit die or less. Against enemies with more than 1 hit die, but less than their own, they get two attacks per round (total). When fighting groups of opponents, use the average hit dice of the group to determine how many attacks the Veteran gets.

**Melee Combat:** Veterans add their strength bonus to melee combat attack and damage rolls.

**Increased Damage:** Veterans add their Strength bonus to all melee combat damage, and their Dexterity bonus to all ranged combat damage. In addition, whenever rolling for damage, Veterans roll one extra die, keeping the best result of all dice rolled. If a weapon's damage code is 2d6, for example, the Veteran rolls 3d6, keeping the best die.

**Improved Defense:** Veterans with a Dexterity of 15 or greater reduce opponents' chances to hit them, imposing a penalty of -1 per point of Dexterity above 14.

**Ranged Combat:** Veterans add their Dexterity bonus to ranged attack rolls.

**Supernatural Attacks:** Beginning at fourth level, the Veteran may choose for their melee attacks to be treated as supernatural for the purpose of overcoming damage immunities. If they do so, however, they do not roll extra dice for damage from their Increased Damage ability (though they still add their strength bonus). Starting at fifth level, ranged attacks by Veterans are also considered supernatural for this purpose.

**Tracking:** Veterans are able to follow the signs of their quarry unerringly even through the most difficult terrain. Tracking can take two forms: following signs like disturbed scenery, footprints, and the like; or by asking questions and gathering information. The base chance to track is 50%, plus 5% per level of experience, and is modified by the difficulty of the signs.

- Creatures who pass through doors, clear obstacles, or otherwise take basic efforts to evade reduce the chance by 10%
- Creatures who take exceptional efforts to evade such as climbing trees, carefully passing through hidden entryways or the like, reduce the chance by 20%
- Those who pass through water, stop to clean themselves, physically cover their tracks, or take otherwise extraordinary

efforts to avoid being detected reduce the chance by 30-40%, at the GM's option

- Every 24 hours that passes from the initial creation of the trail also reduces chances by 10% cumulative, as does each hour of rain, snow, or precipitation.

A tracking check may not automatically lead the veteran to the quarry directly, but to a new area where another tracking check may be called for. In this manner, the GM can create a dramatic element to tracking, where the veteran needs to constantly suss out and interpret symbols and information given, to continue tracking their quarry.

The above modifiers also apply to social situations. If the target takes basic efforts to remain inconspicuous, trying to keep a hood up and avoid drawing a massive scene counts as basic efforts, while a creature with a great deal of friends and associates in a region that would go to bat to hide them might count as extraordinary efforts. The GM should apply modifiers based on the creature's ability to move among society, and again, a successful check should lead from one piece of information to the next, and not necessarily to the quarry directly.

**Table: Veterans**

Level	Hit Dice	Attack Bonus	XP
1	1	+1	2,000
2	2	+1	4,000
3	3	+2	8,000
4	4	+2	15,000
5	5	+2	30,000
6	6	+3	65,000
7	7	+3	130,000
8	8	+3	250,000
9	9	+4	500,000
10	10	+4	750,000
11+	+1	+4	+250,000

## Witch/Warlock

There are those who walk among us with the astounding power to manipulate the forces of nature and the cosmos itself. They can bend the elements and call upon arcane powers from beyond. They can lay their enemies low with terror, charm the coldest of hearts, bless their friends and curse their foes. Some among them can summon storms and raise the dead from their graves. They have mastered the arcane formulae that manipulate the energies of existence. They are Witches and Warlocks.

Some Witches and Warlocks ("Witch" being the feminine and "Warlock," the masculine) are peaceful and follow a new age religion, be it Wicca, Reclaiming, modern Druidism, or another path. Others are Cabbalistic, Islamic, Hindu or Gnostic mystics. There are also those who believe in magic as a science, and delve deeply into ritual tools and scientific formulae to wrest the effects they want from the universe.

There is one thing that all have in common: they are often looked upon with suspicion and not a little fear, even by their most beloved compatriots. The path of a true mage is a lonely one, but can be the gateway to great power...

Witches and Warlocks have the following class abilities:

**Hit Dice:** d4

**Weapons and Armor:** Knives, daggers, small clubs, staves. Armor that is less than (but not including) Kevlar vests (leather jackets, layers of tweed, padded clothing, etc.)

**Saving Throws:** +3 against spells and magical effects; saves improve by +1 per 4 levels.

**Arcana:** Witches and Warlocks are knowledgeable about many things related to the use of magic. While this skill doesn't grant automatic knowledge about the entire supernatural world (which is the province of the Sage), those things involving spells, spellcasting, magical rituals, rites, and orders can be divined with this ability.



The percentage chance to recall arcana is equal to the Witch or Warlock's base chance to cast a spell, modified by anywhere from 10 to 100% by the rarity of the information being recalled. A successful Arcana roll can also allow the Witch to sense the presence of supernatural energy, or identify supernatural creatures.

Sensing a supernatural creature requires looking at them. Some creatures may possess an ability to mask their supernatural nature, reducing the chance to sense it accordingly. In general, a creature without such a masking ability is easier to identify, the more powerful it is— increase the chance to identify by twice the creature's hit dice.

**Spells:** The primary ability of the Witch and Warlock is to cast spells. The class table below lists the number of spells per level that a Witch may prepare each day.

*Casting Spells:* To cast a spell, the Witch's player throws percentile dice. The base chance to cast a spell is 50%, plus 5% per level of the Witch. Thus, a first-level Witch has a base 55% chance to cast a spell. This percentage is penalized by 10% per level of the spell (thus, a second level spell imposes a penalty of -20%). Casters are limited in the level of spell they can cast as indicated on their spells per day table.

If the player beats the base percentage chance to cast a spell by 10% or more, the spell goes off immediately. If they succeed at less than a 10% margin, the spell effect is delayed by one round. If a Witch's base chance to cast a spell is over 100%, there is no roll needed to cast; the spell always works at immediate effect.

For example, a first level character has a 45% chance of success in casting a first level spell. If they achieve a result of 35 or less on the d% check, the spell goes off immediately; if the result is 36-45%, the spell's effect is delayed by one round. At tenth level, the Witch would have a 90% chance to cast a first level spell, with an

80% chance of immediate effect. By twelfth level, the Witch can cast first level spells without the need for a check, and they will always take effect immediately.

*Failing a Casting Check:* A Witch may continue to cast any spell in her repertoire as long as she continually succeeds in casting it. If the Witch ever fails a check to cast a spell, she suffers backlash (see **Chapter 3**).

*Preparing Spells:* Magic is a complex process of formulae, rituals, and offerings which can take an hour or more to perform. When the Witch prepares spells each morning, she chooses a certain number of spells to combine into a single ritual, holding back a single element from each, so that she may use them at will later. When the spell is cast, the ritual is complete, and the magic expended.

Each morning, a Witch consults her Book of Shadows and prepares a number of spells equal to that shown on her caster table. Thus, a third-level Witch prepares three first-level spells and one second-level spell. The ritual for preparing these spells is complex and intensely personal, and no two Witches use the same ceremony for the purpose. More on preparing and casting spells can be found in **Chapter 3: Magic**, including the effects of a spell backfire, rules for becoming corrupted by magic, and full spell descriptions.

*Spells Known:* Every Witch has a specific number of spells entered into their grimoire or book of shadows (the two terms are interchangeable; some Witches simply call it a "spellbook"). At level 1, a Witch's grimoire contains a number of spells equal to one plus her Wisdom bonus. All of these spells are first level. At each level of experience, the Witch, through her readings, studies, and practice, learns two new spells that she may enter into her grimoire. These spells can be of any level that the Witch can cast.

In addition, a Witch may enter new spells that she comes upon through



research and exploration into her book. Doing so requires one day of study per level of the spell, plus an Intelligence check to actually figure out the spell. This check suffers a penalty equal to the level of the spell she is trying to work out, though she gains +3 to learn the spell, exactly as though it were a saving throw against magic. For more on ability checks, see **Chapter 2**.

**Arcane Power:** At first level, the Witch chooses one of the powers below. This power supplements her magic, and can be used once per day. At levels 4, 7, and 10, she may choose an additional power, and may use her previous powers an additional time of day. Thus, at 4th level, she may use her first-level power twice per day, and choose a second power that she may use once per day. Unless otherwise noted, no Arcane Power may be chosen more than once.

Available powers are as follows:

**Arcane Bonds:** A Witch that possesses an arcane bond with another may combine their spellcasting efforts to increase the power of their spells. When multiple Witches with arcane bonds attempt to cast a single spell at the same time, they must be in physical contact (holding hands or the like), and if any Witch succeeds at the casting check, the spell succeeds. In addition, the effects of the spell are increased by a multiple equal to the number of arcane-bonded Witches casting, plus one.

Thus, if two arcane-bonded Witches cast a spell together, both roll a check and if either succeeds, the spell goes off with all effects increased by a multiple of three. If three Witches thus bonded cast, the effects are multiplied by four, etc. In addition, the effective level of the spell for purposes of determining save difficulty is equal to the total character levels of all Witches casting. Thus, if three, third-level Witches cast *hold person*, the creature being held must save as though the spell were being cast by a ninth-level Witch. For more on saving throws, see **Chapter 2**. To use this ability,



all Witches involved in the casting must possess the arcane bond ability.

**Blaster:** Choose one specific type of attack you have (a specific weapon type like swords, firearms, or a specific spell, for example). When you deal damage with that attack, you roll an extra d6 for, keeping the best of the total. Thus, if you apply it to *fireball*, which for you deals 5d6 damage, you would roll 6d6, keeping the best 5. For every 5 levels, you add one more d6 (but the total you keep remains unchanged). You can take this ability more than once. It applies to a different attack each time.

**Charm Person:** This ability works exactly as the spell of the same name. When the Witch reaches 7th level, it functions as the *Charm Person* or *Monster* spell (it may be used against non-human creatures). If used as a *Charm Monster* spell, however, that counts as two daily uses.

*Detect Thoughts:* This ability works exactly as the spell of the same name.

*Empathy:* This ability works as the spell *Detect Thoughts*, but conveys information about emotions as opposed to thoughts. With this ability, a character can detect lies through nervousness, they can sense fear, love, lust, and even, if they go deeply enough, the things that terrify a victim the most. The difference is that while thoughts convey knowledge, empathy conveys feelings.

*Enhanced Senses:* You can see in total darkness up to 60 ft, and you gain "Perception" as a Survivor of the same level. If your character already has the Perception ability you are treated as being one level higher than you are for purposes of this ability. You can also add +4 to any Wisdom checks you make based on sight, hearing, smell, taste, or touch.

*Incubus/Succubus:* By succeeding at an unarmed melee attack, you deal 1d6 damage per two Witch/Warlock levels you possess (minimum 1d6 damage), and heal the equivalent amount in damage. When you choose this power, you must choose the means by which the attack is delivered: kiss/sex, bite, or claw. You may only use this power when you exercise the chosen attack type, which in the case of bite or claw, becomes a natural weapon for you. It is possible for willing victims to allow you to drain them in this way. Doing so requires no attack roll, but does count as a use of the power.

*Innate Magic:* You have innate magical power. Choose any one spell of a level you can cast. You may use this spell as a natural ability, without material components, without the need to prepare daily, and without a casting roll.

The spell does, however, require either a gesture or words (your choice, within reason) and any attack or action requirements are still in play (*Cure Light Wounds*, for example, still requires you to

touch the target). This spell represents a sort of minor psychic or supernatural power you possess, and enhances in power as you increase in levels as standard for the spell, if applicable.

*Precognition:* The Witch can see the best course of action whenever presented with a difficult decision. The base chance of success is equal to the totals of her intelligence, wisdom, and charisma scores added together.

Thus, a Witch with Intelligence 15, Wisdom 11, and Charisma 8 would have a 34% base chance of precognition. For very minor or easy choices with a low probability of divergence, this base chance doubles. For extremely difficult choices with many permutations or outcomes, the base chance is halved. The GM has final say on the chance for success (halved, base, or doubled). Each level after the ability is chosen, the base chance of success increases by 5%.

*Psychic Power:* At the GM's discretion, the Witch can take a psychic power (see the Psychic character class) which has no basic equivalent here, and use it as a supernatural power. It functions in all ways as the psychic power, and the chance to use it is the Witch's basic spellcasting percentage.

*Shadow Walking:* As part of their movement, the Witch can summon a mist, which can be made of shadow, a silvery hue, smoke, or any other form of mist appropriate to the character. The form of the mist is chosen when this ability is taken, and cannot be changed. Upon summoning the mist, the Witch is instantly teleported up to 30 feet from her current location, to another area she can see or with which she is intimately familiar. Line of sight, for the purpose of this spell, includes being able to see the area into which she wishes to step on a monitor or by any other means. Every three levels the Witch gains (4, 7, 10, etc.), the possible distance increases by 30 ft.

*Shapeshifting:* You make yourself—including anything you wear and carry—look different. You can seem up to 1 foot shorter or taller, or alter your weight by as much as 100 lbs. to be thin, fat, or in between. You cannot become a creature that is not humanoid (an animal or completely inhuman monster).

Otherwise, the extent of the apparent change is up to you. You could add or obscure a minor feature or look like an entirely different person. You do not gain the abilities or mannerisms of the chosen form, nor do you gain the perceived tactile (touch) or audible (sound) properties of any simulated equipment. A creature that interacts with you, who knows the person you are impersonating may attempt a Wisdom-based save to recognize something "off" about the person you are pretending to be.

You can use this ability for up to 1 hour, and you may change a number of times per day equal to your Charisma modifier. When the power improves, you gain additional shifts, but the 1-hour per day limit remains.

*Suggestion:* This ability works exactly as the spell of the same name.

*Telekinesis:* The Witch can move physical objects with the power of her mind alone. The maximum weight she can move is 5 lbs. plus 1 lb. per level of Wisdom bonus. The maximum weight increases by 5 lbs. cumulative per level

after the ability is chosen. The Witch may hurl such objects as an attack, and may maintain control so long as she maintains concentration, for up to 1 minute.

*Telepathic Transmission:* The Witch can send and receive telepathic messages to any number of willing participants. This communication is as selective as verbal communication. Non-willing creatures can also be targeted for communication, but they are entitled to a Wisdom saving throw to resist. The duration is up to 15 minutes, and the range is up to 60 ft. Each level after this ability is chosen, the duration increases by 5 minutes, and the range by 5 feet.

*Wild Form:* The Witch can, as an action, magically assume the shape of an animal she has seen before. This creature may not have more hit dice than the Witch, and must be either small or medium sized. The Witch gains the attacks, AC, and natural abilities of the animal but keeps her own intelligence, wisdom, charisma, personality, and hit points.

Her clothes and all equipment she carries are absorbed into the animal form. She may maintain this form for up to 1 hour. Upon choosing this power, select one animal into which you may shift. For every three levels you attain, you may choose an additional animal form from which you may choose when you shift, and you gain one additional use of this ability per day.



**Table: The Witch/Warlock**

Level	Hit Dice	Attack Bonus	XP	Spells Prepared Per Day										
				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9		
1	1	+0	2,500	1										
2	2	+0	5,000	2										
3	3	+0	10,000	2	1									
4	4	+0	20,000	3	2									
5	5	+1	40,000	3	2	1								
6	6	+1	80,000	3	3	2								
7	7	+1	150,000	4	3	2	1							
8	8	+1	300,000	4	3	3	2							
9	9	+1	600,000	4	4	3	2	1						
10	10	+2	850,000	4	4	3	3	2						
11	11	+2	1,100,000	4	4	4	3	2	1					
12	+2 hp	+2	1,350,000	4	4	4	3	3	2					
13	+2 hp	+2	1,600,000	5	4	4	4	3	2	1				
14	+2 hp	+2	1,850,000	5	4	4	4	3	3	2				
15	+2 hp	+3	2,100,000	5	5	4	4	4	3	2	1			
16	+2 hp	+3	2,600,000	5	5	4	4	4	3	3	2			
17	+2 hp	+3	2,850,000	5	5	5	4	4	4	3	2	1		
18	+2 hp	+3	3,100,000	5	5	5	4	4	4	3	3	2		
19	+2 hp	+3	3,600,000	6	5	5	5	4	4	4	3	2		
20	+2 hp	+6	3,850,000	6	5	5	5	4	4	4	3	3		

### MULTICLASSING

Multiclassing is the process of advancing your character in more than one character class. You could be a character, for example, who began as a Sage and later discovered she was destined to be the Chosen One, or started as a Veteran only to get Chosen One powers later. Perhaps David decides to play a federal agent named Fox, who began as a Survivor and later progressed into an active hunter of the supernatural, transitioning to Veteran. Maybe as a Survivor you picked up some knowledge of magic, learning minor powers as a Witch or Warlock.

Whatever the combination, this is accomplished through multiclassing.

The process for multiclassing is simple. When you reach the point where you would normally gain a level, you choose to cease

advancement in your original class, and start advancing in a new class. In order to do so, you must have a minimum score of 13 in the Prime Requisite of the new class. You pick up first level in the new class and start a new experience progression (from 0) in that class. You add the new class' hit die for hit points instead of your original class, and you gain the abilities of the new class.

You do *not* gain the save bonuses or progression of your secondary class, and you do *not* gain a second Primary Ability. These are set by your original class and do not change. While advancing in your new class, you do not progress in your original class, which is "frozen" at the point you left it. When you gain a level in your new class, you can choose to advance that class, or you can switch back to your original class. It is recommended that no character carry more than two classes, however.

Finally, for game balance reasons, unless you always remain within two levels difference in each class you carry, the amount of XP you need to advance a level in either class is equal to its normal advancement, plus 10,000 times your current character level. Character level is your combined levels in all classes.

For example, if you are a fifth-level Chosen One and you opt to pick up a level in Witch/Warlock, you must, before reaching second level in Witch/Warlock (or switching back to Chosen One), achieve 62,500 experience points (2,500 to reach Witch second level, plus a 60,000 point XP penalty for being an effective 6th level character). If, however, you always keep your Chosen One and Witch/Warlock classes within two levels of one another, there is no such XP penalty. This ensures some level of parity among characters advancing.

## ALIGNMENT

The next step in creating your character is to choose their *Alignment*. This is their general outlook on the world, and is expressed in very basic terms. There are three possible alignments: Law, Neutrality, and Chaos. Good and evil do not come into play as descriptors in this game, with the idea being that the universe spins on an axis of order and entropy, with a balancing force between. If your character supports law, it doesn't necessarily mean that they obey any law anywhere they go, to the letter. Likewise, just because your character is chaotic, doesn't mean they can't have some sort of personal code they follow. How alignments are defined is further clarified below:

**Law:** Characters that believe in law believe that the world and cosmos exist on a strictly defined order. Things play out as they are supposed to, and anything that seeks to upset that order is a threat to all existence. Characters on the side of law tend to believe in fate and destiny. They

are more likely to consider the specific rules and regulations of a society in which they are operating, but they are also capable of recognizing when a "law" is not beneficial to the balanced and effective functioning of society, and will challenge such rules. These are characters who feel that while murder is deeply wrong, it should be stopped not solely for moral reasons, but because unfettered murder leads to the breakdown of a functioning world.

**Neutrality:** The vast majority of characters in the world fall into the neutrality range. These are characters who fall into one of three categories. They may believe that a strict balance must always be maintained between law and chaos, and seek to preserve that balance at all costs. Alternately, they haven't committed to the idea of whether the cosmos is ordered or chaotic. Finally, they may simply not care about such things and just want to live their lives, obeying the rules as best they can to stay out of trouble, and not seeking to get involved in such grand cosmic schemes.

**Chaos:** Characters within the realm of chaos believe that destruction, entropy, and randomness are simply the way the cosmos works. There is no fate, there is no destiny, and *absolutely everything* comes to an end eventually...and that end is always bad. After all, if it were good, it wouldn't end, would it? Such characters may well have a personal code of honor. They may lie and cheat, or they may not. What defines them isn't their personal code of behavior, but their sheer disdain for the idea that there is any order or structure to anything, that barbarism always overcomes civilization, and that an attempt to exercise control on an uncaring, unfeeling, entropic cosmos is foolhardy, at best. Still, the world does happen to be where they live, so they're not necessarily going to just let some vampire god tear it to pieces if they can help it. They will strive against the dying of the light, even as they realize the futility of said struggle.

### What about Good and Evil?

In these kinds of games, shades of gray are constantly creeping into the story. Heroes have to make hard choices that may not easily tie them to traditional concepts of morality. In addition, one person's morality can be wildly different than another's, even when it comes down to something as stark as killing another person. The authors feel it best to leave questions of morality to the individual game, and to the way players wish to portray their characters within the bounds of the setting established by the Game Master.

Instead, we offer a very broad ethical outlook that still provides heroes with a role to play in a grand cosmic battle, but which ties it to the age-old idea of order vs. chaos, civilization vs. barbarism, and those caught in the middle.

### Using Alignment in Game

This is extremely important to clarify and for both players and Game Masters to remember. *Alignment is a descriptor of your character's outlook on the cosmos. It is absolutely not, in any way, a box into which your character should be stuffed and kept.* Alignments have a very broad range of approaches, and as mentioned above, a chaotic character isn't necessarily evil, nor are they blanket required to be lying, anarchic bastards without honor.

Under no circumstances should a GM attempt to enforce a play style on a character based upon the alignment they have chosen. Again, this is a descriptor, not a limiting factor on a character. It's intended as a shorthand for the character's overarching view of the cosmos. Are they a determined supporter of the laws of physics and an ordered cosmos, or are they a nihilist who thinks that it's all going to come crashing down, anyway?

It's okay to *question* whether a character's actions align with their beliefs, and even

ask how so. This encourages players to think about how their character behaves. If a player notes one alignment on their sheet, but their character goes in a different direction, it's also okay to change alignment to suit the character's journey. What should not happen, however, is a character constantly leaping from one end of the spectrum to the other with no consistency in play style. This isn't a chaotic character—it's an excuse to not portray a character...unless the character in question has been established to have a good *reason* for such a jump.

There's only so much that can be said about this, but we hope the idea and concept of alignment and its important role as a descriptor and shorthand in game is clear.

### LANGUAGES

Languages are important in a supernatural game. How often in novels, television shows, or films do we see characters researching ancient spells or myths in tomes written in long-dead or demonic languages. Generally, we just roll with the idea that in the tropes of that universe, people just speak a lot of languages.

As such, in **Night Shift**, every character speaks their native language and the language of the area where the game is set. Thus, a character who is from Latin America operating in a U.S.-based game speaks Spanish (or Portuguese) and English. At the GM's option, native characters who wouldn't normally speak two languages can choose a single bonus language that they picked up in school along the line—a Caucasian or African-American in the United States, for example, would automatically speak U.S. English, and the GM can rule that they have also learned Spanish, French, Latin, or the like in high school or college.

In addition, every character with a positive Intelligence bonus has a number of "language slots" that represent other languages that they can speak, read, or

write. These slots are equal to their Intelligence Bonus. They needn't define these languages right out of the gate. Rather, whenever a new language is encountered in game, the character's player can announce "I'm familiar with that language!" and add it to their sheet, using up a slot.

Sages, as explained in their character class, gain a number of language slots equal to their full Intelligence *score*, not bonus. A Sage with a 13 Intelligence has 13 language slots. In addition, Survivors and Sages gain the ability to *read* most languages as they advance in levels. However, any time they encounter a language that is not expressly used as one of their slots, they *must* make a read languages check to decipher the text. Even, for example, if a Survivor has read an ancient Sumerian tome in the past using read languages, they still must make a read languages check every time they encounter ancient Sumerian, unless they expend a language slot to know it.

## BACKGROUND

Characters do not live in a vacuum. Often times, they were something else before fate or the monsters came calling. Maybe they were just an average high school student, or no-nonsense cop that doesn't believe in the supernatural, or drop-out, a runaway, or nearly anything. Your character's background helps define who they were before the events of the game.

Backgrounds can help determine what skills or languages the character might know.

The effect (if any) that a background has on game play is left entirely to the GM. It is here more as another descriptor of who the character once was. This can give a benchmark for the kinds of practical training they might have, what skills they possess, the knowledge they carry with

them, etc. While measurable game effects for such information might be minimal (say, an additional +1 or +2 to any check where a background comes into play), the GM can use it to base difficulty bonuses or penalties to checks.

For example, a group of characters is trying to figure out how structurally sound a mysterious old mansion might be. If one of them has a background in Structural Engineering, the GM might decide that for that character, the difficulty is easy (+10), while for the others it's medium (+1).

For those looking to differentiate their characters such that two Survivors aren't identical, the combination of backgrounds and ability strata (Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary abilities) are the way in which this is done. **Night Shift** is designed to be a wide-open game without the need for laundry lists of skills, special abilities, and random bonuses. Characters should be differentiated as much by role playing as statistics on the page. Backgrounds and ability strata allow for the mechanical differentiation that some players crave, while still keeping the focus on role playing and character as opposed to numbers on a page.

In general, no character should have more than two backgrounds, and these should be basic descriptions of their careers and areas of passionate interest, expressed in one or two words each. There is no pre-defined list of backgrounds—like everything else in the game, they are designed to be broad and open, and to encourage outside-the-box thinking.

## EQUIPPING THE CHARACTER

In general, the tropes of this sort of game don't revolve around the acquisition of money and physical possessions. Most characters are assumed to be relatively middle-class, though Sages and sometimes the Witch/Warlock characters may be characters of means. In the end, this is left

to the players and Game Master to determine, as are the effects it may have on the resources available to characters.

As such, “equipping the character” means jotting down on your character sheet whatever gear and possessions your character might reasonably have. This may be an alien concept to fantasy gamers who are used to having to “buy” equipment, but it’s perfectly reasonable in a modern game to assume your character has a car, apartment, computer, smartphone, even an office and yes, even weapons. All of these things are reasonably available to middle class adults in a modern society, so there’s no reason to “resource manage” their acquisition.

There’s also no reason to create a laundry list of available equipment—the game is set in the modern era. Most people know what a smartphone or tablet is, and since all attacks deal the same damage, even weapons can be tailored to a character’s personal preference.

Thus, in the end, equipment and gear is as customizable as anything else in the game. When outfitting your character, just keep it within reason and remember, the GM has final say on what is and is not available to your characters based on their idea for the game they wish to run.

If the GM needs to create statistics for equipment, simply allow it to give a +1 or +2, or +5% or +10% bonus on ability or skill checks when the equipment is used, or assign a percentage to the use of the equipment itself, perhaps basing the bonus on the quality of the equipment in question. Basic hacker’s tools might give a +5% bonus to hacking, while high end advanced software grants +10%, for example. Alternately, use the guidelines for devices under the Inventor class to build gear.

More detail on how skills, checks, weapons and attacks work will be included in **Chapter 2: Fighting the Forces of Darkness.**







## CHAPTER TWO: FIGHTING THE FORCES OF DARKNESS

### THE RULES OF PLAY: SHORT AND SWEET

There are essentially three mechanics that you will need to learn when playing *Night Shift*. The first is the Combat, Saving Throw, and Check Resolution mechanic. This involves rolling a d20, adding appropriate bonuses, and trying to score a 20 or better.

The second is the Class Abilities mechanic. This is a straight percentile roll to see if you accomplish something tied directly to your character class.

The third is the Rule of Two. This is largely for the GM, and is a quick way to adjudicate any situation that doesn't apply to the Check or Class Ability mechanics. It simply involves rolling a die and looking for a result of 1 or 2 to determine if something happens.

Before we get into more details, let's look at something very important for playing *Night Shift*: your campaign style.

### Campaign Style

There are essentially three different campaign styles, or "levels of play" in *Night Shift*. These are Gritty, Realistic, or Cinematic. Whichever you decide, the basic systems and rules of play remain the same. What changes is the level of deadliness involved in the game.

*Gritty* games are extremely deadly. In these games, for example, if you get shot, you will likely die—guns don't even do damage; you just make a saving throw or die.

*Realistic* games are in many ways the default assumption. They still have a level of grit and danger—vampires are really scary—and they lack some of the over-the-top heroics of Cinematic games, but they

aren't quite as deadly as a gritty game. In a realistic game, for example, getting shot does a *lot* of damage, but doesn't necessarily kill you outright. Keep in mind in this context, "realistic" doesn't necessarily mean it's modeling real life. It just means that it's the middle ground between gritty and cinematic.

*Cinematic* games provide over-the-top heroics that probably most closely resemble the "beautiful people doing amazing things" shows we've all become used to in sci-fi/fantasy TV. The television series featuring a certain blonde girl who was in love with a vampire and once slew a god is an example of a cinematic game. In such games, guns are simply another weapon.

You needn't, of course, blanket choose one of these types of plays. You can feel free to pick and choose elements from each to use in your game. These are simply shorthand assumptions we will use in the rules and options that follow.

It's even possible, if you wish, to begin with one style of play and strip options back (or add them) as the characters grow in experience. For example, you may start off playing a Cinematic game, and then when characters reach mid-level, strip checks and combat back to realistic, to keep a semblance of difficulty in play, stripping back further to Gritty when they reach higher levels. It's really up to you.

Now, let's break down how each of the systems: the Check system, the Class Ability System, and the Rule of 2, function in actual practice.

## The Check System

An **Attribute Check** is called for when the outcome of a given task is in question or uncertain, there is some consequence for failure, or two people are competing in an individual task. The *vast majority* of situations requiring dice in **Night Shift** are handled using an Attribute Check. Attribute check mechanics are quite

simple, and use the following formula:

$$D20 + \text{Ability Bonus} + \text{Check Bonus} > 20.$$

An unmodified "natural" 20 always succeeds, and an unmodified "natural" 1 always fails.

## Ability Bonus

Your character's ability bonus (or penalty) is determined as follows:

Score	Bonus
3	-3
4-6	-2
7-8	-1
9-12	0
13-15	+1
16-17	+2
18-19	+3
20	+4

## Check Bonus

Your character has three levels of abilities: One Primary, Two Secondary, and Three Tertiary.

**Primary Ability** is your class Prime Requisite. This ability starts with a check bonus of +1, and improves by 1 per 3 levels (3, 6, 9, 12, etc.).

**Secondary Abilities** are chosen by the player, and comprise *two* additional abilities. These start with a check bonus of +1, and improve by 1 per 4 levels (4, 8, 12, 16, etc.).

**Tertiary Abilities** are the remaining three abilities. These begin with a check bonus of +0, and improve by 1 per 5 levels (5, 10, 15, etc.).

**Monsters and NPCs Without Class Levels** simply add their number of hit dice to a d20 roll instead of ability and check bonuses. Thus, an 8-HD vampire adds +8 to all checks.

## Checks and Play Styles

The rules above assume a *realistic* game.

In a *cinematic* game, characters will add their level to d20 rolls in addition to the check bonus above.

In a *gritty* game, characters do not gain a Check Bonus, and do not stratify ability scores as Primary, Secondary, or Tertiary. Instead, they gain a flat check bonus that adds +1 to d20 rolls per 4 levels of play, starting at +0 at first level. They still add their ability bonus to checks.

Thus, a 5th level character in a realistic game will add (in addition to ability bonus) +2 to checks with Primary abilities, +2 to checks with secondary abilities, and +1 to checks with tertiary abilities. In a gritty game, a 5th level character will add +1 to all d20 rolls, and in a cinematic game, a 5th level character will add +7 to checks with primary or secondary abilities, and +6 to checks with tertiary abilities.

## Difficulty Modifiers

In addition, each check will have a difficulty modifier applied by the GM, based on how tough the task is. Easy tasks add +5 to +10 to the roll. Medium tasks add +1 to +4. Difficult tasks add neither bonus nor penalty. Heroic tasks subtract between -5 and -10 from the roll. Epic tasks could subtract as much as 15 from the roll. The GM is the final arbiter of how difficult a task might be, and at low levels, even medium tasks might seem heroic to player characters. As your characters advance, however, they'll get better at what they do.

**For Example:** Anthony, playing a 6th-level Sage named Giles, attempts to research a demon using his lore skill. Though he fails his percentile score for Lore (see "Class Abilities," below), he still gets a standard Intelligence check to push the research through. The GM determines that for Giles,

this is a Medium difficulty task, and grants a +3 bonus. Giles has an 18 Intelligence, and it's his Primary Ability. Thus, he has +3 for his intelligence, and a +3 check bonus (+1 for first level, +1 for 3rd, and +1 for 6th as a primary ability). His total bonus for the check is 3+3+3=9. He rolls his d20, scoring 12, adds +9, and his total is 21, a success. He finds the information he needs.

## Contests

Sometimes two or more characters, monsters, or NPCs are competing to accomplish a task. In this case, the base DC of 20 does not matter. In this case, all characters roll their check and whoever gets the highest result, wins. Ties go to whoever the GM designates the defender.

## Ongoing Tasks

Sometimes a task is ongoing, something that needs to be accomplished over time. For example, maybe the characters encounter a complex ritual which will take time and effort to achieve. In such a case, the GM sets a number of successes or failures, and the players continue making checks until they rack up the requisite number.

**For Example:** The characters are conducting a complex ritual to exorcise a haunting spirit from a house. The GM determines that it will require four successes to banish the creature, but four failures will result in some dire consequence, and the inability to banish the spirit. The characters continue making checks at one per minute (the timeframe designated by the GM), until they rack up either four successes or four failures.

## Aiding One Another

In some situations, characters can help one another with a task. In such cases, one character makes the d20 check, but all characters add their appropriate ability bonus to the task. In the example above, the GM determines that the ritual to banish the creature requires Wisdom

checks. All involved characters add their Wisdom bonus to the checks, and one character makes the d20 roll.

The Check mechanic is also used for **Combat** and **Saving Throws** (see below for details).

## Class Abilities

Class Abilities such as the Survivor's ability to climb, move silently, and work sleight of hand, or the Sage's Lore ability, are expressed as percentile dice checks. In general, class abilities represent an *increased ability to accomplish a task*. This means that, for example, anyone can try to move silently. A Survivor, however, gets to roll their percentage chance first, and if it succeeds, they need not make an ability check. If it fails, they can still make the ability check to sneak (and they are *completely silent*, whereas accomplishing the sneak with an ability check means you are relatively quiet enough not to be detected).

Anyone can attempt an Intelligence check to recall a piece of information, but a Sage may attempt a Lore check first, and if they succeed, they need not make the check, and will get a great deal *more* information than a character with an Intelligence check gets.

Likewise, in any circumstance where an opposed check would be allowed (a Wisdom check to detect someone sneaking with a Dexterity check, for example), no opposing check is allowed if a successful class ability check is made.

## Class Abilities and Helping One Another

Sometimes a character with a class ability wants to help someone who doesn't—a Survivor, for example, helping a Witch to move silently and hide. In this case, for every 10% the character with the class ability possesses, the character they are helping adds +1 to their ability check. Thus, a Survivor with a 30% hide ability, would

through advice and example setting ("walk where I do") give the Witch +3 to her Dexterity check to hide.

## Class Abilities and Play Styles

These rules assume a *realistic* game.

In a *cinematic* game, characters add an extra 20% to all base chances listed in their character classes at first level. Thus, the Sage begins at a base of 30% instead of 10% at first level for their Lore ability, the Survivor begins at 35% to open locks and 40% to move silently, etc. Simply increase the base chance for all percentile abilities by +20% at first level.

Class abilities in a *gritty* game should stay the same as in a *realistic* game at level one, but only advance every two levels instead of every level.

## Opposed Checks

Sometimes the GM may wish an opponent to have an effect on the success of a class ability. In such cases, their appropriate ability score can serve as a penalty to the check. Exactly how this works depends on the level of game play you choose:

In **Realistic** games, half the ability score in question serves as a penalty to the chance of success of the character. Thus, if a Survivor with a move silently of 40% tries to sneak up on a victim with a Wisdom of 12, the Survivor's score is treated as though it were 34%. If there are fractions, round down. If the target is a monster with no ability scores, their hit-die-based Check Bonus applies instead.

In **Gritty** games, the full ability score serves as a penalty to the chance of success. In the above example, the Survivor's wisdom score would be treated as 28%. In the case of monsters, use double their hit-die based Check Bonus.

In **Cinematic** games, the target's Check Bonus applies instead. In the example,

above, if the victim with the 12 Wisdom had Wisdom as a Primary Attribute as was 3rd level, they would modify the check by only 1 point, treating it as 39% (Score of  $12=+0$ , 3rd level Primary bonus = +1). In such games, monsters use half their hit-die-based Check Bonus.

Note that opposed checks for class abilities should not be applied across the board. In general, if a class ability succeeds, it succeeds. This system is in place only to handle situations in which the GM feels that specific circumstances would allow the opposing party to have a direct effect. Even the situation of the stealth check, above, should only be applied in a circumstance where it would be exceptionally difficult to move silently.

For the most part, simply turn to the rule of 2, below, if a class ability check fails to see if there are any consequences: if a character sneaking up on an opponent fails their Move Silently check, the Rule of 2 applies to see if they are detected.

### Levels of Success

Besides the opponent's ability having a passive effect on the check, there may be times where the GM or players wish to measure the margin of success achieved on a roll. For such times, levels of success can be used, which are measured by the degree by which the hero beats their check.

For **Realistic** games, every 10% by which a roll beats their chance of success, rounded down to the nearest 10, counts as one level of success. Thus, if a hero has a 65% chance to accomplish a task, and their roll comes up at 30%, they have achieved 3 levels of success ( $65-30=35$ , round down and divide by 10).

For **Cinematic** games, the margin for a level of success is 5%. In the above example, the hero would achieve 7 levels of success.

In a **Gritty** game, each level of success is determined on a 20%-per-level margin,

rounded down to the nearest 10. The above example, thus, would net only a single level of success in a gritty game.

### The Rule of 2

The rule of 2 is a resolution mechanic that allows a GM to quickly and efficiently handle any situation that comes up in game. Whenever any situation is in doubt that is not otherwise covered by the rules, throw a single die. On a result of 1 or 2, something happens. It could be that the players catch something unexpected. Loose gravel might give way and drop that boulder. The villain might react a certain way.

Using this system is simple. Decide the general odds of something happening, and choose a die accordingly:

d4: 50% chance

d6: 33% chance (roughly)

d8: 25% chance

d10: 20% chance

d12: 16-17% chance (roughly)

d20: 10% chance

These probabilities can certainly be handled in other ways, including simply deciding on a percentage chance of an occurrence and rolling percentile dice against that probability, but remembering the Rule of 2 makes for a fast, easy, and elegant fall back for any circumstance.

**For Example:** The GM has carefully crafted an ambush into which she intends the players to stumble. To her shock, Nick, who is playing a character named Xander that has had military experience, comes up with a brilliant plan that nominally allows the PCs to completely circumvent the ambush, and even potentially turn the tables. The GM thinks it's a minor chance, so she throws a die to determine whether the players turn the tables, discover the ambush, and surprise their intended attackers. She weighs their plan and decides to go



with a d8. On a 1 or 2, the players spot the ambush and turn the tide. On anything else, they simply avoid the ambush entirely. She might even push it further, throwing two dice: the d8 to determine if they turn the tables, and a d4 to determine if they get attacked, but aren't surprised by the ambush if the d8 comes up from 3-8.

Another example is determining surprise. Let us say that a party is creeping around an old castle which strangely wasn't there in their California suburb yesterday, and they enter a room where there are three vampires. They didn't stop to listen, so no ability or class checks were made, and the vampires didn't expect the PCs. As the potential for surprise exists on both sides, the GM simply throws a d6 for each side to see if one or both are surprised—a 1 or 2 indicates surprise, allowing the other party a free round to act, unless both parties are surprised in this way.

### Using the Rule of 2

The key to using the Rule of 2 is to simply be creative and think outside the box. Whenever you need to quickly adjudicate an uncertain situation, and a class ability or ability check roll does not apply, pick a die based on your estimated odds and cast it. A 1 or 2 means the situation resolves one way (usually in favor of the characters), while anything else means it resolves another. It's not meant to be a hard-and-fast system, just a quick way to make a decision when you want to let the chips fall as they may, or you're not sure which way to take a situation.

The Rule of 2 does not change for gritty or cinematic games.

### The Rule of 2 vs. Ability Checks

In general, ability checks come into play when a character is actively trying to accomplish something. A character actively

searching an area for clues might roll an Intelligence check. A character actively trying to listen for noise or see something in the shadows will make a Wisdom check. When a situation arises that doesn't involve an active effort by a character, the Rule of 2 can apply, but a character's abilities should come into play.

For example, what if there's a chance the characters hear a noise or spot movement, but aren't actively engaged in the process? The Rule of 2 can be used to determine if they hear the noise or see the movement. The level of the character's associated ability score will determine what die to use.

Abilities under 9 use a d10

Abilities of 9-12 use a d8

Abilities of 13-16 use a d6

Abilities of 17 or higher use a d4

## COMBAT

Combat occurs when two sides decide to throw down and solve problems with violence. It's a common occurrence in RPGs, and is the source of a lot of the tension, drama, and passion in the game. Whether it's a bunch of street thugs trying to mug your character, or a master vampire and her minions deep in the heart of her crypt, combat is part and parcel of the demon hunters who work the *Night Shift*.

The basic process of combat goes as follows:

1. **Determine Initiative**
2. **Establish Surprise**
3. **Make and resolve attacks**
4. **Repeat**

Let's look at the procedure in detail.

### Initiative

When combat begins, all involved must roll 1d10. The highest result goes first,

followed by the next highest, etc. A character may choose to *hold* their action to see what others are going to do. If they do so, they may act when they choose, but reduce their initiative to that level for the rest of the combat. For example, a character rolls a 10 for initiative, but elects to hold their action. When the GM reaches 4 on their countdown, the character decides to act. They may now act, but their initiative is reduced to 4 for the rest of the combat. If a character holds till 1, they must act or forfeit their action for the round *and* have their initiative lowered to 1 for the rest of the combat.

A character may also *prepare* an action; in this case, they are "on hold" until a specific trigger they declare occurs ("I'm going to charge the first one who draws a weapon.") In this case, they interrupt the triggering action, but do not lower their initiative for the rest of the round.

### Surprise

Sometimes, one or both sides in a scenario will be surprised. There are two ways to determine surprise. If the GM feels the circumstances are clear, they can simply declare that one side is surprised. If there is some question whether one or both sides are surprised, each side in a combat will fall back on the Rule of 2 (see above). The GM throws a die for the monsters, and one of the players throws a die for their side. A result of 1 or 2 indicates surprise. Characters with different odds of surprise roll separately from the rest of the group.

If one side is surprised, the other side gains a full round in which to act freely. If neither or both sides are surprised, there is no in-game effect; initiative is checked and the encounter beings when the surprise wears off.

### Rounds

Combat is structured in rounds. A round of combat is a nebulous amount of time lasting anywhere from a few seconds to a minute, depending on how the GM structures the scene at hand. In game

terms, a round progresses until all participants have had the opportunity to act. *In general*, a combat round will be from six to ten seconds, but in larger situations like mass battles involving dozens of participants, the GM could rule that the combat takes place in one, five or even ten-minute rounds.

Some spells have durations that last in rounds. When out of combat, for simplicity's sake, assume that for purposes of spell duration, a round equals ten seconds of time.

## Scenes

Some abilities, options, and circumstances take place over a *scene*. A scene is even more nebulous an amount of time than a round. Generally speaking, a scene is like a miniature story within a story. It's an element that takes place in a given location and has a logical beginning and end point. A combat scenario is a scene. A car chase can be a scene. A negotiation between crime bosses in a Chinese restaurant comprises a scene. If you're not sure when a scene ends, the GM can make that call. Think of your favorite TV show, movie, or book, and you'll have an idea what constitutes a scene in play.

## Movement

Characters may move during the course of a round. In general, a character can move up to 30 feet and still perform an action. Alternately, they can "dash" up to 60 feet without taking an action. Most monsters will also move 30 feet, though some will have a faster or slower movement listed in their statistics in **Chapter Five: Creatures of the Night**.

## Attacks

Making an attack in combat works on the same attribute check system, but uses the opponent's AC in place of a difficulty modifier. Remember, that lower AC is better. Thus, when making an attack roll in combat, you use the following formulae:

**Melee Combat:**  $d20 + \text{Strength Bonus}^* + \text{Attack Bonus} + \text{Target AC} \geq 20$

**Ranged Combat:**  $d20 + \text{Dexterity Bonus}^{**} + \text{Attack Bonus} + \text{Target AC} \geq 20^{***}$

\* Chosen Ones and Veterans Only

\*\* Chosen Ones, Survivors, and Veterans Only

\*\*\* Psychics add Wisdom to attacks with psychic powers. Inventors may add an appropriate ability to attacks with Devices

## Attack Bonuses

Chosen Ones and Veterans begin with a Hit Bonus of +1, and advance every 3 levels.

Psychics, Survivors, and Sages begin with a Hit Bonus of +1 and advance every 4 levels.

Theosophists and Witches / Warlocks begin with a Hit Bonus of 0 and advance every 5 levels.

Monsters and NPCs without class levels add their hit dice instead of a Hit Bonus and Ability Bonus. Thus, an 8-HD vampire will add +8 and the defender's AC.

## Combat and Play Styles

Again, this assumes a *realistic* game.

*Gritty* games will see Hit Bonus progressions increased by 1 level (to 4, 5, and 6 levels, respectively).

*Cinematic* games see all characters add their level as well as their Hit Bonus to attack rolls.

## Determining AC

Monsters will generally have an AC in their statistics, which accounts for their general combat ability as well as armor, toughened hide, or the like. For humans and other characters, AC is determined by subtracting a character's Dexterity bonus from 10, or from the AC of any armor they are wearing (see *Armor*, below). If the character has a Dexterity penalty, it is instead added to 10 or from the armor. Thus, an unarmored character with a Dexterity bonus of +2 has an AC of 8. A character wearing a bulletproof vest (AC 5) with a Dexterity bonus of +2, has AC 3.



## Actions Other than Attacks

You don't have to attack during combat. There are any number of other actions you can take. Trying to open a door, tending to the wounds of an injured comrade, diving for cover, hiding, starting to climb a wall, attempting to pick a lock, rifling through a bag to find something, scanning the shelves of a library for a book, and escorting a potential victim to safety are all examples of actions you can take. The options are near limitless and restricted only by your character's physical and mental abilities, and the scene at hand.

Some actions are "free" and don't require you to use an action. Talking, for example, can be done by anyone at any time, within reason (stopping to deliver a filibuster certainly takes an action, but shouting a sentence or two doesn't, though waiting for a response might, depending on the situation).

In the end, remember: during a round you may take a single action and move. Aside from an attack, what an action entails is up to the GM to adjudicate.

## Damage

When an attack strikes a target, you deal damage to that target, reducing its hit points by the amount of damage you do. In **Night Shift**, all weapons and attacks, unless otherwise noted, deal 1d6 damage. Larger weapons and more brutal attacks, like a big 2-handed axe, may roll multiple dice, keeping the best 1d6 of the dice rolled, at the GM's option.

Some monsters and rare weapons will have special attacks that may do more damage or have additional effects. These will be explained under the individual entry or the rules for such weapons (see, for example, the firearms rules below).

## Wait, All Weapons do the Same Damage?

Yes. For some grognards, this will be old-hat. For others, it may be an alien concept. There are some practical reasons for this. Most weapons, when used to maximum effectiveness can kill or grievously wound a normal human, and 1d6 covers all of this damage for the normal humans in the game. In addition, it balances the terms of engagement somewhat, allowing for normal humans to actually survive encounters against, say, a vampire, at least for one or two hits. This better allows for the scale of play that mimics the tropes of urban fantasy literature, TV, and film.

It also allows for the near infinite variety of weapons, both common, rare and improvised that a character or creature might use, the general idea being that "staking a vampire," for example, is simply represented by reducing the creature to zero hit points. In a gritty style game, the GM can opt to add additional die types to damage, if desired, but this adds a degree of complexity to the game and requires listing specific weapons to deal specific damage codes.

This trade off of "realism" for practical and pragmatic rules helps the game flow better for all players.

## Out of the Fight

When you are reduced to 0 hit points, your character is unconscious and dying. Each round thereafter, they must attempt to succeed at a Constitution save with a penalty equal to the number of hit points below zero they are. If they succeed, they are stable and no longer bleeding. If they fail, they continue bleeding out and lose 1 hit point. When a character reaches -10 hit points, they are dead and cannot be brought back.

While a character is bleeding out, if another character takes the time to try and stabilize them, succeeding at an Intelligence check, the bleeding character doesn't need to make more Constitution saves—they are stable and no longer bleeding.

### Out of the Fight and Play Styles

These rules assume “Realistic” play.

In a *Gritty* game, characters reduced to 0 hit points are permitted a single saving throw to stabilize, and if they fail, they are dead.

In a *Cinematic* game, the rules proceed as with realistic play, but characters are not dead until they reach their constitution plus their level below zero in hit points.

### Non-Lethal Combat

The rules don't differentiate between lethal and non-lethal combat. That is to say, an unarmed attack does normal damage (1d6) just like an attack with a weapon. If you wish to simply knock an opponent out instead of killing them, simply declare that you were engaging in non-lethal combat when they reach zero hit points. They are considered unconscious and stable (they don't need to make saving throws to stabilize).

### Firearms

There are three different ways firearms can be handled, depending on the tropes (play style) of the setting. The GM should choose one of these three methods and consistently apply it through the entire game.

**Firearms are Deadly (Gritty):** In a *gritty* game, firearms are lethal, period. When struck by a firearm, make a Constitution saving throw, with no modifier for difficulty. Success means you are reduced to 0 hit points but stable and require hospitalization to recover. Failure means you're dead.

**Firearms are Brutal (Realistic):** In a *realistic* game, firearms do 5d6 damage, totaled. Semi-automatic weapons can fire twice in a round (you get to shoot twice in your one attack). They're still brutal and deadly, but can be survived.

**Firearms are Normal Weapons (Cinematic):** In a *cinematic* game, firearms are just another kind of weapon. Light caliber pistols do a standard die of damage. Medium caliber pistols and light caliber rifles do 2d6 damage, keeping the best of the two. Heavy pistols and medium rifles do 3d6 damage, keeping the best of the three. Heavy rifles do 4d6 damage, keeping the best of the four. Most pistols can fire twice per round. Assault rifles can fire up to 3 times per round. Lever, bolt, single-action, and pump action weapons can fire once per round.

### Realistic?? That's Not How Guns Work!

No, it isn't. The goal of this particular game is to mimic the tropes of a specific genre of television, films, and novels, and in this genre, guns tend to be exceptionally lethal, far more so than archaic weapons. In real life, an overhand chop from an axe that takes you in the collarbone is going to do as much (or more) damage than a 9mm, but the 9mm will penetrate better and can hit you a lot more times. In urban fantasy TV shows, guns are often a very scary thing that irrevocably kills someone with a single shot. It's not realistic, but it is in keeping with the genre.

For those looking for a more real-world approach to guns, adopt the cinematic method, wherein guns are just another weapon. The term “realistic” is simply a play style in this game and could be best thought of as the medium balance between gritty and cinematic. In this case, the cinematic version of guns is closer to real life than the so-called “realistic” version.

## Automatic Weapons and Shotguns

Fully automatic weapons can spray an area, dealing 3d6 damage, totaled, to everything in a cone 50 yards in front of the shooter and 20' wide at the farthest point. A Dexterity saving throw halves damage, and a "natural," unmodified 20 on the saving throw eliminates the damage altogether, as targets dive for cover.

In a "Gritty" game, damage from a spray is as lethal as from any other firearm, with a save dealing 3d6 damage (totaled), and a natural 20 reducing the damage to 1d6 as the targets dive for cover.

Shotguns loaded with buckshot are treated as medium caliber pistols and gain +3 to hit a target, but can only be fired once per round. If loaded with solid slugs, they are treated exactly as heavy pistols, firing once per round.

## Healing

Characters heal damage at the rate of 1 hit point plus their Constitution bonus per day of bed rest. With professional medical care in an actual hospital, the rate of healing is doubled while in the hospital. Characters who do not engage in complete bed rest see healing halved for every day they are active.

Non-lethal damage (those that have been declared unconscious and stable) heals at the same rate, per hour instead of per day, and does not require bed rest. Any creatures or characters with regenerative capabilities recover non-lethal damage at double the normal rate they recover lethal damage.

### Healing and Play Styles

These rules assume a realistic game.

In a *Gritty* game, healing is 1 hit point per day, and characters that do not engage in complete bed rest do not heal at all.

In a *Cinematic* game, double all healing rates, and characters need not engage in bedrest to get the benefits of healing. In addition, every "episode" begins play with all characters at full hit points, regardless of how they ended the prior adventure.

For more on episodes and seasons, see **Chapter 4: Earth After Dark**.

## "Mook" and "Big Bad" Rules

If the GM desires to allow heroes to mow through hordes of enemies, it's possible to create "mook" level adversaries. Such creatures should have less than 3 hit dice, and 2 hit points per hit die. They perform in all other ways exactly as normal monsters and NPCs; they are just far easier to kill.

While such scenarios are usually best for cinematic play, there are certainly situations in realistic or even gritty games that hordes of easy-to-kill enemies could come into play. Always remember the inverse ninja rule: the power of any given ninja is inversely proportional to the number of ninja present. Taken to a logical conclusion, the GM is also well within their rights to ensure that the "big bad" of a scenario not only has maximum hit points possible, but is assumed to have maximized any and all special abilities (and Fate Points to boot; see below).

In a system like this, low-level (low hit die) creatures are essentially mooks as it stands. Which means that, yes, your player characters, in effect, start the game as glorified mooks...and grow beyond that status as they gain experience.

## Armor

Use the following table to determine the AC of your character, based on the clothing or equipment outfitting they are wearing. In general, *light armor* reflects basic clothing. *Medium armor* represents things like a flak or Kevlar vest. *Heavy armor* represents full SWAT gear or military combat armor.

Armor	AC
None	10
<i>Light Armor</i>	
Padded clothes	8
Layers of tweed, leather jacket, trench coat	7
<i>Medium Armor</i>	
Kevlar-reinforced leathers	6
Bulletproof (Kevlar) Vest	5
<i>Heavy Armor</i>	
SWAT or riot armor	4
SWAT or riot armor plus riot shield	3
Full military combat armor	2

## SAVING THROWS

Saving throws are treated as ability checks and use the Check Mechanic, with the GM determining which ability is most appropriate to the task at hand. The Difficulty Modifier for a given saving throw is based upon the difference in levels between the attacker and the defender. For every level/hit die higher the defender is than the attacker, they gain +1 to their save. For every level/hit die lower the defender is, they suffer -1 to their save.

Just as with Ability Checks and combat rolls, monsters and NPCs without class levels or ability scores simply add their hit dice to all saving throws.

For this reason, the DM should assign "levels" to those situations that are not directly caused by an opponent. A trapped vault wired with explosives, for example, might be a Level 6 trap, allowing for easy comparison to determine difficulty modifier. A level 3 character would suffer -3 to their save, while a level 9 character would gain a +3.

Generally speaking, an easy (+10) Intelligence or Wisdom check can divine the general level of a given circumstance (but not the level or hit dice of a monster or NPC, which must be secretly applied by the GM).



### Saving Throws and Play Style

Since saving throws use the Check Mechanic, the GM should apply whichever play style mechanic she chooses to the adjudication of saving throws as well. Alternately, she could have a Realistic game with Cinematic saving throws, or any other combination she likes. See the sidebar for "Checks and Play Styles," above, for information on these rule adjustments.

### Critical Successes and Failures

Whenever an attack roll, ability check, or saving throw results in an unmodified roll of 20, or a "natural 20," meaning the die reads 20 before any bonuses are added, the check, save, or attack automatically succeeds at the highest level reasonably possible.

In the case of an attack, after damage is rolled, roll an extra d6 and add it to the

total damage. If this die comes up as a 6, roll again, adding to the total, and continue the process as long as the result keeps coming up 6. In this fashion, a single attack can be devastating, but only a small percentage of the time. Also note that the same rule applies to monsters and non-player characters without class levels.

Conversely, if the die comes up as an unmodified "natural 1," the attack, save, or check automatically fails, regardless of the final total. At the GM's option, an additional d6 can be rolled in this case, too, continuing the process as long as 6's are rolled, to help determine just how bad a failure might be.

A normal 1 backed up with a 1-5, for example, could mean that an attack just misses. A 6 followed up by a 1-5 might mean that a bowstring breaks, a weapon is tossed, or the like. Two sixes might mean that the attacker accidentally hits an ally, while 3 6's means the attacker hits an ally with an extra 6 points of damage, etc. These are just suggestions and the GM is encouraged to be creative with the results of critical (or disastrous) failures.

## Vehicles

Piloting a vehicle is fairly simple, and utilizes Dexterity checks. Whenever engaged in a car chase, accelerating and decelerating, and dealing with obstacles and maneuvers which are initiated by the opponent, each driver makes an opposed Dexterity check, with the GM adjudicating the results based on the winner.

While most characters are assumed to be able to drive, assuming they are of legal age to do so, most are not *adept* at driving, in the way that a "wheel man" or "wheel woman" might be. Characters with a background that would give them formal training in driving—something like a race car or stunt driver, or a pilot, for example—use the higher of their bonus, or the vehicle's bonus. All other characters use the lower of their bonus or the vehicle's bonus.

GMs should carefully adjudicate whether a character's background gives them this level of ability when driving, to avoid players trying to "game the system" by all fitting "Race Car Driver" into their backgrounds (See "Backgrounds," below).

## Vehicles and Ability Scores

Vehicles have the same ability scores as people do, though for the most part they will not often use Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma scores. Those that do, are vehicles that, for example, possess advanced optics systems like modern military tanks and fighter jets (which would have a Wisdom score), or advanced AI systems from infotainment systems to active automatic safety features like many modern cars (which would have an Intelligence score and possibly a Wisdom score).

Vehicles that have the ability to intimidate others just by being what they are (like a tank) might have a Charisma score. A Strength score might be applied to determine a vehicle's towing capabilities or off-roading power. A Constitution score can be applied if the vehicle needs to make saving throws against explosions or the like.

In general, however, the vehicle's Dexterity score will be the most commonly referenced ability it has.

When using vehicle scores, also consider that vehicles operate on a different scale than people do, so a +3 bonus to a vehicle for Strength does not indicate the same as a person with a +3 Strength bonus. In general, a vehicle's strength score allows it to tow its Strength bonus times 10,000—thus, a vehicle with an 18 Strength (a +3 bonus) can tow up to roughly 30,000 pounds (if properly equipped and tuned to do so).

## Vehicle Intelligence and Wisdom

In general, a vehicle's Intelligence and Wisdom scores (if any) act as though they

are Aiding the driver. This means that when making a check where the score comes into play, it adds to the driver's check.

**For Example:** Jensen is playing Dean, who has a Wisdom of 13 (+1). He's driving a modern muscle car, chasing down a mad sorcerer. Dean's car has modern active safety technology, giving it a Wisdom of +2 to help him avoid collisions. The bad guys swerve around a bend, throwing off another vehicle, which spins into Dean's path. The GM has Jensen make a Wisdom check for Dean to spot the danger in time to react. Dean will add both his Wisdom bonus of +1 *and* the car's Wisdom bonus of +2, plus his Check Bonus, to his d20 to spot the danger in time to react, as the car's intelligent active safety technology kicks in to help him.

### Speed and Acceleration

A ground vehicle's maximum speed is its Dexterity bonus times 100 (treat +0 as +1 for this purpose). That means that a race car with a Dexterity of 18 (+3) can max out at 300 mph. Vehicles with negative Dexterity bonuses go 100 mph - 10 times the absolute value of their penalty. Thus, a vehicle with -3 Dex penalty can go 100-30=60 mph maximum. Dexterity bonuses should continue by +1 per 3 points.

Thus, a modern commercial airliner, which can travel up to 550 mph on average would round down to 500 with a Dexterity of 22-24 (+5). There can be some play within those numbers—a small sedan, for example, maxes out at 150 mph, which rounds down to a +1 bonus.

For those who think there is a disconnect for vehicles like 18-wheelers, consider that such trucks might have massive engines and a lot of momentum to back them up, but most are fitted with tires that are only rated to go 75 mph, sustained, maximum. A vehicle's stated maximum speed encompasses more than just its engine size and momentum.

For aerial vehicles capable of exceeding the speed of sound, any score over 18 becomes one multiple of the speed of sound per 3 points, starting at 20—thus a jet that has a score of 20-22 can go Mach 1, 23-25 goes Mach 2, etc. Such speed capabilities should be indicated with the notation "M" for "Mach." Thus, an F22 Raptor, capable of Mach 2, would note its ability as Dexterity 23 (+5M) and its maximum speed as Mach 2. The "M" designation denotes that the +5 on this plane is far different and faster than that of a Boeing 747.

Generally speaking, a vehicle's safe cruising speed is half of its maximum speed. This, of course, depends on traffic, weather, and other conditions, at the GM's discretion. Regardless of the fact that it may be able to safely maintain 100 mph on an open road, for example, driving a full-sized sedan at 100 mph on city streets is a recipe for disaster. GMs should set the maximum safe cruising speed for an environment using their best judgment.

It can also safely accelerate or decelerate by 1/10 of its maximum speed every round. Traveling faster than cruising speed requires a driving or piloting test every round, with a penalty of -1 per 10 mph (5 mph in city driving conditions) over safe cruising speed.

Attempting to accelerate or brake up to 3 times the vehicle's safe acceleration/ deceleration speed is possible, but requires a Dexterity check at -1 per multiple of the safe speed; failure means a mishap (losing control of the vehicle, crashing the car, etc.).

### Damage to Passengers from Crashing

Any time a vehicle crashes, all passengers within suffer 1d6 damage, totaled, per 10 mph the vehicle is traveling. Wearing seatbelts in a car or following safety procedures in an aircraft halve this damage. A Dexterity or Constitution save halves the damage again.

At the GM's discretion, the vehicle's structure and safety systems or environmental factors may also mitigate damage somewhat—after all, people do miraculously survive catastrophic plane crashes on occasion.

The same damage levels apply to being hit by a car—1d6 damage per 10 mph the car is traveling to the victim. A dexterity save halves the damage.

### Play Styles and Car Crash Damage

Again, the rules here assume a *realistic* game.

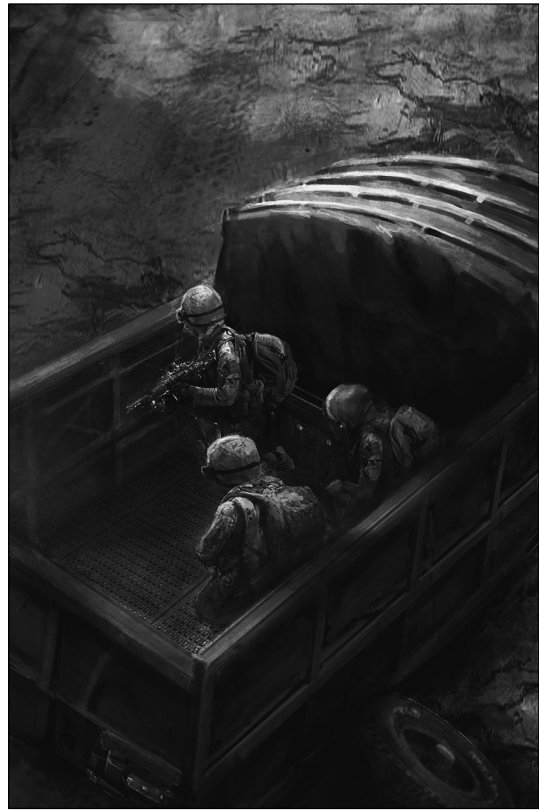
In a *cinematic* game, passengers suffer 1d6 per 100 mph the vehicle is traveling, with damage halved and halved again as described above, unless otherwise dramatically appropriate. For victims being hit by a car, a saving throw allows diving out of the way and avoiding damage entirely.

In a *gritty* game, characters do not gain a saving throw to further halve damage, and if a vehicle is traveling faster than 40 mph, characters must succeed at a Constitution save or die from a crash, in addition to suffering full damage. Victims who are hit by a car may attempt a Dexterity save to reduce damage by 1d6, but if hit by a car traveling faster than 20 mph, must make a Constitution save or die from being struck.

### Firing at Vehicles

The following guidelines can be applied if firearms come into play.

While a handgun may potentially damage a civilian passenger vehicle, it won't do the level of damage it does to a human. Generally speaking, unless there are special circumstances, a civilian vehicle can attempt a Constitution save any time it is shot by a standard firearm or handheld weapon, using the rolled damage as a penalty to its save, and adding +1 per 10 hp the vehicle currently



has remaining. Success means no damage is suffered.

Damaging military class vehicles like a fighter jet with normal weapons simply doesn't work, and the kinds of weapons that are able to damage such vehicles are beyond the scope of this game, which doesn't generally get into military level combat (though future supplements might). A natural 20, of course, does full damage.

Using the rules above, the GM should be able to adjudicate car chases by improvising the effects of maneuvers like playing chicken, bootleg turns, swerving to avoid obstacles, and others.

The table below contains some sample vehicle statistics.

Vehicle	Dex	Str	Con	Int	Wis	Max	Crs	Acc	AC	HP
Sedan, Compact*	10 (0)	8 (-1)	10 (0)	-	-	150	75	15	7	55
Sedan, Mid*	10 (0)	8 (-1)	12 (0)	-	-	150	75	15	7	65
Sedan, Full*	13 (+1)	10 (0)	13 (+1)	-	-	180	90	18	6	75
Muscle/Sports Car*	18 (+3)	18 (+3)	13 (+1)	-	-	300	150	30	6	75
Motorcycle	17 (+2)	3 (-3)	4 (-2)	-	-	200	100	20	9	25
Ambulance**	15 (+1)	13 (+1)	16 (+2)	-	16 (+2)	100	50	10	3	80
Police Car*	17 (+2)	10 (0)	13 (+1)	-	-	200	100	20	6	75
SUV, Compact*	12 (+1)	16 (+2)	15 (+1)	-	-	100	50	10	6	75
SUV, Full*	10 (+0)	17 (+2)	16 (+2)	-	-	100	50	10	5	80
Pickup, Light*	10 (+0)	15 (+1)	13 (+1)	-	-	100	50	10	5	80
Pickup, Med*	13 (+1)	17 (+2)	15 (+1)	-	-	150	75	15	4	85
Pickup, Heavy*	13 (+1)	18 (+3)	16 (+2)	-	-	150	75	15	4	90
Van*	10 (0)	14 (+1)	13 (+1)	-	-	100	50	10	7	80
School Bus	8 (-1)	16 (+2)	17 (+2)	-	-	90	45	9	3	100
Box Truck	7 (-1)	18 (+3)	17 (+2)	-	-	90	45	9	3	150
18-Wheeler	5 (-2)	25 (+6)	20 (+4)	-	-	80	40	8	2	300
Modern Fighter	23 (+5M)	15 (+1)	17 (+2)	15 (+1)	17 (+2)	Mach 2	Mach 1	153	5	150

\*May have AI, safety, infotainment, or other systems that provide an Int or Wis of 13-16 (+1 or +2)

\*\*Ambulances have advanced medical equipment, accounting for their Wis bonus, which applies only to such checks.

## BACKGROUNDS

Backgrounds are an optional rule intended to help flesh out a character. In this system, characters each choose one or two areas of background knowledge. This could be something like “history teacher,” “doctor,” “airline pilot,” “mechanical engineer,” etc., that reflect specific individual professions. A character isn’t a scientist—they are a biologist or particle physicist. They are not an engineer, they are a mechanical engineer, electrical engineer, etc.

The backgrounds chosen should be in line with the character concept. That is to say, if a player wants a character who is both an airline pilot and a surgeon, they should have a good reason why this is, and the GM must approve all backgrounds.

In play, backgrounds function as a point of reference for the GM, to determine what characters know. A character attempting to perform surgery on a companion, for example, simply won’t have the knowledge to do so if they don’t have the right background knowledge. A character trying to ascertain just how sturdy a structure is, on the other hand, might gain a check based on their simple Intelligence and Wisdom scores, but if they are also a structural engineer, they might get a bonus to their check.

In general, any time a character has an appropriate background to apply to a given ability check, they gain +2 to the check. Backgrounds can never enhance combat attack rolls or saving throws; only attribute checks.



## Backgrounds and Play Styles

These rules assume a *realistic* game.

In a *cinematic* game, Backgrounds should be far more general—"science," "military," etc.—and provide a +5 bonus to applicable checks.

In a *gritty* game, characters gain only one background, specific as in the realistic game, and any check that is even questionably tied to a background cannot be made if an appropriate background isn't held. Thus, when checking to see if a structure is solid, *only* a structural engineer, construction worker, or other appropriate background would allow a check. If the GM allows such checks without a background, they are at -5.

## FATE POINTS

Fate Points are a system that is intended for *cinematic* games, though they may be added to *realistic* games to add a bit of extra player agency. They should never be included in *gritty* play style games.

In this system, all players begin with a limited number of Fate Points that they can spend to gain additional effects in game (see below).

A character always has a limited amount of Fate Points, and while the character replenishes this supply with every new level he or she attains, the rate of attrition can far outstrip the rate of gain. As such, players must use them wisely. A character can spend Fate Points to do any of these things:

- **Fortune's Favor:** Alter a single d20 roll used to make an attack, attribute check, level check, or saving throw, or a single percentile-based class ability.
- **Mighty Blow:** Make a single, earth-shattering, ranged or melee attack which also stands a chance of ruining the character's weapon.

- **Righteous Rage:** Gain a bonus to all attacks and actions for an entire scene.
- **You Missed!:** Avoid an attack.
- **Second Wind:** Recover lost hit points.
- **Down But Not Out:** Avoid death when reduced to below -10 Hit Points
- **Providence Smiles:** Gain a minor plot break or scene edit

## Fortune's Favor

When a character spends 1 Fate Point to improve a d20 roll, add a die to the roll to help meet or exceed the target number. The type of die rolled is dependent upon the character's level and shown on the fate point table below. A character can declare the use of 1 Fate Point to alter a d20 roll after the roll is made—but only before the GM reveals the result of that roll (whether the attack, check or saving throw succeeded or failed).

Depending on the hero's character level (see the table below), the die type increases when spending 1 Fate Point to add to a roll. If the character does so, apply the highest result and disregard the other rolls.

### Character Level Fate Dice Rolled

1st–4th	1d6
5th–9th	1d8
10th–14th	1d10
15th–20th	1d12

A Fate Point that comes up at its maximum result explodes; roll it again and add the total, and keep doing so as long as it keeps coming up with its maximum value. When used to alter a class ability that uses a percentile check, roll the Fate die and double the result. This total acts as a bonus to the percentage chance for success, increasing the base chance for success.

For example, Alyson is playing a Witch named Willow who has a 35% chance to

cast a spell. She needs an increased chance, so she spends a Fate Point. Her Fate Die is a d8; she rolls it and gets a 5. She doubles this for 10, and adds it to her base chance, which is now 45%.

### **Mighty Blow**

When a character spends 1 Fate Point to make a single, earth-shattering attack, the attack is treated as though the player rolled a Natural 20 on his attack roll; it automatically hits the opponent. Also, the attack does double the maximum possible damage for the attack.

However, the character must then make a second, unmodified d20 roll; a result of 1-9 means the weapon shatters (firearms are ruined from blowback). This ability can be used in ranged or melee combat, and cannot be combined with additional damage from attacks like sneak attacks. The hero is stunned for 1 round and cannot act. A Fate Point can be used to achieve this effect only once per game session.

### **Righteous Rage**

If you have a good, dramatic, in-game reason (such as witnessing a good friend get gunned down in cold blood), and you have the points to spare, you may spend 3 Fate Points to enter a righteous rage. This gives you +5 to all attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws for the entire scene. For the rest of the scene, you also roll one extra d6 whenever you roll damage, keeping the highest total (thus, if you normally roll 1d6, you roll 2d6 and keep the best one. If you normally roll 2d6, you roll 3d6, keeping the best 2, and so on).

A scene is a nebulous amount of time comprising a part of the story with a beginning, middle, and end—a whole combat, for example, may be construed as a “scene.” The GM has final say when a scene begins and ends. The GM must approve your reason, and the +5 you gain as well as the extra d6 for damage add together with any other bonuses you might have.

### **You Missed!**

A character may spend 2 Fate Points to avoid a single attack that targets her. Critical hits may only be avoided if they would reduce the character below 0 hit points, and this costs 2 Fate Points.

### **Second Wind**

A character who has lost more than half of their current total hit points (and is still conscious) may spend a Fate Point to recover half of all the hit points they have lost (round up). For example, a character who has 25 hit points maximum has suffered 15 points of damage, reducing him to a current total of 10 hit points. He may spend a Fate Point to instantly recover 8 hit points.

### **Down But Not Out**

When a character falls to at least -10 Hit Points or below, he is normally considered dead. Not so, if he has Fate Points to spend. Down But Not Out costs three Fate Points, and results in the character being reduced to exactly -10 Hit Points and stabilized. The character must have three Fate Points to spend to use this ability, and may only call upon it once per character level. If they don't use it, it doesn't carry over. So a character who never has to use Down But Not Out at second level doesn't have two uses of it waiting when he gets to third.

### **Providence Smiles**

By spending a Fate Point, a character can gain a small plot break that helps him in some minor way. He gains an important clue that he overlooked, just happens to be talking to the right person to get the information he needs, or has the cavalry come over the hill while he's in a hopeless situation. The player must describe exactly what the plot break is that his character gains, and the GM always has the right to overrule this use if he deems it improper, or if he has a good reason for the character to

be in such a tight spot. If the plot break is overruled, the Fate Point is not spent. Characters can spend a point for Providence Smiles once per game session.

### Limits on Fate Point Use

A character can only spend Fate Points for any given use once per round. If a character spends a point to strike a mighty blow, he or she can spend another one in the same round to improve a die roll, but cannot do a second mighty blow.

### Starting and Gaining Fate Points

Characters begin the game with a number of Fate Points determined by their class.

**Chosen Ones and Veterans:** 5 Fate Points

**All others:** 10 Fate Points

Each level thereafter, the character gains additional Fate Points equal to half their new level (rounded down). Any Fate Points not spent carry over to the new level. Thus, if a first level character makes it to second level with 8 Fate Points remaining, she gains 1 new Fate Point for half her level at second level, which adds to her existing 8, for a total of 9.

In addition, the GM can (and should) award Fate Points as an on-the-spot reward for heroic or dramatic play, the use of clever (in character) banter, noble self-sacrifice, or as "compensation" to the players when the story needs to take a turn that is particularly dark for one or more characters. Generally speaking, characters should earn and spend Fate Points at roughly the same rate, if the game is progressing properly with the right challenges and good role playing in progress.

Remember, however, that the use of Fate Points creates an extremely heroic game, and awarding too many can result in very over-the-top play, rather than the cinematic bennies that they are intended to represent. It's important to strike a balance

between allowing characters to have Fate Points when needed, and the characters having so many that they never have to worry about failing.

### Monsters, NPCs, and Fate Points

If the players have Fate Points, monsters and NPCs can, as well. In general, a creature has a number of fate points equal to half its hit dice (rounded down). This means that creatures up to 1 HD don't have fate points, while 2 HD creatures have 1 Fate Point, and an 8 HD vampire has 4 Fate Points.

Big Bads, the major villain for a season or campaign, should have Fate Points equal to their hit dice, plus one per player character in the gaming group. This allows them to perform seemingly astounding escapes and feats throughout the course of the game via plot twists and the like, while also maximizing their combat effectiveness until the final showdown. During the final showdown, a major villain should gain bonus Fate Points equal to twice the number of player characters facing them down.

### SKILLS (OPTIONAL)

Some tables prefer the idea of skills that can differentiate one character from another. This optional subsystem allows for the choosing and use of skills in game. A skill operates on the Class Ability mechanic—that is, success is determined by a percentile roll for success.

### Base Chance of Success

The percentage chance of success in a skill is determined by the associated ability score. When initially chosen, a skill has a percentage chance of success equal to double the associated ability, rounded to the nearest 5%. Thus, if a skill is associated with Dexterity, and the character has a Dexterity of 12 or 13, they have a 25% chance of success. If they have

a Dexterity of 14 or 15, they have a 30% base chance of success.

Whenever a skill is used in game (successfully or not), the player places a check mark next to that skill on their character sheet. When they level, any skill that has been used advances by 5%, and all check marks are erased. No skill can rise to a level greater than 95%. There is always a margin for failure, and no skill can increase by more than 5% per level, regardless of how often it has been used. There is no need to put multiple check marks next to a skill that's used often.

### Skills and Saves

In some cases, a skill could conceivably be used as a replacement for a saving throw. In this case, treat it as any class ability—the character may check their skill first, and if it succeeds, they need not save. If it fails, they still get a saving throw.

### Skills and Difficulty

The GM may apply difficulty modifiers to skill checks. Such modifiers should always be in increments of 5% and based on the difficulty. They are applied to the chance of success. A skill that is trivial to accomplish should never require a roll. A relatively easy task may get a +10% bonus. An average task gains no bonus nor penalty. A tricky task is at -5%, a hard task at -10%, a difficult task at -15%, and so on. The GM may also simply decide that an extremely difficult task is performed at half the normal chance of success.

### Skills with Multiple Abilities

Some skills may require multiple abilities to engage. Performing surgery, for example, requires manual dexterity as well as intelligence. In this case, determine the chance of success by adding the two abilities together instead of doubling one (in this case, base difficulty for surgery would use Intelligence + Dexterity), then adding any advancement bonuses (if your



medicine skill has advanced twice, you still get the 10%). If a skill could require more than 2 skills, simply choose the two that are most applicable, with one always being the base ability associated with the skill.

### Ongoing Checks

In some cases, a skill may require ongoing work. At the GM's option, this can require multiple skill checks, with a certain number of successes being required to accomplish the task, and a certain number of failures meaning things have gotten too bad to continue.

### Putting It Together

Consider the example of surgery, above. The GM may decree that surgery is complex enough that it requires a series of actions to succeed over a few hours of time. The player must attempt repeated skill checks, with 4 successes meaning they have accomplished the surgery, closed up the patient, and kept them stable. If they fail twice, however, the patient dies on the operating table.

At some point, the character encounters a medical conundrum, a puzzle that would normally require Wisdom to solve. The GM decides that the skill check is based upon Intelligence and Wisdom instead of Intelligence and Dexterity or Intelligence doubled.

### Choosing Skills

When creating a character, the player chooses any 4 skills in which to be proficient. At levels 5, 10, 15, and 20, a character can forego choosing to advance their existing skills and instead choose a new skill in which to be proficient at base (double ability) chance of success. A new skill may only be chosen if there is a very good in-game reason for doing so.

### List of Skills

The skills below are left deliberately broad and general. Detailed descriptions are not provided as they should, for the

most part, be self-explanatory. It is left to the GM and players to determine exactly how they can be applied in game. Body Control, for example, could be used to engage in meditation or to feign death, while Resistance is applied against gas attacks or during a night of drinking. Steady Hands could be used for tasks requiring fine detail like building models or defusing bombs, while sleight of hand is for things like the shell game or close-up magic.

If there's a question about what a skill can be used for, the GM's ruling is final in all cases.

In no case should a skill replace a class ability—this is why there is no stealth or climbing skill. These are class abilities. In situations where there is crossover, the player with both the skill and the class ability may attempt both their skill and their class ability before failing or turning to the Rule of 2.

#### Strength

Athletics  
Swimming

#### Dexterity

Contortionism  
Driving (Land)  
Forgery  
Graphic Art  
Gymnastics/Tumbling  
Piloting (Air)  
Piloting (Water)  
Sleight of Hand  
Steady Hands  
Dance

#### Constitution

Body Control  
Forced March  
Resistance

#### Intelligence

Computers  
Engineering  
History

Knowledge  
Literature  
Medicine  
Research  
Science  
Theology/Mythology

### Wisdom

Beast Whisperer  
Cartography  
Insight  
Navigation  
Notice  
Wilderness Survival  
Writing

### Charisma

Convince  
Deceive  
Impersonate  
Intimidate  
Perform

## Breaking Out Skills

For some, the skill list here may be too broad and general. The GM can choose, at their option, to break out skills further—Engineering or Science, for example, may require a specialization (Mechanical Engineering or Particle Physics, for example). They may choose also to combine skills into one. Convince, Deceive, and Intimidate, for example, could all just go into a single Persuade skill. In the end, the system is designed to be as flexible and malleable as you like. Break the skills out to whatever number and function works best for your game.

## Skill Defaults

If you break out the skills into specialty areas, it may be a good idea to allow for defaulting—allowing the use of a related skill, but at half the normal chance of success. A character with one science specialty, for example, may have a broad and general knowledge in other areas. So a particle physicist may be able to attempt a

chemistry check, using half their normal skill proficiency (then applying any bonuses or penalties).

## MADNESS (OPTIONAL)

Madness is another optional mechanic that can be applied in games that have a strong horror element. When combined with the optional Corruption mechanic for spellcasting (see **Chapter 3**), it can create a game that features a stark spiral into darkness.

### Mental Illness in the Real World

It should be noted that in the real world, mental health is a very serious issue, and millions of people suffer from mental health disorders. These should never be glorified or belittled, for they represent a serious struggle, and mental health services in our society are seriously underfunded by the public. Mental illness is an "invisible" disease, but no less real for those who suffer with it. The madness rules herein are in no way intended to represent, cheapen, or belittle those who struggle with such a condition. They are merely intended to add a Lovecraftian or cosmic horror element to a game, and if they make *anyone* at your table feel uncomfortable, they should be discarded entirely.

### Using Madness

In a game that uses Madness, when players are faced with horrific situations, be they scenes of graphic violence and brutality, or supernatural creatures spawned from the outer dark, they must succeed at a Wisdom saving throw. The level of this save is set by the GM, but when it concerns facing a monster, the monster's hit dice are generally used as the save level. Thus, an 8 HD vampire imposes a Level 8 Wisdom saving throw against madness.

For those saves with a level of 4 or less, a successful save means the character

suffers no madness on a successful save. On a failed save, they suffer 1 point of madness. For saves whose level is 5-7, a successful save indicates 1 point of madness, while a failed save indicates 1d4 points of madness. If the save is level 8 or higher, a successful save indicates 2 points of madness, while a failed save generates 1d6+1 points of madness.

When a player suffers madness, they accrue Madness Points, which serve as a penalty to further madness saves.

### Acute Stress Reaction

If a character gains more than 5 points of madness in the course of one hour (in game time, not play time), they suffer an acute stress reaction. This can result in any of the following effects (or others, as appropriate and at the GM's discretion):

- 1. Dissociation:** A dissociated character's personality undergoes a stark and marked change. They may begin laughing hysterically, flee in absolute terror, cower in a corner, go completely catatonic, scream, gibber, or babble uncontrollably, unable to do anything else, or they may develop a secondary personality altogether with its own name and identity, which manifests to "protect" the primary personality, possibly even seeing friends as enemies. When the dissociation wears off, the character has no memory of what occurred while it was in effect.
- 2. Fight:** The character violently lashes out, seeing everything around as a threat, and desiring to destroy everything until they are left completely alone, until the episode wears off. They cannot determine friend from foe, and simply want to kill, as it's the only way they can see to protect themselves. When the reaction wears off, they are fully aware of what they have done, and suffer an additional point of madness at the realization.

- 3. Flight:** The character flees the scene, desperate to get away from the horror, and doesn't stop running until the reaction ends.

- 4. Freeze:** The character completely freezes up. They are paralyzed and cannot move. The rule of 2 determines whether they lose control of their bladder or bowels. They remain frozen until the episode ends.

### Duration of an Acute Stress Reaction

Characters who suffer an acute stress reaction endure the effects for 1-9 minutes. Roll a d10 to determine duration. If, however, the die comes up as 10, they instead suffer the break for 2d6 hours.

### Post-Traumatic Stress and Trauma

If the character suffers more than 2 stress reactions in the course of a single day of game time, there is a 25% chance that they will suffer a permanent psychological disorder from the trauma of their personal hell. This chance increases by 25% per additional stress reaction they suffer in the course of a day. Thus, if a character suffers 3 stress reactions, there is no chance of permanence for the first one, a 25% chance of permanence for the second, and a 50% chance of permanence for the third.

The effects of a permanent disorder can vary based on the situation and are largely left to the discretion of the GM, but should be related to the situations that led to the disorder. Some options include:

- 1. Paranoia:** They're out to get me. It could be related to a single person or creature that's always out there, waiting, or in severe cases it could be related to everyone, even close friends.
- 2. Hallucinations:** The character has auditory or visual hallucinations (or both). When such hallucinations occur, the subject is completely incapable of shutting them off or

acknowledging that they aren't real. Often, these hallucinations will be in the form of triggering flashbacks that occur when they hear a loud noise or otherwise find themselves in a situation that reminds them of the source of their trauma. They can find themselves occasionally dissociating as they relive the event, which can cause them to harm friends and loved ones without realizing it.

3. **Phobia:** The character develops a crippling, unreasoning fear of something related to that which gave them the break that led to their condition. A tentacled horror, for example, might lead to a fear of anything tentacle-y, such as snakes, worms, cephalopods, or the like.
4. **Depression, Mania, or Bipolar:** The character develops crushing bouts of depression where they have to succeed at a Charisma save to take any action at all, or may develop bouts of mania where they are constantly on the move, active, and potentially aggravated, elevated, and violent. Some may develop alternating bouts of depression and mania, and are known as bipolar. Many who suffer this sort of disorder engage in self-harm in an effort to feel something, or may have suicidal or violent ideations while manic.
5. **Permanent Dissociation:** The character develops a permanent dissociation as a response to threatening or stressful stimuli. This dissociation has a 40% chance of occurring under any stressful situation, and could be of any form described above. The most severe reaction is Dissociative Identity Disorder, wherein they develop a number of divergent personalities, each fulfilling a specific need and with the goal to protect the primary personality. Each time the character dissociates, they have a 1% chance of developing a brand new personality. After a dissociative

episode, there is a 50% chance per hour of the dominant (core) personality resurfacing.

6. **Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder:** The character develops an obsession or fixation which preoccupies them almost constantly, or they develop a compulsive need to undertake certain repetitive tasks, whether it's a need to count everything, a drive to complete organizational tasks, or obsessive detail orientation. The exact nature of the obsession and/or compulsion can take a wide variety of forms.

## Game Effects of Mental Disorders

For the most part, the game effects of mental disorders are of the role-playing variety. It's worth noting, however, that in all cases they represent some aspect of the mind that is out of the character's control. Thus, the GM will describe the hallucinations a delusional character experiences, and the character is expected to react to them as though they were real.

It is left to the GM if there are any penalties, bonuses, or other in-game effects related to manifestations of stress and trauma, but always keep in mind that this is a game. Playing madness can be fun, creepy, and even scary in a game where that is called for, but it's also treading on thin ice for some players. These rules are *not an excuse for the GM to torture or upset players, or cross the boundaries of decency*. Again, if someone at the table seems to be triggered for real, it's time to back way off, and even considering putting away the madness mechanics for a while.

## Recovering From Mental Illness

Recovering from a permanent condition can take years of treatment, medication, and work. Regular therapy sessions with a licensed psychologist, mental health therapist, or psychiatrist are required, as are in many cases prescription medications. Characters who seek such treatment show no improvement for the first 1d6 months of work.



Thereafter they must make a Charisma saving throw with a level equal to their Madness Points each day to function without symptoms. Once per month, they can attempt an additional save, and if it is successful, they remove 1d4 points of Madness. When their Madness score reaches zero, they are free from their ailment and need no longer make saves.

If, however, they suffer another acute stress reaction while "cured," the character has a 50% chance of relapsing, their original psychosis returning with a vengeance.

### Breaking From Reality: Unplayable Characters

A character whose Madness points equal or exceed their Wisdom score suffers a debilitating and crippling mental illness, which requires institutionalization. They are incapable of functioning in normal society and are considered a danger to themselves and/or other people. They remain institutionalized until their Madness Points are reduced to 4 or fewer, at which point they are considered to be well enough to function in society once more. For most characters, this means removal from the game.

### Madness and Play Styles

Madness rules are by their nature part of a gritty game, and should only be used in their full capacity in a game where player characters face stark mind-blasting horrors.

**Realistic:** If the GM desires, a version of madness could exist for mid-level ("realistic") campaigns that does not include the development of long-term or permanent madness, and simply uses stress reactions if enough madness is suffered in a short period of time. For such campaigns, there is no need to track the total madness a character has; it's simply necessary to track the madness points they accrue in a single hour, to determine whether they suffer a temporary break from reality.

**Cinematic:** A Madness mechanic in a

cinematic game should take more the fear and terror mode. In such games, a failed saving throw against madness results in fight, fright, or freeze.

### Roll 1d6:

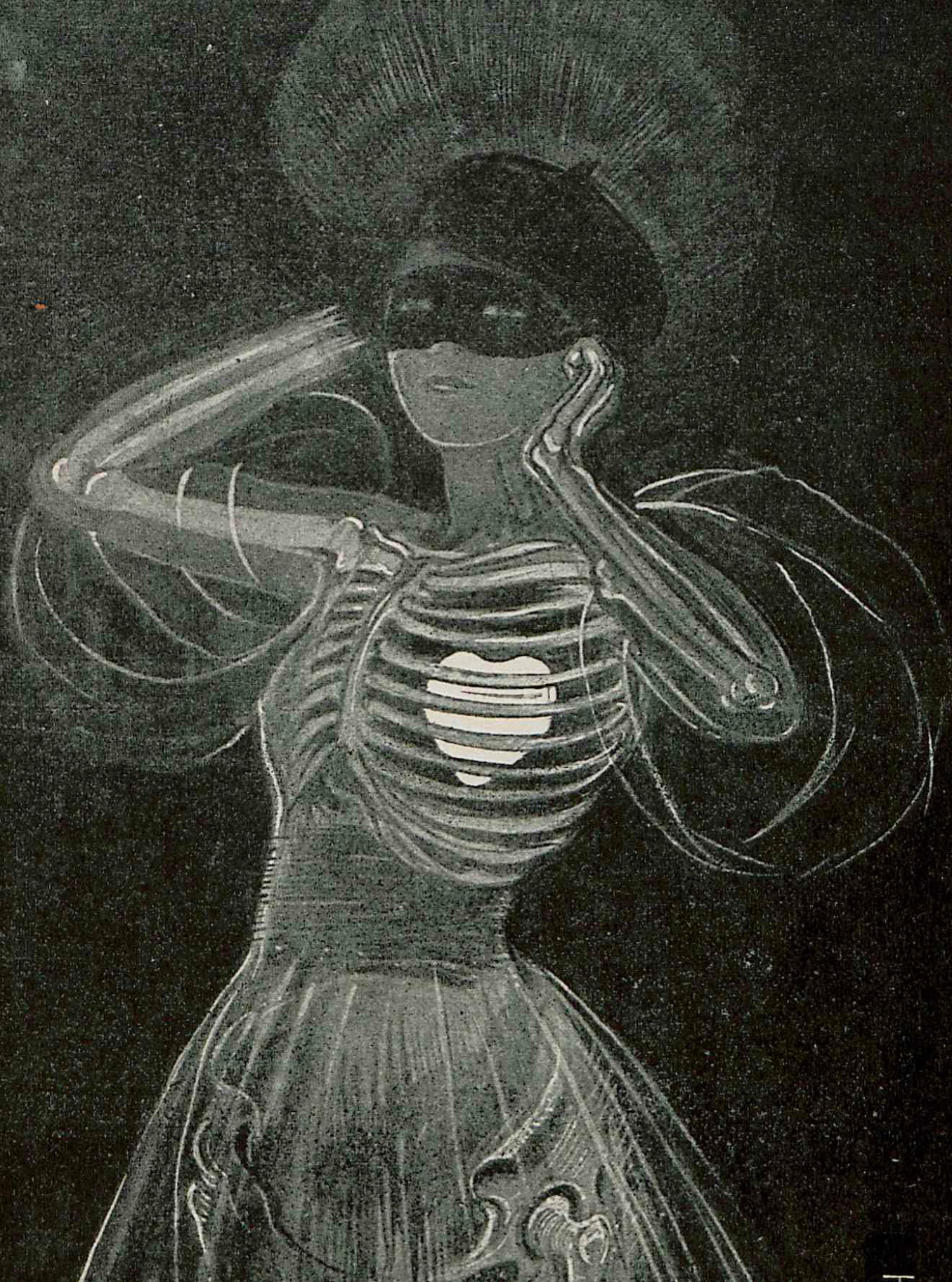
**1-2: Fight**—The character blindly attacks the source of their fear, suffering +2 on attack rolls and -4 on AC. They continue in this rage for 1d6 rounds, unable to do anything else until they calm down or die. They can attempt a new save each round to shake it off.

**3-4: Fright**—The character flees the scene in panic for 1d6 rounds before recovering, and may attempt a new save each round to calm down and come out of it.

**5-6: Freeze**—The character freezes, staring agape at the source of their fear for 1d6 rounds before recovering, and may attempt a new save each round to come out of it.

In such a game, the existence of psychotic breaks or permanent madness is more along the lines of a story point that the GM sets in place.







## CHAPTER THREE: THE ARTS ARCAINE

The major ability of the Witch and Warlock, and a minor ability of the Sage, is that of wresting the mystical forces of the universe and molding them to suit their needs. In simple terms, they cast spells to create magical effects. Casting magic requires both an innate talent and ability, and years of intensive study and training in one of a near-infinite variety of philosophies, religions, and sciences.

### MAGIC AND ENERGY

In the end, however, the heart and soul of magic comes down to the manipulation of energy. Whether it's personal energy, the energy of the Earth, of one or more gods, or of the very cosmos itself, it's all energy.

Magic is an intensely personal process, and no two magicians cast spells exactly alike. Even two Witches in the exact same tradition will have personal touches and different approaches to the rituals they use. There are, however, certain universals that apply.

### Magic is a Ritualistic Process

The first universal is that magic requires rituals to cast. Nobody walks around and flings mystical energy about to accomplish anything they like. To achieve a cosmic effect, whether it's to attract a lover, create financial success, or accomplish a basic blessing, a Witch or Warlock must undertake a ritual involving gestures, incantations, and offerings in the form of incense, candles, the creation of talismans, casting runes, and in the most powerful (and dark) rituals, sometimes blood and animal sacrifice.

Each spell has its own specific ritual requirements. A skilled Witch or Warlock is able to combine the requirements for a number of different spells together in a single, complex ritual, allowing them to hold back a key point of activation, to be used at a later time. This is what makes it appear as though the spell caster simply throws around spells with a word and a gesture.

## Rituals Require Components

Every magic ritual requires three categories of components. *Verbal* components are the words that must be spoken to make the magic work. *Somatic* components are the gestures the mage must make to shape the magic. This could mean making specific shapes with one's hand, waving an athame or ritual dagger around, or even doing a dance. *Material* components are the ritual offerings—incense, sacrifices, coin, gems, candles, burned paper, or any other item that is in some way sacrificed, offered, or destroyed in the activation of the magic.

Some spells require a fourth component—a *focus*, which could be the aforementioned athame, a wand, a holy symbol (a pentacle, crucifix, Star of David, or other icon), or an item that is of some special divine (to the user) significance which helps to quite literally focus the energy. Most often, the *focus* is used in the final casting, as opposed to during the ritual.

### What Components Are Required?

In the interest of keeping things open and simple mechanically and narratively, Most spells listed here don't list specific required components. These are largely left to the GM to add whatever balance and flavor they wish, such as limiting spells by requiring expensive material components.

Alternately, the GM could allow a Witch to increase her chances to cast a given spell by incorporating specific components, say by 3% to 5% per component added to the casting, depending on the specific components.

## Magi Require Spellbooks

Every magic user, whether they are part of the Wiccan, Reclaiming, Cabbalistic, Gnostic, Druidic, or any other tradition, requires a spellbook in which they record the detailed instructions for their spells.

Some call this book a grimoire. Others call it a Book of Shadows. Still others call it a spell journal. Regardless of the name, it's a Witch or Warlock's most deeply personal possession, and the core of their approach to and philosophy of magic. Without their spellbook, they are forced to start over again from scratch, re-creating all of the spells they've lost.

A spellbook can be a large, leather-bound tome. It can be a series of digest-sized notebooks. It can be a box full of scrolls. In a modern game, it can even be on a tablet, smartphone, or laptop computer. It can take almost any form, and many Witches and Warlocks have many such books of shadows, detailing their entire journey in magic, which function as much as a personal journey, diary, and philosophical treatise as they do a collection of spells.

## Magic Is Tiring

Finally, the process of casting spells is exhausting. Not only is the mage attempting to re-shape the building blocks of creation in some way, they are putting a great deal of concentration and mental energy into it. Each spell takes a lot out of the mage, which is why, at low levels, they can only handle so many spells. As they gain more power, they are able to prepare more spells.

## PREPARING SPELLS

A Witch, Warlock, or Sage can only prepare a limited number of spells at one time. This is a factor of their experience and mental fortitude. The Witch/Warlock and Sage class tables define how many spells of each level the character can prepare each day. This preparation means combining all of the different spells the Witch thinks she may need over the next day or so, in one large ritual. Each spell she puts into the ritual allows her to make use of the spell that day. So long as she continues succeeding at casting checks, she can cast the spell as many times as she likes.

For example, if a Witch has 3 first-level and 2 second-level spells available, and she thinks she might need to call upon *detect magic* twice, she needs use only one of her three first-level slots on that spell. She might choose to prepare it twice, however, allowing her to keep access if she loses it through backlash. Being an effective Witch is as much about strategy as it is having great cosmic power at one's fingertips.

This ritual takes anywhere from 30 minutes to two hours, and the Witch performs it at the same time every day. It could be in the morning when she rises, at dawn, at dusk, at twilight, midnight, even 3:14 AM if she wants. Regardless, the ritual gives her the spells she can access over the next 24 hours. The time the Witch performs her rituals is chosen at character creation and may not be changed, as it is an integral part of her approach to magical studies.

## CASTING SPELLS

To cast a spell, the Witch's player casts percentile dice. The base chance to cast a spell is 50%, plus 5% per level of the Witch. Thus, a first-level Witch has a base 55% chance to cast a spell. This percentage is penalized by 10% per level of the spell (thus, a second level spell imposes a penalty of -20%). Casters are limited in the level of spell they can cast as indicated on their spells per day table.

If the player rolls under the base percentage chance to cast a spell by 10% or more, the spell goes off immediately. If they succeed at less than a 10% margin, the spell effect is delayed by one round. If a Witch's base chance to cast a spell is over 100%, there is no roll needed to cast; the spell always works at immediate effect.

For example, a first level character has a 45% chance of success in casting a first level spell. (base 55%, -10% for the first-level spell). If they achieve a result of 35 or less on the d% check, the spell goes off immediately; if the result is 36-45%, the spell's effect is delayed by one round. At

tenth level, the Witch would have a 90% chance to cast a first level spell, with an 80% chance of immediate effect. By twelfth level, the Witch can cast first level spells without the need for a check, and they will always take effect immediately.



## Spell Backfire

Any time a Witch fails to cast a spell, it can backfire, sometimes catastrophically. Higher level spells have a greater chance of catastrophic backfire than lower level spells, though disaster can accompany any spell misfire. Effects can range from the Witch suffering damage or getting knocked unconscious, to the spell having its exact opposite intended effect, to massive explosions, to quite literally unleashing Hell on Earth.

When a spell fails, the Witch or Sage must throw 1d20, add the spell's level, and consult the Spell Backfire table (see below) to see what happens.

## Spell Backfire Table

1d20 + spell level	Result
1-10	Spell simply fails to work; no loss or negative effects and the spell remains available to cast.
11	Spell fails to work. Spell is lost and cannot be cast until prepared again.
12	Caster is stunned and cannot act for 1-4 turns. Spell remains available to use.
13	Caster is stunned and cannot act for 1-4 turns. Spell is lost and cannot be cast until prepared again.
14-15	Caster is knocked unconscious; treat as if affected by the <i>sleep</i> spell. Spell remains available to use.
16-17	Caster is knocked unconscious; treat as if affected by the <i>sleep</i> spell; spell is lost and cannot be cast until prepared again.
18	Caster suffers 1d6 damage per 2 spell levels (minimum 1d6). Spell remains available to use.
19	Spell has the exact opposite effect intended (GM's discretion). Spell is lost and cannot be cast until prepared again.
20-21	Spell affects the wrong parties (allies instead of enemies, enemies instead of allies). Spell is lost and cannot be cast until prepared again.
22-23	Spell summons a demon or undead with a number of hit dice equal to the spell's level. The creature is immediately hostile towards the caster and their allies.
24-25	Spell creates an explosion centered on the caster with a 30 ft. radius, dealing 1d6 damage per level of the spell to everyone in the radius. A dexterity saving throw can be made for half damage. The spell is lost and cannot be cast until prepared again.
26+	Spell creates an explosion centered on the caster with a 30 ft. radius, dealing 1d6 damage per level of the spell to everyone in the radius. A dexterity saving throw can be made for half damage. All spells are expended and the caster can't use magic until they prepare spells again.

## Counterspells

When a spellcaster sees another attempting to use magic, they can try to counter the spell by casting one of their own. This is the only time in which a caster can interrupt initiative, and react to another action. If the countering spellcaster (the defender) has *dispel magic* prepared, this will automatically counter any spell of a lower level; if the spell being cast is of higher level than *dispel magic*, the original caster (aggressor) must succeed at a Charisma-based saving throw, or their spell is canceled.

The aggressor does *not* gain their class bonus against spells and magical effects for this save.

If the defender doesn't have *dispel magic* cast, they must choose an available spell slot, and make a casting roll. They may attempt an Intelligence check to identify the spell being cast to give them a clue in this area; otherwise, they must blindly guess what level of spell to cast. If the chosen slot is of the same level as the spell being cast, this roll is a straight casting check. For every level *above* that of the aggressor's spell, they gain +1 to the check. For every level *below* that being cast, they

suffer -1 to the check. If the defender's roll ties or beats the aggressor's, the spell is canceled. If the aggressor's roll beats the defender's, the spell is not canceled, but the defender loses one prepared spell of the chosen level until she prepares spells again.

## MAGICAL DUELS

Sometimes when two spellcasters meet, they simply want to engage in a raw show of magical power. This is a magical duel. In order to initiate a magical duel, a Witch, Warlock, or Sage must make a casting check as though casting a first-level spell. No spell slot is required to make this check, and no spells are cast. The opposing spellcaster can either choose to accept the duel, or attempt to fight it off, in which case they may attempt a Wisdom save against spells to resist. During the duel, any other spellcaster can be drawn in at any time by a participant using their action to initiate a duel with the new participant by making a first-level spell check as above, or by that participant simply electing to join.

Once a magical duel begins, all participants are locked in until only one is left standing (all others have been defeated or otherwise break off).

The process of magical dueling is simple—casters each, in turn, choose spell slots to make casting checks and counter checks exactly as above, except that no actual spells are cast. Instead, a successful attack deals one of the following effects, at the choice of the attacking caster:

- Deal 1 die of damage per level of spell cast (Wisdom save vs. spells for half)
- Hurl opposing spellcaster 5 ft. per level of spell cast, deal 2d6 damage (add an extra 1d6 if the defender strikes a solid object), and knock opponent prone (lose their next attack; Strength save vs. spells to resist)
- Stun the opposing caster (Charisma save vs. spells to resist; -1 to save per level of

spell cast above 3rd); caster loses next 1d4 attacks.

- Knock the opposing caster unconscious (Wisdom save vs. spells to resist; -1 to save per level of spell cast above 3rd); opponent is out of the fight. If the opponent successfully saves, they may immediately counterattack using any of the effects above with no spell check needed, at the same level slot originally cast. They may also make their next attack as normal.

### Magical Duels in Play

Magical duels, and the rules and process by which they are initiated and conducted, can vary wildly from campaign to campaign. In some settings a magical duel could be simply a show of raw power and the means by which two magi have a showdown. In others, it could be carefully regulated by the laws of the magical underworld such as the *Code of the Duelio Arcane*:

**Rule the First:** Whomever offers offense may be the first to offer an apology or recompense at no loss of honor or face. The offended party may choose to accept or to demand greater recompense or a duel.

**Rule the Second:** If the disagreement has already resulted in physical or arcane attacks then the first rule is void.

**Rule the Third:** Once a duel is fixed and the parties take their positions on the field, no verbal apology will be offered or received.

**Rule the Fourth:** Duelists will name a Second who will duel in their stead if they are incapable, incapacitated or otherwise unable to duel.

**Rule the Fifth:** The duel will progress till some predetermined end condition is met. The end can be to "First Blood", to Stun, to knock from a circle, or any other victory condition. A duel to the death is also possible, but must be agreed upon by both parties.

There is no spell backfire during a magical duel; a failed check simply means the attacking mage neither deals damage nor imposes any effects upon their opponent, and loses access to one spell of that level until they next prepare spells. A caster with no spells left loses the duel.

## Surrender

Magical duels are brutal, flashy, and can be quite deadly. More often than not, a caster chooses to yield the fight to a superior opponent, falling to one knee and surrendering, rather than suffering the severe consequence of pushing a futile fight. This automatically ends the battle, and the surrendering caster may not use their magic for one full day after doing so.

## CORRUPTION

This optional system serves as a set of simple guidelines to limit the potential power of Witches and Warlocks. It assumes that in your setting, magic is alien and inherently corrupting. Whenever a Witch or Warlock casts a spell (successfully or unsuccessfully) she must make a standard saving throw against spells. If she fails, she gains a Corruption Point.

For every five Corruption Points gained, the caster gains a level of Corruption, suffering -1 (cumulative) to future saves and becoming a bit less human. This begins with her outlook—she slides ever more towards chaos; each Corruption Level corresponds to one "slide." That is, a lawful Witch becomes neutral, while a neutral Witch becomes chaotic. Chaotic Witches and Warlocks will show no measurable effects from corruption until they gain a full four corruption levels.

Once a Witch gains her fourth corruption level (20 corruption points), she begins to show physical effects of corruption. These effects are up to the GM, but they should include things like glowing red or coal black eyes, jet black or scaly skin, black veins clearly visible on her ghostly pale

skin, an aura of corruption that makes those around him uncomfortable, causes plants to wither, food to rot, etc., vestigial tentacles, clawed hands, gaunt appearance... the options are nearly endless.

Such characters are almost irrevocably evil at this point, and should be played as completely inhuman in outlook, and completely callous regarding the well-being of other humans. Such sorcerers consider themselves "evolved," and above humanity. They are, indeed, the very monsters they once battled. This is a *rare* case where the GM is in their right to occasionally direct the actions of the character, if the player is not portraying them as well and truly corrupt.

## Redeeming the Corrupt Sorcerer

Removing levels of corruption is not easy, and should require a major character sacrifice to accomplish. Characters who come back from evil in books, movies, and television series never do so without consequence. There must be an intensive story reason for a Witch to come back, and the consequences could be as severe as losing a level of experience, or even worse, suffering ability score losses, even having to quit using magic (effectively becoming a Survivor instead of a Witch or Warlock). Multiple sacrifices of this nature may need to be made, depending on the levels of corruption a Witch currently has, and the number of physical manifestations she displays.

In the end, it's left to the GM and player to come up with the process to redeem a fallen Witch or Warlock, as are the level of corruption at which a character becomes unplayable due to their sheer corruption.

## Black and White Magic

Also at the GM's option, certain spells in the setting may impose additional penalties to corruption saves—those spells that have a distinctly evil connotation, such as *inflict wounds*, *enervation*, *vampiric touch*, and even *raise dead* could impose a penalty



equal to the level of the spell on a corruption save. Such spells may even impose more than one corruption point on a failed save, again, at the discretion of the GM.

If this option is in play, only these "black magic" spells will require a corruption save, while "white magic" such as healing spells, will not. It is left to the GM's discretion which spells are black magic, and which are white magic.

### The Temptation of Corruption

It is left to the GM which spells will lead to corruption saves, and some spells may lead to corruption saves based on their intended use, in addition to their effect. For example, a Witch that uses her magic out of rage, hate, or malicious actions, regardless of the spell she is using, may trigger a corruption save. In general, it's best practice for the GM to make clear which spells will and will not trigger a save, or when a Witch is about to take an action that will trigger a save. Witches and Warlocks will always know when they are treading on the edge of corruption.

However, sometimes, corruption will empower a Witch, tempting her to step over to the dark. The GM may offer bonuses to casting, or enhanced spell effects for a Witch to use black magic. If she does so, she suffers an additional penalty of -1 to -5 to her saving throw, based on the benefit granted. Once a Witch reaches four levels of corruption, these benefits vanish, and she must actually succeed at a Wisdom saving throw to *not* use black magic when the opportunity arises, applying her corruption penalty to the save.

### What Spells Are Available in My World?

Always keep in mind that while these are spells and effects that should largely be familiar to most players of an old school game, in the end it's left to the GM to determine which spells are available in any given Night World setting. Your GM, for example, may not wish for "flashy" magical

effects like *magic missile* to exist in your world, as they feel that magic should be more subtle and mysterious, and less overt. Always discuss the available spells with your game master before finalizing your choices.

### Corruption and Play Styles

These rules assume a *realistic* play style.

In a *gritty* game, a Witch receives a Corruption Level for every *three* Corruption Points she racks up, and every spell, regardless of its effects or the intent of a Witch, will trigger a corruption save. Likewise, in a gritty game, healing magic may not exist (at the GM's discretion)

In a *cinematic* game, the black vs. white magic option is in play; only certain spells will trigger a corruption save, and these spells are those that either harm other people, support evil designs, or seek to subvert nature in some base (and debased) way. In addition, in a cinematic game, Witches only gain a level of corruption every 10 corruption points, instead of every 5.

## EXORCISM

Exorcism often plays a role in horror and urban fantasy games, and the level of its complexity or importance in your game will determine the rules you need to use.

In general, any character who is a Witch, Warlock, Sage, Theosophist, or Psychic can attempt to perform an exorcism. Good characters gain a bonus of +10% to their exorcism checks, whereas corrupted characters suffer a penalty equal to -5% per level of corruption they possess. As with many mechanics in *Night Shift*, there are three levels of play from which to choose for performing an Exorcism.

### A Battle of Wills

Exorcisms involve the character making a contest of wills against the possessing



entity. The percentage chance to exorcise the spirit is equal to the character's percentage to cast spells, use psychic powers, or perform theosophic abilities. This percentage is modified upward or downward by 10% per difference in the entity's hit dice and the hero's levels. That is, a 5th-level character attempting to exorcise a 7th-level spirit would suffer -20% to their chance to exorcise, whereas a 5th level character attempting to exorcise a 3rd-level spirit would gain +20% to their chance. This basic mechanic remains the same across the board; the complexity of the process and the consequences for failure is what denotes the level of play.

### Realistic Games

In order to successfully exorcise the spirit, the hero must succeed at a number of checks equal to half the hit dice of the possessing entity, with each check taking 1 day of time. Conversely, if they fail at an equal number of

checks first, the spirit cannot be exorcised. At the GM's option, the hero may try again after performing some task that enables them to regain their faith and power.

What happens after the spirit is expelled from the body is then left to the GM's discretion. It may be banished entirely. It may take on physical form and attack. It may try to possess another person present. Often, it will need to be battled in some way after being expelled from the body, and four different spirits could result in four different means for this battle to take place.

### Cinematic Games

Cinematic games see the character needing to make but a single check. A new check may be performed each day until the spirit is exorcised. Exorcised spirits are also banished from this plane of existence (possibly to return to harry the heroes again later). If the check succeeds by a wide enough margin (say 1/5 of the base chance) the entity is destroyed utterly. In such games, exorcism is not so much a plot point as it is a basic obstacle to be overcome.

### Gritty Games

In gritty games, exorcism is a ritualistic and violent test of personality and essence, wherein the exorcist must beat down the spirit, who seeks to do the same with mental assaults, half-truths, outright lies, and taunts. Each successful exorcism check by the exorcist does 1d6 damage to the spirit, where each failed check deals 1d6 to the exorcist. Further, each failed check results in a cumulative -5% to further checks.

If at any point the exorcist reduces the demon or possessing entity to half or less its total hit points, they gain +5% cumulative to further checks for each successful check thereafter.

Each check takes 1d4 hours of ritual and psychic battle to perform. If at any point the exorcist is reduced to 0 hit points, they are not dead as normal, but have been utterly beaten by the demon. They have failed in their exorcism and must succeed at a Charisma

saving throw or lose 1 level of experience, setting their experience point total to the midpoint of the next lowest level, losing one hit die worth of hit points, and reducing all class abilities to one level lower.

In addition, the spirit may decide to attempt to possess the exorcist, seeing them as a larger trophy. This requires a final exorcism check (at full penalties and using the new, reduced base chance from the lower level); if the exorcist fails, the victim is freed and they are possessed instead (and restored to full hit points, using their total or the entity's, whichever is higher). Until exorcised, the player loses control of their character, which is owned by the possessing entity.

If the exorcist reduces the entity to 0 hit points, it is expelled and usually banished, but may return at a later date, at the GM's option. Sometimes, the spirit may take on some sort of physical manifestation, requiring it to be battled to destroy it or drive it away.

After the exorcism is complete, all damage suffered by the exorcist during the exorcism is healed after a full night's rest. During the process of exorcism, the exorcist may regain 1 hit die of damage per 8 hours of rest.

If the exorcism is interrupted for more than 8 hours, the entire process must begin anew, with the possessing entity imparting a cumulative 10% penalty to exorcism checks per interruption as it has had the opportunity to bolster its defenses.

## NOTES ON SPELLS

### Turns and Spell Duration

A number of spells list duration in "turns." In terms of spell duration, a turn is an increment of 10 minutes. Thus, a spell that lasts for 3 turns will have a duration of 30 minutes in game time (not play time).

### Spell Attacks

When a spell calls for an attack, the formula is  $d20 + Wis\ Bonus + Hit\ Bonus + Target\ AC \geq 20$ . For determining hit bonus, the Witch is treated as a Veteran for spell attacks only.

## SPELL TABLES

### Level One

Bane  
Bless  
Charm Person  
Chill Ray  
Command  
Cure Light Wounds  
Dancing Lights  
Deathwatch  
Detect Evil  
Detect Magic  
Detect Snares & Pits  
Detect Undead  
Disrupt Undead  
Faerie Fire  
Hold Portal  
Inflict Light Wounds  
Light  
Magic Lock  
Magic Missile  
Obscurement  
Predict Weather  
Protection from Evil  
Protection from Undead  
Purify Food & Water  
Read Languages  
Sleep  
Speak with Animals

### Level Two

Animal Summoning  
Cause Fear  
Continual Flame  
Create Water  
Death Knell  
Desecrate  
Detect Invisible  
ESP  
Find Traps  
Heat Metal  
Hold Person  
Invisibility  
Knock  
Lesser Restoration

Levitate  
Locate Animals  
Locate Object  
Locate Plants  
Phantasmal Image  
Produce Flame  
Protection from Evil, 10' Radius  
Protection from Good or Evil  
Remove Paralysis  
Suggestion  
Warp Wood

### **Level Three**

Animal Summoning 2  
Animate Dead  
Cause Blindness or Deafness  
Clairaudience  
Clairvoyance  
Contagion  
Cure Disease  
Curse  
Dispel Magic  
Fly  
Haste  
Hold Animal  
Infravision  
Invisibility, 10' Radius  
Neutralize Poison  
Plant Growth  
Protection from Fire  
Protection from Good or Evil, 10' Radius  
Protection from Normal Missiles  
Protection from Undead, 10' Radius  
Pyrotechnics  
Remove Blindness/ Deafness  
Remove Curse  
Slow  
Speak with Dead  
Staves to Snakes  
Unholy Blight  
Water Breathing

### **Level Four**

Animal Summoning 3  
Arcane Eye  
Black Tentacles

Charm Monster  
Confusion  
Control Temperature, 0' Radius  
Cure Serious Wounds  
Daylight  
Death Ward  
Dimension Door  
Dimensional Anchor  
Enervation  
Forest Legion  
Hallucinatory Terrain  
Hold Undead  
Inflict Serious Wounds  
Insect Plague  
Phantasmal Killer  
Plant Door  
Polymorph Others  
Polymorph Self  
Produce Fire  
Protection from Lightning  
Restoration  
Speak with Plants  
Vampiric Touch  
Wall of Ice

### **Level Five**

Animal Growth  
Animal Summoning 4  
Anti-Animal Shell  
Blight  
Cloudkill  
Commune  
Conjure Elemental  
Contact Higher Plane  
Control Winds  
Create Food  
Create Undead  
Dismissal  
Dispel Evil  
Domination  
Finger of Death  
Geas  
Harm  
Heal  
Hold Monster  
Magic Jar

Pass Plant  
Pass-Wall  
Raise Dead  
Shadow Armor  
Telekinesis  
Teleport  
Transmute Rock to Mud  
Wall of Fire  
Wall of Iron  
Wall of Stone

### Level Six

Anti-Life Shell  
Anti-Magic Shell  
Blasphemy  
Circle of Death  
Control Weather  
Disintegrate  
Enchant Item  
Feeblemind  
Invisible Stalker  
Lower Water  
Move Earth  
Part Water  
Projected Image  
Reincarnate  
Slay Living  
Stone to Flesh  
Undeath to Death

### Level Seven

Ball of Sunshine  
Call the Restless Soul  
Death Aura  
Draw Forth the Soul  
Foresight  
Mass Polymorph  
Maze  
Peace Aura  
Serpent Garden  
Veneration  
Wave of Mutilation  
Windershins Dance

### Level Eight

Antipathy/Sympathy

Creeping Doom  
Damning Stare  
Destroy Life  
Discern Location  
Mind Blank  
Pit  
Prophecy  
Seek  
Wail of the Banshee

### Level Nine

Astral Projection  
Breath of the Goddess  
Mystic Barrier  
Sleeping Village  
Trap the Soul

## SPELL DESCRIPTIONS

**Animal Growth:** The caster causes up to a maximum of eight animals in a 25 square foot area within 150 feet to grow to twice their normal size. The animal's HD doubles, increasing the animal's attack and saving throws accordingly. The increase in size increases the damage the animal delivers by one die. When the spell ends, the animal's HP return to normal, and all damage taken while enlarged is divided by 2. This spell lasts for 1 turn per level of the caster.

**Animal Summoning 1:** This spell summons a natural animal of the caster's choice with up to two hit dice (or two animals with one hit die each), which appears where the caster designates within twenty feet, and acts immediately, on the caster's turn. It attacks opponents to the best of its ability and defends the caster. If the caster can communicate with the creature, she can direct it not to attack, to attack particular enemies, or to perform other actions. Animals able to be summoned are subject to the same restrictions as those discovered by the Locate Animals spell (i.e. no humans, humanoids, etc.) The spell lasts for one round per level of the caster, at which time the creature summoned disappears, returned to the location from which it was originally summoned.

**Animal Summoning 2:** As Animal Summoning 1, but the caster may summon any combination of animals whose total hit dice do not exceed 4.

**Animal Summoning 3:** As Animal Summoning 1, but the total hit dice of summoned creatures may not exceed 6.

**Animal Summoning 4:** as Animal Summoning 1, but the type of animals summoned may not have hit dice exceeding 8.

**Animate Dead:** This spell raises from the dead 1d6 corpses per level of the caster above 8. These corpses function exactly as normal zombies or skeletons and follow the caster's commands. The spell is permanent until canceled by the caster or the undead are destroyed.

**Anti-Animal Shell:** This spell creates an invisible, 20' diameter mobile barrier that keeps all creatures within protected from attacks by animals or magical beasts. Forcing the barrier against creatures that the spell keeps at bay strains and collapses the field. Intelligent magical beasts (such as dragons) and any magical beast of Giant size or larger may attempt a saving throw to pierce the barrier (ability base at referee's discretion); success indicates the barrier collapses and the spell ends. Otherwise the spell lasts for ten minutes per caster level.

**Anti-Life Shell:** This spell summons a mobile, hemispherical energy field, 10 feet in diameter, that prevents the entrance of most types of living creatures and lasts for 1 turn per level of the caster. The effect is centered upon the caster, moves with him, and hedges out all living creatures, but not constructs, elementals, outsiders, or undead. The spell may be used only defensively, not aggressively. Forcing the barrier against creatures that the spell keeps at bay collapses the barrier.

**Anti-Magic Shell:** This spell creates a mobile, 20 ft. diameter, sphere of shimmering transparent energy around the caster that

is impervious to most magical effects, including spells, spell-like abilities and supernatural abilities. An anti-magic shell suppresses any spell or magical effect used within, brought into or cast into the area, but does not dispel it. Time spent within an anti-magic shell counts against the suppressed spell's duration. Likewise, the shell prevents the functioning of any magic items or spells within its confines. The shell prevents the entrance of summoned or conjured creatures and incorporeal undead; normal creatures can enter the area, as can normal missiles. Unless they are summoned, golems and other magical constructs, elementals, outsiders, and corporeal undead may enter in an anti-magic area, but the anti-magic area temporarily nullifies their spell-casting supernatural, spell-like, and other magic abilities. Dispel magic does not affect an anti-magic shell. This spell lasts for 1 round per level of the caster.

**Antipathy/Sympathy:** The Witch can cause an object or location to emanate magical vibrations that repel either a specific kind of intelligent creature or creatures of a particular alignment, as defined by the Witch. The spell lasts for 1 hour per level of the Witch and the kind of creature to be affected must be named specifically. A creature type is not specific enough ("vampires," as opposed to "undead"). Creatures so named feel compulsion to abandon the area or item, shunning it and never willingly returning to it while the spell is in effect. A creature that makes a successful saving throw can stay in the area or touch the item but feels uncomfortable doing so. This distracting discomfort reduces the creature's Dexterity score by 4 points while they are in the area, and imposes -2/-10% to all ability checks, attacks, saving throws, and class abilities.

The reverse of this spell, Sympathy, compels a creature to come into an area. If they try to leave the area they suffer the same effects to Dexterity, checks, attacks, saving throws, and class abilities.

**Arcane Eye:** The caster creates an invisible magical eye that sends the caster visual information. The arcane eye travels at 120 feet per round. Solid barriers prevent the passage of an arcane eye, although it can pass through a space as small as one inch in diameter. The caster must concentrate to use the eye. If the caster does not concentrate, the eye becomes inert until the caster again concentrates. The eye lasts for 1 turn per level of the caster.

**Astral Projection:** The Witch can free her spirit from her physical body and project herself into the Astral Plane. She can bring the astral forms of one additional creature per two Witch levels, provided that these subjects are willing and linked in a circle with you at the time of the casting. These fellow travelers are dependent upon the Witch and must accompany her at all times. If something happens to the Witch during the journey, her companions are stranded wherever she left them.

The travelers are projected onto the Astral Plane, leaving their physical bodies on the Material Plane in a state of suspended animation. While she is on the Astral Plane, the astral body remains connected at all times to the physical body by a silvery cord. If the cord is broken, the Witch is killed. Luckily, very few things can destroy a silver cord.

The Witch and her companions may travel through the Astral Plane indefinitely. Their bodies simply wait behind in a state of suspended animation until they choose to return. The spell lasts until the Witch desires to end it, or until it is terminated by

some outside means, such as *dispel magic*, the breaking of the silver cord, or the destruction of the body back on the Material Plane (which kills the Witch).

**Ball of Sunshine:** Upon casting the Witch tosses a handful of gold dust into the air where it gathers and collapses into a fist size ball of pure sunlight. The small star burns till the end of the round. All creatures within 60' are blinded and take 6d6 points of damage. A dexterity save negates blindness and halves damage. Living creatures to which sunlight is harmful take double damage. Any undead creature caught within the globe takes 1d6 points of damage per caster level to a maximum of 20d6, or half damage if a save is successful. In addition, the burst destroys any undead creature normally harmed by bright light if it fails its save. *Ball of Sunshine* dispels any darkness spells cast in the area.

**Bane:** This spell fills your enemies with fear and doubt. Each creature affected takes a -1 penalty on attack rolls and a -1 penalty on saving throws against fear effects. Bane counters and dispels bless This spell lasts for 1 round per caster level.

**Black Tentacles:** This spell conjures a field of rubbery black tentacles that fill a 20-foot radius for 1 minute per level of the caster. The inky, waving tendrils spring forth from whatever surface is underfoot—the earth, floor, even water. They bash, grasp and entwine creatures in the area, holding and crushing them with great strength. Every creature within the area of the spell that is successfully attacked (see must make a Strength-or Dexterity-based save against the tentacles or suffer 1d6+4 damage. A new save to escape is allowed



every round. Treat the tentacles as 6-HD creatures. The tentacles are immune to all types of damage save fire and acid, which deal normal damage. The tentacles continue to crush the opponent until the spell ends or the opponent escapes. Any creature that enters the area of the spell is immediately attacked by the tentacles, including the caster and her allies. Even creatures who aren't grappling with the tentacles may move through the area at only half normal speed.

**Blasphemy:** The spell caster raises his voice and utters a phrase of incomprehensible, base wrongness, which has a devastating effect on any non-evil creature hearing and understanding his words. The exact effects of the spell are dependent upon the difference between the hit dice or levels of the victims and the level of the caster. Those equal to the caster's level are stunned for 1 round. Those that are one to four levels below the caster are weakened, their Strength score reduced by 2d6 for 1d6+2 rounds, and are stunned for 1 round. Those of 5 to 9 levels below the caster are paralyzed for 2d6 rounds, after which they are weakened and stunned as above. Victims that are 10 or more levels or hit dice below the caster are instantly killed. A Wisdom-based saving throw halves these effects (negating any 1-round stun effects entirely). Creatures whose levels or hit dice exceed the caster's are unaffected by this spell.

**Bless:** The caster instills his allies with divine aid, adding +1 to attack rolls and saves against fear. Lasts for 1 round per level.

**Blight:** The caster causes a single plant of any size to wither and die. An affected plant creature takes 1d6 points of damage per level of the caster (maximum 15d6) and may attempt a Constitution-based saving throw for half damage. To accomplish this, the Caster must make a Ray Attack or Melee Spell Attack, as appropriate, against the plant creature. A plant that isn't a

creature doesn't receive a save and immediately withers and dies.

**Breath of the Goddess:** The Witch calls forth the life-invigorating breath of the female divinity and infuses a large area with positive energy. All living creatures within the area are *healed*, and all undead are *harmed*. All non-sentient plant life is fully restored as if affected by the enrichment feature from the *plant growth* spell.

**Call the Restless Soul:** The casting of this spell tears the fabric of reality, allowing restless spirits to come through into the world. Undead called in this way will not harm the Witch, but any other living being they sense is subject to their attacks. Unfortunately, these undead will not respond to any instructions; rather they will blindly attack all living creatures within the area, other than the Witch. When the spell is cast, roll 1d6 on the table below and refer to monster stats in **Chapter 5** for individual monster entries.

Die Result	Called Creature	Quantity
1-2	Shadow	1d8
3-4	Wraith	1d6
5	Spectre	1d4
6	Ghost	1d2

**Cause Blindness or Deafness:** The reverse of remove blindness or deafness, this spell causes the creature touched to become blinded or deafened if he fails a Constitution-based saving throw. Blind characters cannot see, suffer -3 to all rolls requiring dexterity or related to movement, and automatically fail any checks related to sight. A deafened character suffers -4 on initiative, and all spell casting rolls suffer a -3 penalty. Remove blindness or deafness counters and dispels the reverse of the spell. This spell lasts for 1 hour per caster level.

**Cause Fear:** Panic and terror race through the hearts of the creatures affected by this spell if they fail a Charisma-based



saving throw, causing them to flee from the caster as fast as possible. The creatures cower in abject horror if cornered, and if forced to confront the caster, any effected creature suffers a -2 penalty to all rolls. It effects all enemies of the caster in a 25 foot x 25 foot area.

**Charm Monster:** See Charm Person, but affects any creature. Creatures can make a saving throw with their Wisdom to resist. Multiple animals of less than three hit dice can be affected; up to 3d6 hit dice worth of animals. This spell doesn't grant the ability to speak or communicate with charmed subjects. Lasts one hour per level of the spell caster.

**Charm Person:** This charm makes a medium-size or smaller humanoid regard the caster as a trusted friend and ally. If the target is being threatened or attacked by the caster or the caster's allies, however, it receives a +5 bonus to its saving throw. The spell does not enable the character to control the charmed creature as if it were an automaton, but the subject does perceive the caster's words and actions in the most favorable way. Any act by the caster or the caster's apparent allies that threatens the charmed creature breaks the spell. Note also that the caster must speak the creature's language to communicate commands. The subject may make a Charisma-based saving throw to negate the effects. This spell lasts for one hour per level of the caster.

**Chill Ray:** A ray of blue energy erupts forth from the caster, which disrupts the life force of living creatures. Each ray channels negative energy that deals 2d6 points of damage. The affected creature may make a Strength-based save for half damage. The Caster gains one ray per level and must make a Ray Attack to hit. Undead creatures take no damage, but must make a successful Wisdom-based saving throw or flee as if panicked for 1d4 rounds +1 round per caster level.

**Circle of Death:** A circle of death snuffs out

the life force of living creatures, killing them instantly. The spell slays 1d6 HD worth of living creatures per caster level (maximum 10d6) in a 20-foot diameter up to 100 feet away. Creatures with the fewest HD are affected first; among creatures with equal HD, those who are closest to the burst's point of origin are affected first. No creature of 8 or more HD can be affected, and Hit Dice that are not sufficient to affect a creature are wasted.

**Clairaudience:** Clairaudience enables the character to concentrate upon some locale and hear almost as if the character were there. Distance is not a factor, but the locale must be a place familiar to the character. The spell does not allow magically enhanced senses to work through it. If the chosen locale is magically silenced, the character hears nothing. Lead sheeting or magical protection blocks the spell, and the caster senses that the spell is so blocked. The spell can be dispelled, and it functions only on the plane of existence the character is occupying. This spell lasts for 1 turn per level.

**Clairvoyance:** As clairaudience, except visual. If the chosen locale is magically darkened, the character cannot see. If it is naturally pitch black, the character can see in a 10 foot radius around the center of the spell's effect.

**Cloudkill:** A bank of yellowish-green poisonous fog billows out from the point the caster designates and affects a 30 foot diameter area, obscuring all sight beyond 5 feet. The fog's vapors kill any living creature with 3 or fewer HD (no save) and cause creatures with 4 to 6 HD to make saving throws with Constitution save bonus, or die. Living creatures above 6 HD, and creatures of 4 to 6 HD who make their saving throws, take 2d6 points of poison damage each round while in the cloud. Holding one's breath doesn't help. The cloudkill moves away from the caster at 10 feet per round, rolling along the surface of the ground. Because the vapors are heavier than air, they sink to the lowest level of the

land, even pouring down openings. A moderate wind (11+ mph) disperses the fog in four rounds; a strong wind (21+ mph) disperses the fog in one round.

**Command:** You speak a one-word command to a creature you can see within range. The target must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or follow the command on its next turn. The spell has no effect if the target is undead, if it doesn't understand your language, or if your command is directly harmful to it. Some typical commands and their effects include: Approach, Drop, Flee, Grovel, Halt. You might issue a command other than one described here. If you do so, the GM determines how the target behaves. If the target can't follow your command, the spell ends.

**Commune:** The caster contacts his deity or agents thereof and asks one "yes or no" question per caster level. The answers given are correct within the limits of the entity's knowledge. "Unclear" is a legitimate answer, because powerful beings of the Outer Planes are not necessarily omniscient. In cases where a one-word answer would be misleading or contrary to the deity's interests, a short phrase (five words or less) may be given as an answer instead. The spell, at best, provides information to aid character decisions. The entities contacted structure their answers to further their own purposes. If the caster lags, discusses the answers, requests clarification, or goes off to do anything else, the spell ends.

**Confusion:** This spell causes creatures in an area 50 feet x 50 feet and up to 150 feet away (within sight) to behave randomly, as indicated on the table below. Except on a result of 1-2, roll each round to see what the subject does. Wandering creatures leave the scene as if disinterested. Any confused creature who is attacked automatically attacks its attackers on its next turn. This spell lasts for 1 round per level of the caster. Victims can make a saving throw with their

Wisdom to resist the effects.

### 1d20 Behavior

1-2	Wander away for 2d6 minutes (unless prevented)
3-8	Attempt mundane task, like cooking, for 1 round
9-10	Do nothing for 1 round
11-12	Try to locate lost items for 1 round
13-17	Attack nearest creature for 1 round
17-20	Act normally for 1 round

**Conjure Elemental:** A portal to an elemental plane of the caster's choice (air, earth, fire or water) is torn open with this spell, drawing a 12 HD elemental to the caster's service. Once the elemental appears, it serves the caster for the duration of the spell. The elemental explicitly obeys and never attacks the caster, even if someone else manages to usurp or gain control over the elemental. The caster does not need to maintain control over the elemental, and can dismiss it at any time. This spell lasts for 1 turn per level of the caster.

**Contact Higher Plane:** The caster projects his mind to another plane of existence in hopes of receiving advice and information from powers that reside there. The powers reply in a language the character understands, or by telepathy, but they often resent such contact and as a result give brief answers. The GM will answer questions with yes, no, maybe, never, unclear, irrelevant or some other one-word answer. The caster must make a saving throw with Intelligence. The GM will impose a penalty of 1-10 based on the complexity of the question asked. Failure indicates a chance for insanity equal to the save penalty x 10%. Characters who become insane have a percentage chance equal to half the chance of insanity that the affliction is permanent; otherwise, it lasts for 1-4 weeks (see optional **Madness** rules).

The caster may contact any plane he

wishes, knowing that higher planes carry with them a better chance of a true and correct answer, but more of a chance of insanity from a failed save. Game Masters should adjudicate insanity as they see fit, but generally it results in the spell caster being incapacitated for the duration of the affliction. This spell is usable only once per week.

**Contagion:** This spell afflicts the subject with a disease of the caster's choice. This disease has no incubation period and strikes immediately. The target gets a Constitution-based save to resist the spell, though the more powerful the disease, the easier it is to save. The target gets a bonus to his saving throw equal to the disease's Severity Rating of 1-10, assigned by the Game Master.

**Continual Flame:** A flame, equivalent in brightness to a torch, springs forth from an object that the character touches. The flame looks like a regular flame, but it creates no heat and doesn't use oxygen. The flame can be covered and hidden, but not smothered or quenched. The spell is permanent.

**Control Temperature, 10' Radius:** The caster can raise or lower the ambient temperature in the affected area by up to 50 degrees Fahrenheit. The temperature will change at a rate of 10 degrees per round until the maximum alteration is achieved or the caster decides to stop the adjustment. The spell duration is three turns, plus one turn per level of the caster, and the caster may make repeated adjustments and alterations throughout the spell duration.

**Control Weather:** The caster changes the weather in the local area, 2 miles x 2 miles centered on caster. It takes 10 minutes to cast the spell and an additional 10 minutes for the effects to manifest. The caster can only call forth weather appropriate to the climate and season of the area, but can almost always change the direction of the wind and control its

intensity from calm to strong. The character cannot control the specific applications of the weather. When the character selects a certain weather condition to occur, the weather assumes that condition 10 minutes later (changing gradually). The weather continues as the caster left it for the duration (4d6 hours), or until the character designates a new kind of weather, which fully manifests 10 minutes later. Contradictory conditions are not possible simultaneously. Control weather can do away with atmospheric phenomena (naturally occurring or otherwise) as well as create them.

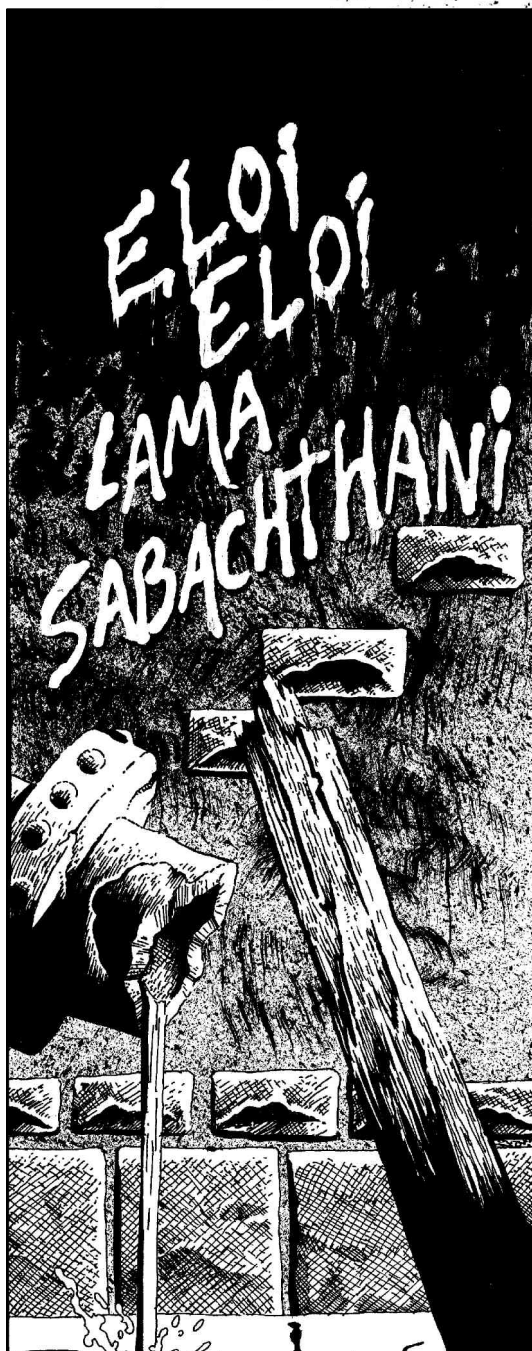
**Control Winds:** The caster alters wind force in the 40' per level area surrounding him. The caster can make the wind blow in a certain direction or manner, increase its Strength, or decrease its Strength. The new wind direction and Strength persist for ten minutes per level of the caster or until the caster chooses to alter his handiwork, which requires concentration. The caster may create an "eye" of calm air up to 80 feet in diameter at the center of the area if he wishes, and may choose to limit the area to any cylindrical area less than the spell's full limit. For every three caster levels, the caster can increase or decrease wind Strength by one rank. Each round on the caster's turn, a creature in the wind must make a Strength-based save or suffer the effect of being in the windy area. Rank 0 is any condition from no wind to a gusty breeze of up to 20 mph. Strong winds (rank 1; 21+ mph) make sailing difficult. Severe wind (rank 2; 31+ mph) causes minor ship and building damage. A wind storm (rank 3; 51+ mph) drives most flying creatures from the skies, uproots small trees, knocks down light wooden structures, tears off roofs, and endangers ships. Hurricane force winds (rank 4; 75+ mph) destroy wooden buildings, sometimes uproot even large trees, and cause most ships to founder. A tornado (rank 5; 175+ mph) destroys all nonfortified buildings and often uproots large trees.

**Create Food:** This spell creates food to sustain three humans for 24 hours. The food is simple fare of the caster's choice—highly nourishing, if rather bland. Food so created decays and becomes inedible within 24 hours, although it can be kept fresh for another 24 hours by casting a purify food and drink spell on it. The water created by this spell is just like clean rain water, and it doesn't go bad as the food does.

**Create Undead:** A much more potent spell than animate dead, this evil spell allows the creation of ghouls, ghosts and mummies. The type or types of undead the Caster can create is based on caster level: Casters of 8th level create ghouls, while casters of 9th level can create ghosts, and casters of 10th level can create mummies. The caster may create less powerful undead than her level would allow if she chooses. Created undead are not automatically under the control of their animator, and must be subdued or controlled using some other means. This spell must be cast at night.

**Create Water:** This spell generates up to 2 gallons per caster level of wholesome, drinkable water, just like clean rain water. Water can be created in an area as small as will actually contain the liquid, or in an area three times as large—possibly creating a downpour or filling many small receptacles.

**Creeping Doom:** The Witch calls forth a mass of centipede, spiders, locusts, and other crawling, biting swarms (one per two Witch levels, to a maximum of ten swarms at 20th level), which need not appear adjacent to one another, but all of which appear within 50 feet of the Witch. The Witch may summon the swarms so that they share the area of other creatures. The swarms remain stationary, attacking any creatures in their area, unless commanded to move. The Witch can command any number of the swarms to move toward any prey within 100 feet of her position. She



cannot command any swarm to move more than 100 feet away from herself, and if she moves more than 100 feet from any swarm, that swarm remains stationary, attacking any creatures in its area (but it can be commanded again if you move within 100 feet). See **Chapter Five** for statistics regarding swarms.

**Cure Disease:** Cures all diseases from which the subject suffers. The spell also kills parasites, including green slime and others. Certain special diseases may not be countered by this spell or may be countered only by a caster of a certain level or higher.

**Cure Light Wounds:** This spell heals 1d6+1 points of damage to a character touched. Requires a melee spell attack against unwilling targets.

**Cure Serious Wounds:** This spell cures 2d6+2 points of damage to a wounded character touched by the caster.

**Curse:** The opposite of Bless, this spell fills enemies with fear and doubt. Each affected creature takes a -1 penalty on attack rolls and a -1 penalty on saving throws against fear effects. The spell lasts for 1 round per level of the caster, and affects all enemies in a 50 foot square.

**Damning Stare:** This murderous spell causes the Witch's eyes to emit deadly necromantic power, slaying nearly anyone who meets the Witch's gaze. This spell functions just like a standard gaze attack. Living subjects with less than 6 HD are instantly slain by the Witch's gaze (no save). Those who have 6 to 9 HD must make a Charisma save or die. Living creatures above 9 HD, and those of 6 to 9 HD who succeed at their saving throws suffer 1d6 damage per 2 levels of the Witch, and see one ability score reduced by 4 points. Roll 1d6

Roll d6	Ability
1	Strength
2	Dexterity
3	Constitution
4	Intelligence
5	Wisdom
6	Charisma

on the table to determine which ability is reduced. This ability reduction is permanent until removed with appropriate magic (*remove curse* etc.). The Witch must be able to look at and see the target of this spell.

**Dancing Lights:** Depending on the version selected during casting, the caster creates up to four lights that resemble lanterns or torches (and provide the same amount of light), or up to four glowing spheres of light (which look like will-o'-wisps), or one faintly glowing, vaguely humanoid shape. The dancing lights must stay within 20 feet of each other, but otherwise move as the caster desires (no concentration required): forward or back, up or down, straight or turning corners, etc. The lights can move up to 100 feet per round. A light winks out if its distance from the caster exceeds the caster's line of sight. A creature that interacts with a dancing light gets a Wisdom-based saving throw to recognize it is an illusion.

**Daylight:** An object touched by the caster sheds light as bright as full daylight in a 60-foot radius, and dim light for an additional 60 feet beyond that. Creatures that take penalties in bright light also take them while within the radius of this magical light; similarly, creatures that are damaged or destroyed by bright light are harmed by this spell, if within the 60' full daylight radius. If daylight is cast on a small object that is then placed inside or under a light-proof covering, the spell's effects are blocked until the covering is removed. Daylight counters or dispels any darkness spell of equal or lower level, such as darkness. The spell lasts for 1 turn per level of the caster.

**Death Aura:** *Death aura* drains the life from any and all living creatures within range. Living creatures within 15 feet of the Witch suffer 2d6 points of damage per round from negative energy as their life is drained away unless they succeed at a Constitution save each round they remain

in the area. The spell lasts for 1 minute, or until the Witch's concentration is broken.

**Death Knell:** The caster draws forth the ebbing life force of a creature and uses it to fuel her own power. Upon casting this spell, the caster touches a living creature that has 0 or fewer hit points (Assuming the Referee is using the "negative Constitution" option; see Damage, p. 72). If the subject fails its saving throw, it dies, and the caster gains 1d6+1 temporary hit points and a +2 bonus to Strength. Additionally, the caster's effective caster level goes up by +1, improving spell effects dependent on caster level. (This increase in effective caster level does not grant you access to more spells.) These effects last for 10 minutes per HD of the drained creature. If the Referee is not using the negative Constitution option, for purposes of this spell, any creature that falls in combat is subject to this spell for 1d6 rounds after its hit points reach zero.

**Death Ward:** For one round per level of the caster, the subject is immune to all necromancy, death, or negative energy spells. This includes all spells cast by members of the Caster Elite Path, even if such spells mimic standard Caster or Cleric spells. It also includes spells such as raise dead, and renders the subject immune to energy drain attacks for the duration (but does not restore already lost levels). The spell can be cast upon a dead body to prevent it being raised. Unwilling subjects may attempt a Wisdom-based save to resist the effects of this spell.

**Deathwatch:** Using the foul sight granted by the powers of unlife, the caster can determine the condition of creatures near death within a 30-foot line of sight. The caster instantly knows whether each creature within the area is dead, fragile (alive and wounded, with 3 or fewer hit points left), fighting off death (alive with 4 or more hit points), undead, or neither alive nor dead (such as a construct). Deathwatch lasts for ten minutes per level and sees

through any spell or ability that allows creatures to feign death.

**Desecrate:** This spell imbues an area with negative energy. Theosophists attempting to use their powers in this area suffer -15% to their base chance of success, and every undead creature entering a desecrated area gains a +1 bonus on attack rolls, damage rolls, and saving throws. An undead creature created within or summoned into such an area gains +1 hit point per HD. Furthermore, anyone who casts animate dead within this area may create as many as double the normal amount of undead. If the desecrated area contains an altar, shrine, or other permanent fixture dedicated to an evil deity or higher power, the modifiers and effects of this spell are doubled. If the area contains an altar, shrine, or other permanent fixture of a deity, pantheon, or higher power that is not evil, the spell instead curses the area, cutting off its connection with the associated deity or power. In this case the spell does not grant the bonuses and penalties relating to undead, as given above unless cast a second time.

**Destroy Life:** Use of this spell slays a target living creature (excluding undead, constructs and creatures from other planes). When cast, the Witch must determine whether she will target one individual or a group. If it is against a single opponent, and that individual has 80 hit points or less, it dies unless it makes a successful Constitution saving throw. On a successful save, the victim loses all but 1d6 hit points.

If the Witch targets a group, the total number of would-be-affected creatures may not exceed 100 hit points, starting at the weakest creature and moving upwards until all 100 hit points or a fraction thereof have been used. No creature so affected can have more than 20 hit points. Each creature so affected makes a Constitution saving throw, if successful they lose all but 1d4 hit points. Lastly, all non-sentient plant life is wiped out in the area of the spell, leaving a fine ash in its wake.

**Detect Evil:** The caster can sense the presence of supernatural evil within a 60 foot radius, as well as how relatively powerful the source of the evil is (minimal, slight, moderate, great, obscene). The spell notes the general direction, but not the exact location or distance of the evil. This spell will detect undead, but not evil characters of lesser than eighth level (and those of eighth to tenth level will generally register as "slight.") The spell lasts for one turn per level of the caster.

**Detect Invisible:** The caster can see invisible creatures. This spell does not reveal creatures simply hidden, such as thieves using their stealth abilities or monsters using a natural stealth ability. The spell lasts for 1 round per level of the caster.

**Detect Magic:** the caster can detect the presence of magical auras in anything the caster observes. The Strength of the magic detected will be revealed as lingering, faint, moderate, strong or overwhelming. Magical areas, multiple types of magic or strong local magical emanations may confuse or conceal weaker auras, although the Game Master may allow the caster to spend additional rounds concentrating to decipher the confusion or reveal weaker auras. The Game Master may require an Intelligence check to do so. The spell lasts for only one turn.

**Detect Snares & Pits:** This spell detects simple pits, deadfalls, and snares, as well as mechanical traps constructed of natural materials, but not complex traps or trapdoors. It does detect certain natural hazards such as quicksand, sinkholes, or unsafe walls of natural rock. However, it does not reveal other potentially dangerous conditions such as slick walkways, at the Referee's discretion. The spell does not detect magic traps, mechanically complex ones, or those already sprung or nonfunctional. The amount of information revealed depends on how long the caster studies a particular 10 foot square area.

During the 1st Round, the spell notes the presence or absence of hazards. In the 2nd Round, the number of hazards and the location of each can be determined. If a hazard is outside line of sight, then direction, but not exact location, is divined. Each additional round thereafter reveals the general type and trigger for one particular hazard closely examined by the caster. The spell has a duration of 1 turn per level of the caster.

**Detect Undead:** The caster can detect the aura that surrounds undead creatures up to 60 feet away within a direct line of sight. The amount of information revealed depends on how long he studies a particular area. In the first round the caster can detect the presence of undead auras. In the second round the caster senses the number of undead auras in the area and the Strength of the strongest undead aura present. In the third round the strength and location of each undead aura are revealed. If an aura is outside the caster's line of sight, then he discerns its general direction. The strength of an undead aura is determined by the HD of the undead creature. This aura will linger after its original source leaves or is destroyed. Creatures of 1 or fewer HD give off a faint aura which lingers for 1 round, while 2-4 HD creatures give off a moderate aura that lingers for 1d6 rounds, 5-10 a strong aura that remains for 1d6x10 rounds, and over 10 HD the aura is so overwhelming it will stun good aligned casters for 2d6 rounds. The aura of such powerful creatures remains for 1d6 days. In general, only creatures of 5+ HD can be detected through walls (provided that they would be in line of sight if the wall weren't there). The spell lasts for 1 round per level of the caster.

**Dimension Door:** The target instantly transports from its current location to any other spot within 350 feet chosen by the caster. The character always arrives at exactly the spot desired whether by simply visualizing the area or by stating direction.

After using this spell, the character can't take any other actions until the next round. If the character arrives in a place that is already occupied by a solid body, the character becomes trapped in the astral plane. All that the caster wears and carries is teleported, up to 500 pounds. If used on an unwilling target, the target can make a save with Dexterity to escape.

**Dimensional Anchor:** This spell causes a green ray to spring from the caster's outstretched hand which "locks" the target in its current dimension. The caster must make a ranged spell attack to hit the target with a range of 500 yards; this attack ignores AC from armor, but suffers a penalty equal to the target's Dexterity bonus. Any creature or object struck is covered with a shimmering emerald field that completely blocks extradimensional travel. Forms of movement barred by a dimensional anchor include dimension door, pass wall, teleport, tree stride, and similar spells or spell-like abilities. The spell also prevents the use of summoning spells for the duration of the spell, and prevents summoned creatures from disappearing at the end of a summoning spell. A dimensional anchor does not block extradimensional perception or attack forms. This spell lasts for one round per level of the caster.

**Discern Location:** A discern location spell is among the most powerful means of locating creatures or objects. Nothing short of a *mind blank* spell or the direct intervention of a deity keeps the Witch from learning the exact location of a single individual or object. Discern location circumvents normal means of protection from scrying or location. The spell reveals the name of the creature or object's location (place, name, business name, building name, or the like), community, county (or similar political division), country, continent, and the plane of existence where the target lies.

**Disintegrate:** A thin green ray springs

from the caster's pointing finger, causing the creature or object it strikes to glow and vanish, leaving behind only a trace of fine dust. The caster must make a ranged spell attack to hit, and the ray affects one creature or up to a 10-foot cube of nonliving matter (thus, the spell disintegrates only part of any very large object or structure). The ray affects even magical matter, or energy of a magical nature, but not a globe of invulnerability or an antimagic field. A creature or object that makes a successful save with Charisma is only partially affected, taking 5d6 points of damage instead of disintegrating. Only one creature or object can be affected, and the ray is not blocked by normal barriers.

**Dismissal:** This spell forces an extraplanar creature (including undead) back to its proper plane, if it fails a Wisdom save with a penalty (or bonus) equal to the difference between the caster's level and the creature's Hit Dice. Thus, if a 10th level caster uses this spell against a 5 HD creature, the creature saves at -5, whereas if an 8th level caster uses this spell against a 10th level creature, the creature saves at +2. If the spell is successful, the creature is instantly whisked away, but there is a 20% chance of actually sending the creature to a plane other than its own. Non-corporeal undead affected by this spell are considered to have "Negative Plane of Shadow" as their home plane; corporeal dead which fail to save against this spell are destroyed as the negative force animating them is banished.

**Dispel Evil:** shimmering, white, holy energy surrounds the caster, imparting a -4 to attacks made against the caster by evil creatures. Also, on making a successful melee attack against an evil creature from another plane, the caster can choose to drive that creature back to its home plane. The creature can negate the effects with a successful save using Wisdom (if applicable). This use discharges and ends the spell. Finally, with a touch the caster can automatically dispel any one enchantment.



spell cast by an evil creature or any one evil spell. Spells that can't be dispelled by dispel magic also can't be dispelled by dispel evil. Saving throws and spell resistance do not apply to this effect. This use discharges and ends the spell.

**Dispel Magic:** This spell ends ongoing spells and spell-like effects that have been cast on a creature or object, temporarily suppresses the magical abilities of a magic item or counters another spellcaster's spell within an area 30 feet x 30 feet x 30 feet. The caster must make a successful ability check against each spell, effect, object or creature in the area of effect to succeed. The chance of success is the difference between caster levels. In addition, if the spell is higher level than the caster can cast, he gains a penalty equal to half the level of the spell itself. Thus, a 4th level caster attempting to dispel a fourth-level spell cast by a 9th level caster has a -5 to his ability check to dismiss the effect for the difference between caster levels, plus -2 (half of 4) because he cannot yet cast 4th level spells. A 6th level caster attempting the same would have a -3 chance of success (9-6=3) and no penalty for the spell level as he has third-level spells in his repertoire. Some spells, at the Game Master's judgment, can't be defeated by dispel magic. The effects of spells with instantaneous duration can't be dispelled, because the magic effect is already over before dispel magic can take effect.

**Disrupt Undead:** A ray of searing light erupts from the caster's finger, dealing 1d6+1 damage to an undead creature. This spell requires a ranged or a melee spell attack (if the caster can touch his opponent) to strike.

**Domination:** You attempt to beguile a humanoid that you can see within range, causing it to regard you as a trusted friend and master. While the target is under the spell, you have a telepathic link with it as long as the two of you are on the same plane of existence. You can use this

telepathic link to issue commands to the creature while you are conscious (no action required), which it does its best to obey.

You can specify a simple and general course of action, such as "Attack that creature," "Run over there," or "Fetch that object." If the creature completes the order and doesn't receive further direction from you, it defends and preserves itself to the best of its ability. You can use your action to take total and precise control of the target. Until the end of your next turn, the creature takes only the actions you choose, and doesn't do anything that you don't allow it to do. During this time you can also cause the creature to use a reaction, but this requires you to use your own reaction as well.

The creature is entitled to make a Wisdom saving throw to resist when you cast this spell. In addition, each time the target takes damage, it makes a new Wisdom saving throw against the spell. If the saving throw succeeds, the spell ends. Otherwise, it lasts for up to 1 minute, as long as you maintain concentration.



**Draw Forth the Soul:** A thin beam of grey energy leaps from the Witch's extended finger. The target must make a successful Intelligence save. If the save is failed, the target suffers a -1d6 penalty to Intelligence, Wisdom and Charisma, with an additional -1 per two caster levels (maximum of -10). The target's affected attributes cannot drop below 1 in this fashion. This spell lasts for 1 hour per level of the Witch

**Enchant Item:** This spell prepares an object to accept magical power. The item must be continually held during the casting. During this time, the caster may not be interrupted, and must always be within 1' of the item being enchanted. At the end of the spell, the caster will make a saving throw based on Intelligence versus magic (the caster is saving for the item); if he succeeds the spell is completed and, in the case of weapons or armor, the item now has a +1 enchantment. Further castings of this spell, taking 1d6 days each, can increase this base enchantment by +1 per successive casting. Once the spell is finished, the caster may begin to place magic into the item, the spell to actually grant power the item must be cast within 24 hours or the process starts all over. Again, during casting the item must be held and must always be within 1' of him during rest. This procedure holds true for any additional spells, and each successive casting must be begun within 1 day of the last. No magic placed on or into an item is permanent unless this spell is used a second time as a finishing touch, and this always runs a risk of draining a point of Constitution from the magic-user casting the spell (Constitution check with a -1 penalty per level of the spell cast into the item; failure results in loss of Constitution).

**Enervation:** Upon uttering this spell, a black ray of crackling negative energy issues forth from the caster, which suppresses the life force of any living creature it strikes. The caster must make a

ranged spell attack to hit the target as though using a long bow; this attack ignores AC from armor, but suffers a penalty equal to the target's Dexterity bonus. If the attack succeeds, the subject is temporarily drained of 1d3 (d6/2) levels. If this reduces the target to below zero levels, it dies. The creature is subject to all the effects of Energy Drain as detailed in **Chapter Five**, save that creatures who die from this spell can be raised after the duration ends. Assuming the target survives, it regains lost levels after a number of hours equal to the caster's level (maximum 10 hours). An undead creature struck by the ray gains 1d6x5 temporary hit points for 1 hour.

**ESP:** The caster can detect surface thoughts. The amount of information revealed depends on how long you study a particular area or subject. On the 1st round, the presence or absence of thoughts (from conscious creatures with Intelligence scores of 1 or higher). On the 2nd round, detects the number of thinking minds and the Intelligence score of each. This spell does not determine the location of the thinking minds if the caster can't see the creatures whose thoughts he is detecting. On the 3rd round, detect the surface thoughts of any mind in the area. A target's saving throw with Wisdom prevents reading its thoughts, and the spell must be cast again to have another chance. Creatures of animal Intelligence (Int 1 or 2) have simple, instinctual thoughts that can be picked up. Each round, you can turn to detect thoughts in a new area. The spell can penetrate barriers, but 1 foot of stone, 1 inch of common metal, a thin sheet of lead, or 3 feet of wood or dirt blocks it. This spell lasts for 1 round per level so long as the caster concentrates, and affects a 10-foot per level area.

**Faerie Fire:** A pale glow surrounds and outlines the subjects, who shed light as candles. This spell negates concealment from non-magical darkness, blur, displacement, invisibility, or similar effects, and grants all opponents +1 to hit the limned target. The light is too dim to

have any special effect on undead or dark-dwelling creatures vulnerable to light. Faerie fire can be blue, green, or violet, according to caster choice when casting. The fire does not emit heat, causing no harm to objects or creatures outlined. The spell lasts for one round per level of the caster. A successful Wisdom-based save by the target negates this spell.

**Feeblemind:** This spell drains the target's higher intellect, reasoning and even base cunning, reducing the target to an Intelligence below that of even some animals. Still, even at such low Intelligence, the spell's target instinctively recognizes friends, and can follow them and protect them in a very primitive manner. The unfortunate victim remains in this state until a successful dispel magic is used. Victims may save to escape the effects with Intelligence. This spell is especially vicious against casters, who save at -4 and if they fail lose all benefits of the caster class until the effects are dispelled.

**Find Traps:** The caster locates any mechanical or magical traps within 30 feet. This spell lasts for 1 round per level.

**Finger of Death:** The caster points at a single target within 25 feet and utters a curse that slays the target instantly. If the target makes a successful save with Charisma (if applicable), it instead suffers 3d6 damage +1 point per level of the caster.

**Fly:** This spell empowers the caster to fly at up to 90 feet per round. The character can ascend at 45 feet per round, or dive at 180 feet per round. This flight feels as natural as walking, enabling the character to fight or cast spells quite normally, though the character cannot bear aloft more weight than a normal maximum load. It lasts for 1 turn per level.

**Foresight:** This spell grants the Witch a powerful sixth sense in relation to herself or another. Once foresight is cast, she receives instantaneous warnings of impending danger or harm, and is never

surprised. In addition, the spell gives her a general idea of what action she might take to best protect herself and grants a +2 bonus to AC and saving throws. When another creature is the subject of the spell, the Witch can receive warnings about that creature. She must communicate what she learns to the other creature for the warning to be useful, and the creature can be caught unprepared in the absence of such a warning. Shouting a warning, yanking a person back, and even telepathically communicating (via an appropriate spell) can all be accomplished before some danger befalls the subject, provided she acts on the warning without delay. The subject, however, does not gain the bonus to AC and saves. This spell lasts for 1 hour per level of the Witch.

**Forest Legion:** This spell will instantly transform up to five human-sized targets per caster level up to 250 feet away into trees for the duration of the spell. Unwilling victims can resist by making a save with Wisdom to escape. The spell lasts for 1 turn per caster level, or until dismissed (at will) by the caster. Transformed men can see and hear as normal, but will not in any way register to any form of detection as other than normal trees.

**Geas:** The caster places a magical command on the spell's target to carry out some quest or service, or to refrain from some activity or course of action. If the geased individual fails to do as instructed, they sicken and most likely die, losing 1 point of Strength and suffering a 1 penalty to all saving throws for every day during which the quest is not undertaken. If a creature ignores a quest for 5 days in a row, they must make a Constitution save or sicken. A sickened character moves at half normal speed, suffers -4 penalty on Constitution and Dexterity, heals no damage naturally, and cannot benefit from magical healing. All of these effects end 1 day after the character deliberately attempts to resume the quest. The caster of

the geas may release the effected creature from it at any time. This spell cannot force a creature to commit suicide or put itself in the path of certain death, nor does it function on a creature that cannot understand the caster.

**Hallucinatory Terrain:** The caster makes natural terrain up to 150 feet away look, sound and smell like some other sort of natural terrain. Structures, equipment and creatures within the area are not hidden or changed in appearance. The illusion persists until dispelled or disbelieved by an intelligent creature. It affects a 10 foot x 10 foot area per level of the caster. Disbelief occurs if an observer makes a save with Intelligence .

**Harm:** The reverse of *heal*, Harm drains the target of all but 4 hit points and causes disease in the subject (see *contagion*). If used against an undead creature, harm acts like heal.

**Haste:** Haste doubles the affected creature's movement rate and number of attacks per round. Neither spell casting nor other actions are accelerated. A creature affected by haste ages one year, and assumes the risk of permanent bodily damage from the strain of the spell. At the end of the spell's duration, an affected creature must make a successful saving throw or lose 1 hit point permanently. This spell lasts for one round per level.

**Heal:** This powerful curative enables the caster to wipe away disease and injury. It completely cures all hit point damage, all diseases, blindness, deafness and all temporary ability damage. It neutralizes poisons in the subject's system, so that no additional damage or effects are suffered. It nullifies a feblemind spell. It cures mental disorders caused by nature, spell, or injury to the brain. Heal does not remove negative levels, restore permanently drained levels, or restore permanently drained ability scores. If used against an undead creature, heal acts as its reverse, *harm*.

**Heat Metal:** This spell raises the temperature of metal items, such as weapons and armor, while its reverse, chill metal, lowers the temperature. Magical metal items are not affected. The spell affects the equipment of one creature per every two caster levels and the creatures can be no more than 25 feet apart, or it affects 25 pounds of metal per level (not held or worn by a creature). It lasts for 7 rounds. On the first and seventh round, the metal becomes warm or chilly, uncomfortable to touch but deals no damage. During the second and sixth rounds, burning heat or icy coldness causes pain and 1d6-1 damage. In the third, fourth and fifth, the metal is searing hot or freezing cold, causing disabling pain and 1d6+2 damage per round. The disabling pain results in the hands and/or body becoming totally disabled for a number of days equal to the creature's Constitution divided by 4.

**Hold Animal:** Functions as *Hold Person* but functions only on a normal animal whose total hit dice do not exceed the caster's level. Thus, a fifth level caster can Hold an animal of up to 5 hit dice.

**Hold Monster:** Functions exactly like *Hold Person*, but works on any creature. Victims can save using Wisdom if applicable.

**Hold Person:** This spell holds a single medium-sized or less humanoid target rigidly in place. It is aware and breathes normally but cannot take any physical action. It can, however, execute purely mental actions. The spell lasts for 1 round per level, and the target may make a saving throw with Wisdom to resist.

**Hold Portal:** This spell magically bars a door, gate, window, shutter of wood, metal or stone. The magic holds the portal fast, just as if it were securely closed and normally locked. A knock spell or a successful dispel magic can negate the hold portal, and portals held shut by this spell can still be forced or battered down by strong opponents. The spell lasts for one hour per level of the caster.

**Hold Undead:** This spell functions exactly as the spell, *hold person*, save that it affects only undead creatures. In addition, only intelligent undead creatures gain a Wisdom save to resist. Simple undead such as skeletons and zombies are automatically held by this spell.

**Inflict Light Wounds:** The opposite of *cure light wounds* this spell inflicts 1d6+1 damage on any living creature touched. Alternately, it will heal 1d6+1 damage to any undead touched. Casters must make a successful Melee Spell Attack to use this spell, ignoring armor (treat target as AC1) but suffering a penalty equal to the Dexterity bonus of the target.

**Inflict Serious Wounds:** This spell is the opposite of *cure serious wounds*, and functions as the *inflict light wounds* spell on, save that it deals 2d6+2 damage to the living or heals as much to undead.

**Insect Plague:** This spell summons a number of swarms of locusts (one per three levels, to a maximum of six swarms at 18th level). The swarms must be summoned so that each one is adjacent to at least one other swarm (that is, the swarms must fill one contiguous area). The locust swarms may share the area of other creatures. Each swarm attacks any creatures occupying its area, obscuring vision and dealing 1d6 damage per round per swarm. The swarms are stationary after being summoned, and won't pursue creatures that flee. The swarms remain in the area for 1 full day after summoned, and may cause the normal damage to crops and land that a natural locust plague would cause. This spell only works outdoors above ground.

**Invisibility, 10' Radius:** Functions exactly as the second level spell *Invisibility*, but creates a 20' diameter "globe" centered upon the caster or upon any one person designated by the caster. The globe moves with that person, and any who remain within it are invisible, subject to the normal limitations against hostile action.

The duration of this spell is 1 turn per caster level.

**Invisibility:** The target (and all of his or her gear) vanishes from all forms of natural sight, including special visions. Items dropped or put down by an invisible creature become visible; items picked up disappear if tucked into the clothing or pouches worn by the creature. Light, however, never becomes invisible, although a source of light can become so (thus, the effect is that of a light with no visible source). Any part of an item that the subject carries but that extends more than 10 feet from it becomes visible, such as a trailing rope. The spell ends if the subject attacks or behaves in a hostile manner towards any creature, but otherwise lasts until cancelled by the caster or until the subject makes a saving throw with Intelligence.

**Invisible Stalker:** This spell summons an invisible stalker to the service of the caster. The invisible stalker undertakes whatever task the summoner commands, even if the task sends it hundreds or thousands of miles away. The creature follows a command until the task is completed and obeys only the summoner. However, it resents protracted missions or complex tasks and seeks to pervert its instructions accordingly.

Invisible stalkers are AC 7 and have 8 HD. They have 4 attacks, darkvision to 120 feet, and are invisible. They may track other creatures at 50% efficiency. They have a spell resistance of 15%. A roll under 15 on d% means a spell used against them fails.

**Knock:** This spell opens stuck or locked doors, even magically held ones. It slides bolts and lifts latches. It opens secret doors, as well as locked or trick-opening boxes or chests, and also loosens shackles or chains that have been employed to hold closures shut. Knocked doors do not relock themselves once opened. Knock cannot raise portcullises or similar impediments, nor can it undo or untangle knots. Each spell can undo up to two means of

preventing egress through a portal. If used to open a magically locked closure, knock does not remove the spell but simply inhibits its functioning for 10 minutes.

**Lesser Restoration:** Lesser restoration dispels any magical effects reducing or imposing penalties to one of the subject's ability scores and cures 1d6-1 (minimum 1) points of damage. It also eliminates any fatigue suffered by the character. Note that it does not cure diseases, but can instantly alleviate the symptoms of those diseases, if the symptoms include ability score loss. This unto itself may allow the subject (at the Game Master's option) to fight off the effects of the disease via a new saving throw, if applicable.

**Levitate:** Allows the caster to float up or down through the air at a luxurious pace, moving no more than 20 feet up or down per round. Alternatively, the caster may levitate another creature or object weighing no more than 100 lbs. per level, although an unwilling creature is entitled to a saving throw. Levitation does not enable horizontal movement, although a levitating character could clamber along the face of a cliff or push against a ceiling to move laterally (generally at half base speed). This spell lasts 1 turn per caster level.

**Light:** This spell causes an object to shed light, clearly illuminating the area around it as much as a torch, albeit with clear, white light. Although the effect is immobile, it can be cast on a movable object. Light taken into an area of magical darkness does not function. The spell lasts for one turn per level of the caster.

**Locate Animals:** Using this spell, the caster may locate the nearest normal animal of a known type, provided it is within 1 mile per caster level. If more than one such creature is within range, the spell locates the nearest creature or group. Thus, it will indicate groups, herds, or flocks, though only a general impression of the size of the group is given. This spell detects only normal animals; it cannot detect humans, demi-humans, humanoids, magical creatures, objects, etc. The spell requires concentration to maintain but will last for 1 turn per level.

**Locate Object:** Enables the caster to sense the direction of a well-known or clearly visualized object, including apparel, jewelry, furniture, tools, weapons or even such mundane implements as a ladder. The spell may be used to search for general items such as a stairway, a sword or a jewel, in which case the spell locates the nearest such object within its range, or the spell may be used to find a specific item, such as a particular piece of jewelry. A unique object (such as Gideon Thorne's gold-plated quill) may not be located unless the caster has observed that particular item firsthand. The spell is blocked by lead, fooled by polymorphing, and cannot detect creatures.

**Locate Plants:** As Locate Animals, but locates only a specific normal, natural plant of any given type with which the caster is familiar.

**Lower Water:** This spell causes any volume of water to immediately lose 50% of its volume. In the case of tanks, artificial pools, glasses, buckets, or other sources of



water without a feeding source, this loss is permanent. In rivers, lakes, streams, wells, or other areas with a source of replenishment, the loss lasts for 1 turn per level of the caster before refilling naturally.

**Magic Jar:** The caster places his own soul into a gem of at least \$1,000 in value (the magic jar), leaving the caster's original body is, as near as anyone can tell, dead. The caster then attempts to take control of a nearby body within 10 feet per caster level, forcing the target's soul into the magic jar.

Attempting to possess a body is an attack, and it is blocked by protection from evil or a similar ward. The caster possesses the body and forces the creature's soul into the magic jar unless the subject succeeds at a save with Charisma.

Failure leaves the caster's life force in the magic jar, and no further attempts are possible against the same target. If successful, the caster keeps his or her Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma, level, class and class abilities, alignment, and mental abilities. The host body retains its Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, hit points, natural abilities and extraordinary abilities such as water breathing or regeneration.

The caster may move back to the jar, returning the trapped soul to its body, at any time; and may thereafter attempt to possess another body. The spell ends when the caster chooses to return to the caster's own body (leaving the receptacle empty). If the host body is slain, the caster returns to the magic jar, and the life force of the host departs (that is, it is dead).

If the spell ends while the caster is in the magic jar or another body, the caster returns to his body. The soul in the magic jar returns to its body (or dies if its body is dead). Destroying the receptacle ends the spell. A magic jar may also be dispelled by casting a dispel magic (or greater) spell on either the receptacle or the host. If the jar

is more than 150 feet away from the caster's body when the spell ends for any reason, the caster dies.

**Magic Lock:** Magically locks a door, chest, or portal. The caster can freely pass your own arcane lock without affecting it; otherwise, a door or object secured with this spell can be opened only by breaking in or with a successful dispel magic or knock spell. Halves the chance to break open a door or portal affected by this spell. (A knock spell does not remove an arcane lock; it only suppresses the effect for 10 minutes.)

**Magic Missile:** This spell conjures a bolt of magical energy that automatically strikes its target, dealing 1d6-1 damage (minimum 1 point). For every four levels of the caster, another missile fires (a fourth level caster fires two missiles, an eighth level caster three, etc.), though all missiles fire simultaneously and strike the same target.

**Mass Polymorph:** As *polymorph other*, except that the spell may affect a number of opponents. The new form must be the same for all creatures that failed the saving throw against this spell. Hence, the Witch may not turn half of the number of creatures into cats, and the other half into dogs. Instead, they must all be dogs or all cats. If one of the targeted creatures cannot assume the desired form because of size restrictions, then the spell fails. The targets save against the spell individually and a successful save by one does not affect how the spell works on the others.

**Maze:** The Witch can banish the subject into an extradimensional labyrinth of force planes. Each round on its turn, the creature may attempt a Intelligence check to escape the labyrinth as a full-round action. If the subject doesn't escape, the maze disappears after 10 minutes, forcing the subject to leave.

On escaping or leaving the maze, the subject reappears where it had been when the maze spell was cast. If this location is

filled with a solid object, the subject appears in the nearest open space. Spells and abilities that move a creature within a plane, such as teleport and dimension door, do not help a creature escape a maze spell, although a plane shift spell allows it to exit to whatever plane is designated in that spell.

**Mind Blank:** The subject is protected from all devices and spells that detect, influence, or read emotions or thoughts. This spell protects against all mind-affecting spells and effects as well as information gathering by divination spells or effects. Mind blank even foils wish spells when they are used in such a way as to affect the subject's mind or to gain information about it. In the case of scrying that scans an area the creature is in, such as arcane eye, the spell works but the creature simply isn't detected. Scrying attempts that are targeted specifically at the subject do not work at all. This spell lasts for one hour per level of the Witch.

**Move Earth:** This spell moves dirt, possibly collapsing embankments, moving hillocks, shifting dunes, etc. Rock formations cannot be collapsed or moved. The area to be affected determines the casting time. For every 10 foot x 10 foot area, casting takes 3 minutes. The maximum area, 800 feet by 800 feet, takes 4 hours to move. The earth moved cannot exceed 10 feet. This spell does not violently break the surface of the ground. Instead, it creates wavelike crests and troughs, the earth reacting with glacierlike fluidity until the desired result is achieved. Trees, structures, rock formations and such are mostly unaffected except for changes in elevation and relative topography. The spell cannot be used for tunneling and is generally too slow to trap or bury creatures. Its primary use is for digging or filling moats or for adjusting terrain contours before a battle.

**Mystic Barrier:** When this spell is cast, the Witch surrounds herself with a magical

hemisphere that provides damage protection of 3 hit points per level of the Witch and a +5 magic bonus to all saves. In addition, if the Witch is of lawful alignment, the Witch can inflict 10d8 points of holy damage to any opponent of chaotic alignment who touches the barrier of the spell. If the Witch is chaotic, the barrier inflicts 10d8 unholy damage to any lawful aligned creatures. If the Witch is neutral, this spell confers no additional effect beyond its protective qualities. This barrier lasts for one round per level of the Witch.

**Neutralize Poison:** This spell will detoxify any sort of venom in the creature or object touched. A poisoned creature suffers no additional effects from the poison, but the spell does not reverse previously suffered effects, such as hit point damage, temporary ability damage, or effects that don't go away on their own. The creature is immune to any poison it is exposed to for the duration of the spell. Alternately, this spell can make a poisonous creature, such as a viper, non-poisonous for the duration. The spell lasts for 1 turn per level.

**Nightvision:** Enables the caster or recipient to see in normal darkness as though it were daylight, and doubles the range of visibility granted by light sources such as torches, lanterns, and campfires, in the dark. Note that true, pitch darkness like that found deep underground cannot be seen through with this spell. Duration: 1 hour per caster level.

**Obscurement:** This spell hides an object from location by divination (scrying) effects, such as a locate object spell or a crystal ball. Such an attempt automatically fails (if the divination is targeted on the object) or fails to perceive the object (if the divination is targeted on a nearby location, object, or person).

**Part Water:** This spell creates a part in water of up to one foot deep per level of the caster. The part is ten feet wide and up to ten feet long per level of the caster. The



spell lasts one turn for every two levels of the caster, or until dismissed by the caster.

**Passwall:** The caster creates through a wall within 50 feet a temporary passage that is 5 feet wide, 8 feet tall and 10 feet deep. Several passwall spells can form a continuing passage to breach very thick walls when one spell is insufficient. When passwall ends, creatures within the passage are ejected to the nearest corridor or other exit. This spell lasts for 1 hour per caster level.

**Peace Aura:** Peace aura wards a particular site, building, or structure against violence. Anyone attempting to strike or otherwise attack a creature within the warded area, even with a targeted spell, takes 1d6 points of force damage per caster level (maximum 20d6). The ward lasts for 1 hour per level of the Witch.

**Phantasmal Image:** This spell creates a visual illusion of an object, creature or force, as visualized by the caster in a 40 foot cube, + 10 feet per level which lasts as long as the caster maintains concentration. It cannot create sound, smell or tactile illusions. Creatures who view the illusion believe it, and can suffer damage from illusions. Hit point damage is suffered from damage to the mind/psyche. While concentrating, the caster can move the image within the range. The illusion disappears if an opponent makes a saving throw with Intelligence ability score modifier.

**Phantasmal Killer:** When this spell is cast, the caster calls forth from the negative plane of shadow a phantasmal image of the most fearsome creature imaginable to the subject simply by forming the target's subconscious fears and worst nightmares into a tangible (to the victim) state. Only the spell's subject can see the phantasmal killer. The caster sees only a vague shape. The target first gets a Wisdom-based save to recognize the image as unreal. If that save fails, the phantasm viciously attacks the subject, and the subject must succeed on a Constitution-based save or die from fear. Even if the Con

save is successful, the subject takes 3d6 points of damage. A Death Ward spell renders this spell ineffective.

**Pit:** When this spell is cast, a 30 ft. radius hole appears in the ground beneath the target's feet and drops him 10 feet per level onto a hard surface in an extra-dimensional space. The pit affects all within the area of effect, and on a successful save, they manage to catch the edge. Failure indicates that they take falling damage and once on the bottom, they are dazed for 1d6 rounds. Creatures so affected may climb out of the hole in following rounds. Once created, the pit is permanent.

**Plant Door:** This spell creates a path through any foliage, no matter how thick, through which the caster can pass freely and unencumbered. Even a solid wall of trees will allow passage. Wood that has been cut and worked such as a wall or rampart, however, will not open. The path created is 3 feet wide, six feet high, and 100 feet long.

The spell lasts for three turns, plus one per level of the caster. Only the caster may pass through this Plant Door; he may not take anyone with him. In addition, the caster may choose, if he desires, to remain within a tree opened through the use of this spell. In such a situation, he may remain within the tree as long as he likes (even exceeding the spell duration) and exit whenever he desires—he may view the outside world from inside the tree, just as though looking through a peephole or small window.

**Plant Growth:** This spell causes normal vegetation in a 100' radius within 250 feet to become thick and overgrown. The plants intertwine to form a thicket or jungle that creatures must hack or force a way through. Speed is reduced to ½ normal rate. The area must have brush and trees in it for this spell to take effect, and the new growth is permanent unless destroyed or dispelled. The caster may designate areas within the area that are not affected.

**Polymorph Others:** The caster causes another creature to assume the body, abilities and potentially the consciousness of another form of another creature. An unwilling target gets a save with Wisdom to resist the spell.

Additionally, a creature polymorphed into the form of another risks assuming the consciousness of the new form. For every 12 hours spent in the new form, the creature must succeed at a save with Wisdom or become a member of the species in question in both form and consciousness, forgetting everything associated with the prior form, including friends, family, experiences and training.

If the magic is cancelled by the caster or somehow dispelled, the target regains its former memories and personality. Size can be no larger than twice the creature's normal height. The caster has control over minor physical qualities and significant physical qualities (he can choose the appearance of the new form). Upon changing back to an original form, the polymorphed creature regains 1d4 hit points. If slain, the creature reverts to his or her original form, but remains dead. This spell is permanent.

**Polymorph Self:** Similar to Polymorph Others, but with a duration of 1 turn per level of the caster. The polymorphed caster acquires the physical and natural abilities of the new form while retaining his or her own mental abilities and limitations. Physical and natural abilities include the natural size, armor class, natural weapon attack types and damage and similar physical qualities such as mundane movement capabilities (like flying or swimming), and vision capabilities. Physical and natural abilities do not include magical flight and other magical forms of travel, spell-like abilities, or supernatural abilities, at the discretion of the Referee.

**Predict Weather:** This spell enables the caster to predict with 95% accuracy the

weather within the next twelve hours. The area affected is equal to a 2-mile radius per level of the caster.

**Produce Fire:** This spell is an enhanced version of Produce Flame. Upon casting this spell, flames as bright as a torch appear in the caster's open hand. The flames harm neither the caster nor her equipment. In addition to providing light, the flames can be hurled or used to touch enemies. The caster can strike an opponent with a melee or ranged attack, dealing fire damage equal to 1d6 +1 point per caster level (maximum +5).

The caster can hurl the flames up to 120 feet as a thrown weapon. When attacking with this spell, the caster adds their Wisdom bonus to their Strength or Dexterity bonus to hit. No sooner does the caster hurl the flames than a new set appears in the caster's hand. Each attack the caster makes reduces the remaining duration by 1 round. If an attack reduces the remaining duration to 0 rounds or less, the spell ends after the attack resolves. This spell has a duration of 1 round per level and does not function underwater.

**Produce Flame:** Upon casting, a flame about the size of a torch, appears in the caster's hand. The flames illuminate as torches do, and will not harm the caster. In all other respects, however, the flame is real and will ignite combustible materials. The flame can be used to attack. The caster can hurl the flame or use it to harm enemies. Successful attacks deal 1d6 per two caster levels. The flame can be thrown up to 50 feet as a ranged attack, igniting any combustible materials at the point of impact and damaging any creature struck; against creatures in metal armor the caster gains +3 to hit. Touching opponents requires a melee attack with the same bonus and damage, and touched opponents are treated as AC 10. The spell ends immediately after an attack.

**Projected Image:** Upon casting this spell, the caster weaves a shadow duplicate

of himself. The image is intangible, but looks, sounds and smells like the caster. The shadow mimics the caster's actions (including speech) unless the caster concentrates on making the duplicate act differently. The caster can use the duplicate's senses, and during the caster's turn in a round, the caster can switch from seeing through its eyes to seeing normally, or back again. Any spell the caster casts originates from the shadow instead of from the caster. The caster must maintain a line of sight to the shadow at all times. If the caster's line of sight is obstructed, the spell ends.

**Prophecy:** When staring into the heart of a roaring fire for 1d6x10 minutes, the Witch may catch glimpses of the future, clues of things to come. Through these visions she can learn certain future truths surrounding an object, person, place or event. The GM will describe what it is that Witch can see. The information comes to you in a series of visions, some obscure and vague, while others might be clear and even alarming.



Once the Witch has seen these images, it is up to her to draw some conclusions about what it was that the GM shared. In any event, she may prophesize about a subject once and only once. This spell is more powerful than *divination* in that it gives guaranteed success at receiving an accurate picture of what might come.

**Protection from Evil, 10' Radius:** Functions exactly like the second level spell *protection from evil*, but extends in a 20' diameter with the caster at its center. Duration is two hours.

**Protection from Evil:** This spell creates a magical barrier around the subject at a distance of 1 foot offering protection against evil creatures. It does not defend against chaotic characters of less than 8 levels/Hit Dice, but will defend against powerful characters, undead and other supernatural evils. The GM determines whether a creature qualifies as a supernatural evil. Demons certainly do, while ghosts may or may not. The barrier moves with the subject and grants a +2 bonus to AC and +1 to saving throws against evil creatures. The spell prevents bodily contact: the melee attacks of such creatures fail and the creatures recoil from the protective magic.

The protection ends if the warded creature makes an attack against, or tries to force the barrier against, the blocked creature. Magic resistance can allow a summoned or conjured creature to overcome this protection and touch the warded creature by making a save. Otherwise, no save is allowed. The spell lasts for one hour.

**Protection from Fire:** Grants temporary immunity to natural or magical fire and heat. The spell will absorb 12 points per caster level of damage (to a maximum of 120 points at 10th level), it is discharged and ends. The spell has a duration of 1 turn per level, and if it has not absorbed its maximum damage by that time, it ends regardless.

**Protection from Lightning:** This spell grants temporary immunity to lightning and electricity. Once the spell absorbs 12 points per caster level of energy damage (to

a maximum of 120 points at 10th level), it expires. At the Game Master's option, other forms of Protection from Energy may exist, each being a separate spell, or there being only one spell, Protection from Energy, which provides protection as above, but against a type of energy (acid, cold, electricity, fire, or sonic) specified upon casting.

**Protection from Normal Missiles:**

The warded creature gains resistance to ranged weapons. The subject gains the ability to absorb up to 10 points of damage per level of the spellcaster without harm. Once the spell has prevented a total of 10 points of damage per caster level (maximum 100 points), it is discharged.

**Protection from Undead, 10' Radius:**

Exactly as Protection from Undead, save that it protects everyone within a 10' radius of the caster.

**Protection from Undead:** This spell functions identically to the spell *protection from evil*, but works against undead rather than evil creatures. Intelligent undead are allowed a Wisdom-based save to negate the effects of the spell.

**Purify Food & Water:** This spell makes up to 1 cubic foot per level of spoiled, rotten, poisonous, or otherwise contaminated food and water suitable for eating and drinking. It does not prevent subsequent decay or spoilage. Unholy water and similar food and drink of significance is spoiled by purify food and drink, but the spell has no effect on creatures of any type nor upon magic potions.

**Pyrotechnics:** Casting this spell transforms a fire within 150 feet of the caster into either a burst of blinding fireworks or a thick cloud of choking smoke, as chosen by the caster. The fireworks are a flashing, fiery, momentary burst of glowing and colored aerial lights. This effect blinds creatures within 100 feet of the fire source for 1d6-1 rounds (minimum 1 round; Dexterity-based save negates).

Creatures must have line of sight to the fire in order to be affected. Spell resistance can prevent blindness. The smoke cloud is a writhing stream of choking smoke, billowing out from the source. The cloud spreads 20 feet in all directions and lasts for 1 round per caster level. All forms of natural sight (including special vision) are ineffective in or through the cloud. The spell consumes one fire source, which is immediately extinguished. Magical fires are not affected.

**Raise Dead:** This spell restores life to a creature that has been dead for no longer than one day per caster level. In addition, the subject's soul must be free and willing to return. If the subject's soul is not willing to return, the spell does not work.

The subject of the spell loses one level or Hit Die. If the subject is 1st level, it loses 2 points of Constitution instead (if this would reduce its Con to 0 or less, it can't be raised). This level/HD loss or Constitution loss cannot be repaired by any means.

A character who died with spells prepared has a 50% chance (1-3 on 1d6) of losing any given spell upon being raised, in addition to losing spells for losing a level. Normal poison and disease are cured in the raising, but magical diseases and curses are not undone.

While the spell closes mortal wounds and repairs lethal damage of most kinds, it does not restore missing parts. None of the dead creature's equipment or possessions are affected in any way by this spell. A creature who has been turned into an undead creature or killed by a death effect can't be raised by this spell.

The spell cannot bring back a creature that has died of old age. Characters brought back by this spell must spend two weeks in bed recuperating, or the spell will be undone and they will die once more.

**Read Languages:** This spell allows the caster to read any and all mundane

languages, modern or ancient. It lasts for 10 minutes per level of the caster.

**Reincarnate:** With this spell, the caster brings back a dead creature in another body, provided that the death occurred no more than 1 week before the casting of the spell. The magic of the spell creates an entirely new, young adult body for the soul to inhabit from the natural elements at hand. This process requires 1 hour to complete.

The reincarnated subject recalls most of their former life and retains the Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma scores, and hit points from their former existence. Strength, Dexterity and Constitution scores depend on the new body.

The attributes of animal forms are typical for the species, but the player should roll new physical attributes if reincarnated as a new player character. The ability to speak is not guaranteed. The character retains his class, but it's possible for the new form to impede use of class abilities or even advancement in a class.

Moreover, the character's level is reduced by 1; if the character was 1st level, then the new form's Constitution is reduced by 1. The form should be determined by random roll of 2d6. On a result of 10-12 the body will be of the same gender and species as the original. If the result is 6-10, the body is of a different species, determined randomly among all options for player characters, animals, and monsters, and even results representing male, and odd results representing female. Alternately, the Game Master may randomly determine a monster or animal body for the character.

**Remove Blindness or Deafness:** This spell cures either blindness or deafness whether normal or magical in origin in one target. The spell does not restore ears or eyes that have been lost, but it repairs them if they are damaged.

**Remove Curse:** This spell allows the caster to remove the effects of a curse from an object or creature. Remove curse does not remove the curse from a cursed shield, weapon, or suit of armor, although the spell typically enables the person afflicted with any such cursed item to remove it and get rid of it. Certain special curses may not be countered by this spell, or may be countered only by a caster of a certain level or higher.

**Remove Paralysis:** The caster frees one or more creatures from the effects of any temporary paralysis or related magic, including a ghoul's touch or a slow spell. If the spell is cast on one creature, the paralysis is negated. If cast on two creatures, each receives another save with a +4 resistance bonus against the effect that afflicts it. If cast on three or four creatures, each receives another save with a +2 resistance bonus.

**Restoration:** This spell functions like *lesser restoration*, except that it also immediately restores 1d3 (d6/2) levels lost from level drain if the time since the creature lost the levels is equal to or less than one day per caster level. A character who has levels restored by restoration gains exactly the minimum number of experience points necessary to restore him or her to the restored level. This spell doesn't restore levels lost due to *raise dead* or *reincarnation*.

**Seek:** The Witch may force any creature short of a deity to seek her out. The target creature cannot have more than 20 HD and is entitled to a Wisdom save to resist. Those under the effects of the seek spell will do everything in their power to find the Witch and brave many life threatening risks to do so. Creatures under the effects of this spell will not take suicidal paths such as swimming unprotected through a moat of lava, but they will strive to find some way around, over, under or through said moat unmolested. Targets of this spell act in a manner that appears obsessed, and will appear so to their companions. Once the

target has found and approached within five feet of the Witch, the spell is lifted.

**Serpent Garden:** This spell allows the Witch to summon several large-size viper snakes to restlessly patrol just outside the perimeter of a 15-ft. radius circle. One snake is summoned for every two levels of experience of the Witch. These snakes will attack any creature they can perceive that approach within 10 ft. of the exterior of the perimeter, with the exception of the Witch. If a snake is slain then it will immediately vanish. The spell lasts for 1 hour per level of the Witch, after which the snakes vanish.

**Shadow Armor:** By means of this spell, the caster envelops the warded creature in a suit of shadowy armor pulled from the negative shadow plane. The shroud can, if the caster desires, conceal the wearer's features.

In any case, it grants the recipient an Armor Class of 7, exactly as though he were wearing Kevlar-lined clothing. This shadowy armor improves by one type for every three caster levels, to the normal maximum of AC 2. The subject can see through the armor as if it did not exist and is also afforded darkvision with a range of 60 feet.

In addition, he gains the ability to hide in shadows as though he were a third-level Survivor (or if already a Survivor, hides as though he were three levels higher than he currently is). The armor does not affect Survivor skills, nor is it affected by a character's "allowed armor" list, as it is made of shadow and thus weightless and noiseless.

Finally, the subject gains a +2 bonus on saving throws against any holy, good, or light spells or effects. Undead creatures that are subjects of armor of darkness also gain +4 to morale checks to resist Theosophist powers. The armor does not augment currently worn armor for purposes of determining AC.

Thus, if a character is wearing full military battle armor and is the recipient of this spell (which at caster level 8 provides an AC of 5), his armor would still provide primary protection as it provides a better AC. He would still, however, gain darkvision, saving throw bonuses, and the obscuration of his features as normal.

Lawful characters who are subject to this spell lose 1d3 levels for the entire duration of the spell; if this drops them below zero, the spell ends and they fall unconscious for one hour. A successful Wisdom-based save will negate the effects of the spell.

**Slay Living:** The caster makes a Melee Spell Attack. If successful, the target is instantly slain, unless it makes a successful Constitution-based save, in which case it suffers 3d6 points of damage, plus 1 point per level of the caster.

**Sleep:** Creatures within range and within a 30' diameter circle that are capable of sleep will fall into a comatose slumber, with weaker ones being felled prior to stronger ones. The spell will affect 2d6 HD of creatures. For creatures with equal HD, those who are closest to the spell's point of origin are affected first. No creature with 5 or more HD is affected, and HD that are not sufficient to affect a creature are wasted.

The spell is centered on a location determined by the caster. Sleeping creatures are helpless. Slapping or wounding will awaken affected creatures, but normal noise does not. Sleep does not affect unconscious creatures, constructs or undead creatures. The spell lasts for 1 turn per level of the caster, and creatures are entitled to a saving throw using their Wisdom ability modifier (if applicable) to resist.

**Sleeping Village:** This powerful enchantment subdues dozens of individuals with sleep. The Witch may affect creatures with up to 4 HD each. The effect spreads out from the central burst.

location. The sleep induced by this spell is a deep slumber that requires 1d4 rounds of severe shaking and/or noise to wake from. Upon waking from this spell, subjects are drowsy for 1d4 rounds, suffering -2/-10% to all attacks, saves, ability checks, and class abilities. Taking damage will awaken the target.

**Slow:** Slow is the exact opposite of *Haste*, though it does not restore age lost to that spell, nor grant longevity to recipients. Targets can make a save with their Constitution save bonus to resist.

**Speak with Animals:** The caster can comprehend and communicate with animals. He may ask questions and receive answers, although the spell doesn't make them any more friendly or cooperative than normal. Further, it doesn't make animals any more intelligent, so answers and comments will be based on the animal's perception. The spell lasts for 1 round per level.

**Speak with Dead:** The caster grants the semblance of life and intellect to a corpse, allowing it to answer one question per two caster levels asked by the caster, which it would've known in life. The spell lasts for 1 round per caster level, at which point the corpse "dies" again, even if all questions have not been asked. The corpse speaks only the languages it spoke (if any). Answers are usually brief, cryptic, or repetitive.

If the creature's alignment was different from the caster's, the corpse gets a Wisdom-based save to resist the spell as if it were alive. The corpse must have an intact tongue and vocal cords, and is not the person; only knowledge left in the brain can be communicated.

This spell may be used but once per week on any given corpse, which will not remember being questioned after it dies again. The spell has no effect on undead.

**Speak with Plants:** The caster may comprehend and communicate with plants, including both normal plants and plant creatures. The caster can ask questions and receive answers. A regular plant's sense of its surroundings is limited, so it won't be able to give (or recognize) detailed descriptions of creatures or answer questions about events outside its immediate vicinity. Further, the same restrictions as to amicability and Intelligence apply as with *Speak with Animals*. The duration is 1 round per level.

**Staves to Snakes:** The caster can turn from 3-16 sticks or staves into snakes, with each snake having a 50% chance (1-3 on 1d6) of being poisonous. The snakes will follow the caster's commands. At the end of the duration, any remaining snakes (which have not been utterly destroyed by some method or another) will resume their original form as sticks or staves. The duration is 1 round per level.

**Stone to Flesh:** This spell restores a petrified creature to normal, requiring the subject make a Constitution ability check with a bonus equal to +1 per three levels to survive the process. The spell also can convert a mass of stone up to 30 cubic feet into a fleshy substance. Such flesh is inert and lacking a vital life force unless a life force or magical energy is available (i.e. an animated statue would essentially become a Frankenstein monster, but a statue would become a corpse).

**Suggestion:** You suggest a course of activity (limited to a sentence or two) and magically influence a creature you can see within range that can hear and understand you. Creatures that can't be charmed are immune to this effect. The suggestion must be worded in such a manner as to make the course of action sound reasonable.

Asking the creature to stab itself, throw itself onto a spear, immolate itself, or do some other obviously harmful act ends the spell. The target is entitled to a Wisdom saving throw to resist. You can also specify

conditions that will trigger a special activity during the duration. For example, you might suggest that a knight give her warhorse to the first beggar she meets. If the condition isn't met before the spell expires, the activity isn't performed.

The duration of the spell is up to 8 hours. If you or any of your companions damage the target, the spell ends. If the target completes its objective, the spell ends.

**Telekinesis:** By concentrating, the caster can move an object or creature weighing 25 pounds per level of the caster by mental command. Telekinesis can move a creature or object weighing up to 25 pounds per caster level up to 20 feet per round to a maximum range of 100 feet.

A creature can negate the effect against itself with a successful save at -4, applying Charisma, and against an object it possesses with a successful save applying Strength. The spell lasts up to 1 round per caster level, but it ends if the caster ceases concentrating.

Alternatively, if the caster chooses, the spell energy can be expended in a single round. The caster can hurl, with massive force, one object or creature (within range toward any target also within range). The caster can hurl up to a total weight of 25 pounds per caster level.

To hit a target with a hurled item, caster must succeed at a ranged attack roll. Weapons hurled by the spell cause 2d6 damage and attack on the "short bow" matrix. Other objects cause 2d6 points of damage per 25 pounds of weight and should be treated as catapult fire.

Creatures who fall within the weight capacity of the spell can be hurled, but they are allowed a save with Charisma to negate the effect. If a creature is hurled against a solid surface, it takes 3d6 damage.

**Teleport:** This spell instantly transports the caster and a certain amount of additional

weight, to any designated destination on the same plane of existence. The caster can transport himself, gear, and willing creatures to a total weight of 50 pounds per caster level.

The character must have some clear idea of the location and layout of the destination; the clearer the mental image, the more likely the teleportation works. With no certain knowledge of the destination, there is a chance of a fatal mishap (roll 2d6; 2-8 indicates mishap). For situations where the character has a good description or has seen the place once, the chance of failure is only 2-4, with a result of 3 or 4 meaning a fall of 2d6X10 feet, suffering damage equal to 1d6 per 10 feet fallen. A result of 2 results in death as the caster materializes inside a solid object or falls hundreds of feet. If the character is intimately familiar with the area, failure only occurs on a result of 2, indicating a fall of 3d6 feet. The spell is instantaneous.

**Transmute Rock to Mud:** This spell turns natural, uncut or unworked rock of any sort into an equal volume of mud. Magical or enchanted stone is not affected. The depth of the mud created cannot exceed 10 feet deep and thirty inches long and wide. Creatures unable to levitate, fly or otherwise free themselves from the mud will sink and potentially asphyxiate. If the spell is cast upon the ceiling of a cavern or tunnel, the mud falls to the floor and spreads out in a pool at a depth of 5 feet. The falling mud and the ensuing cave-in deal 5d6 points of damage to anyone caught directly beneath the area, or half damage to those who succeed at saves with Dexterity.

**Trap the Soul:** Trap the soul forces a creature's life force (and its material body) into a gem. The gem holds the trapped entity indefinitely or until the gem is broken and the life force is released, which allows the material body to reform. If the trapped creature is a powerful creature from another plane it can be required to



perform a service immediately upon being freed. Otherwise, the creature can go free once the gem imprisoning it is broken.

The creature is allowed a Wisdom saving throw to avoid being trapped.

**Tree Stride:** The caster gains the ability to enter trees and move from inside one tree to inside another tree. The first and all subsequent trees entered must be of the same kind, must be living, and must have girth at least equal to the caster. By moving into an oak tree (for example), the caster instantly knows the location of all other oak trees within transport range (see below) and may choose whether he wants to pass into one or simply step back out of the current tree.

The caster may choose to pass from one tree to any tree of the appropriate kind within 500 feet plus 100 feet per level of the caster, once per caster level. The spell lasts until the duration expires or the caster exits a tree. Each move between trees counts as a character's full movement for the round (ie. the caster may not move between trees and attack or cast a spell).

The caster can, if they wish, remain within a tree without transporting, but they are forced out when the spell ends. If the tree is chopped down or burned, the caster dies if they do not exit before the process is complete.

**Undeath to Death:** Exactly as Circle of Death (see above), save that it destroys only undead creatures rather than living creatures.

**Unholy Blight:** A freezing miasma of greasy darkness issues forth to smite your foes, dealing 1d6 damage per caster level to

all lawful creatures in a 20-foot radius (including the caster, if applicable), and causing them to be sickened, suffering a -2 penalty to all attacks, saves and checks for 1d6-1 (minimum 1) rounds. It deals half-damage to neutral creatures,

**Vampiric Touch:** Upon making a successful Melee Spell Attack, the caster deals 1d6 damage per every two caster levels to his foe and gains the same amount to his own hit point pool. These hit points first heal any damage the caster has suffered; remaining hit points are gained as "temporary" hit points over and above the caster's base, which are spent before any other hit points and go away after an hour.

**Veneration:** This charm permanently changes an intelligent creature's attitude to helpful. No matter what the Witch does, the subject of this spell will always view her in the best possible light, seeing her as a trusted ally and friend. If ever placed in a moral quandary such as a command to commit suicide, or harm someone whom he would never otherwise harm, the subject of this spell will act if under the effect of the *confusion* spell until such order is withdrawn. If he is attacked by the Witch, he will defend himself to the best of his ability, but will not strike back to injure, only to subdue. The effects of this spell may be lifted by a successful *dispel magic* or *remove curse*.

**Wail of the Banshee:** With this spell the Witch can emit a terrible scream that kills one creature that hears it, except herself. The closest creature is affected. Creatures are granted a Constitution saving throw to negate the spell. If the



creature saves then the next closest must save until a creature is slain or the range runs out. The scream can be heard to a maximum of 150' away.

**Wall of Fire:** A blazing curtain or ring of shimmering fire springs into existence at the caster's command. The is an immobile fiery wall, 20 ft. tall and 60 ft. long, or a ring of fire surrounding the caster, 30 feet in diameter and 20 feet high. The wall deals 1d6 damage per round to all creatures within ten feet, on the side away from the caster, and 2d6 to undead.

In addition, the wall deals 2d6+1 point per caster level of fire damage to any creature entering or passing through the wall. If the caster evokes the wall so that it appears where creatures are already present, each creature takes damage as if passing through the wall. Each creature can make a successful save with Dexterity to escape, but will take damage from heat as normal. For being within 10 feet. The wall lasts 1 round per caster level, or as long as the caster concentrates on the spell. The wall can be attacked and cancelled by cold spells and damage. If any 5 foot length of the wall takes 20 points of cold damage or more in 1 round, that length goes out.

**Wall of Ice:** Similar to *wall of fire*, this spell creates a wall or "igloo" of ice, which deals 1d6 cold damage to any creature that touches or comes within 5 feet of it, and double that to creatures associated with fire (such as fire elementals). Breaking through the frigid wall requires 20 points of damage per five foot section, and passing through deals 2d6+1 point per caster level of cold damage. The wall lasts 1 round per caster level, or as long as the caster concentrates on maintaining it.

**Wall of Iron:** The caster causes an anchored, vertical iron wall to spring into being. The wall cannot be conjured to occupy the same space as a creature or another object. The wall inserts itself into the surroundings, anchoring itself if possible. The wall must always form a flat

plane, though the caster can shape its edges to fit available space.

Like any iron wall, this wall is subject to rust and other natural phenomena. The wall is 1 inch thick per four caster levels, and up to 5 feet x 5 feet per caster level. The caster can double the wall's area by halving its thickness. Each 5 foot square section has 30 hit points per inch of thickness. The wall is so hard that the first 10 points of damage from each blow are ignored. A section of wall whose hit points drop to 0 is breached.

**Wall of Stone:** This spell creates a wall of rock that merges into adjoining rock surfaces. The wall is 1 inch thick per four caster levels, and up to 5 feet x 5 feet per caster level. The caster can double the wall's area by halving its thickness. The wall cannot be conjured so that it occupies the same space as a creature or another object. The caster can create the wall in almost any shape. The wall need not be vertical, nor rest upon any firm foundation; however, it must merge with and be solidly supported by existing stone. It can be used to bridge a chasm, for instance, or to form a ramp. For this use, if the span is more than 20 feet, the wall must be arched and buttressed. This requirement reduces the spell's area by half.

The wall can be crudely shaped to allow crenellations, battlements and so forth by likewise reducing the area. Each 5 foot square area of the wall has 15 hit points per inch of thickness. Creatures can hit the wall automatically, but the wall is so hard that the first 8 points of damage from each blow are ignored. A section of wall whose hit points drop to 0 is breached. It is possible, but difficult, to trap mobile opponents within or under a wall of stone, provided the wall is shaped so it can hold the creatures. Creatures avoid entrapment with successful saves with Dexterity.

**Warp Wood:** The caster causes wood to bend and warp, permanently destroying its straightness, form and strength. One cubic

foot of material per two levels of the caster can be affected by this spell. Boards or planks can be affected. Warped weapons are useless. Magic weapons and wood are not affected. This spell can be reversed to *straighten wood*, which will make a straight piece of wood out of a bent and twisted one, or which completely undoes the effects of this spell.

**Water Breathing:** Grants the ability to breathe in water as a fish for 1 hour per level of the caster.

**Wave of Mutilation:** This spell sends out a 60' cone of magical energy from the Witch's hand or *athame*. This energy causes all living matter to become twisted, cut, slashed or torn. The wave causes 12d6 points of damage to any within its area of effect. Those in the area may attempt a Dexterity save for half damage. Elementals, undead, magical constructs and non-living matter are not affected.

**Windershins Dance:** The Witch may reverse one action, spell or outcome. For

example, she can dance around an area that has been magically darkened she can reverse the spell and the area will lighten up. An area of *Protection from Evil* becomes a *Protection from Good*. She can dance around a person that has suffered damage, disease or a curse and the affliction is removed. The Witch can reverse any one specified action up to a number of days equal to her level. The Witch can't use it as an attack, but she can reverse healing.

The Witch must choose the actions she wishes to reverse and she begins a twirling counter-clockwise (widershins) dance around the object or person to be affected. This spell can't be used to raise a person from the dead or reverse a transformation to undeath.

If the reversal is on a spell, then the spell lasts a number of rounds equal to half of what it had before. Removing damage or curses, such as lycanthropy, are permanent.







## CHAPTER FOUR: EARTH AFTER DARK

So you want to run a **Night Shift** campaign? You've come to the right place. This chapter will outline advice on using one of our Night Worlds, or building your own, to tell your personalized stories in a world of dark urban fantasy or horror. It will offer GM guidelines on how to run a game in general, how to structure your campaign in season and episode arcs just like a TV series (or in chapters and novels if you prefer books), how to bring some excitement and flavor to your game in maintaining the mood, and when to rely on rules as opposed to when to just make judgement calls.

Here we'll deal with the general genre tropes and how various properties can twist, bend, and even break those tropes to keep things fun and exciting. Though obviously we can't use the intellectual properties of others, we're sure you'll get a charge out of a few familiar faces, albeit wearing masks, that show up in this chapter.

We'll look at the role that magic and magical items such as artifacts, icons, relics, grimoires

and the like play in your game, and the ways in which supernatural creatures like fey and demons can change the entire flavor of a setting.

In the end, we'll work to build your own campaign setting that you can use as a jumping off point, applying all the advice herein step-by-step. The goal is to get you up and running with a minimum of fuss, while providing some tips, tricks, and advice that experienced GMs use to create unforgettable stories that their players will talk about for years.

### DO I NEED THIS SECTION?

Many experienced GMs may skim or skip this section. After all, if you've been running for decades, you've probably got a method down pat that works for you. If that's the case, sure, skip over this section. There's few to no rules to be found here. Still, a refresher never hurts, and nobody knows everything there is to know. You may find things in here that royally tick you off, or you may find things in here that

ignite a light bulb in your brain. Likely you'll find a bit of both.

This section is comprised of the experiences of the authors, two very experienced GMs who have been running games for many years. The two of us often have very different outlooks about what makes a great game, but in many ways we're in perfect sync. It's our hope that just about everyone will find something of use in here.

## Session Zero

Session Zero is a relatively newer concept in gaming circles. Actually, it's not, but the idea of codifying it is relatively new. The idea behind Session Zero is that it's the time when everyone sits down to discuss the new campaign. During Session Zero, you will create characters and discuss everyone's expectations.

## Character Generation

This can't be stressed enough: don't ever let players make characters at home and just show up at the table. This isn't necessarily because players can't be trusted (though sometimes they can't). It's because as the GM, you have a responsibility to make sure you facilitate a group that can work together, whose characters will complement each other, and who are fair to everyone sitting down to throw dice.

Sure, for many the fun part is throwing those dice and getting down to the story and staking vamps, but for others, char gen is part of the fun, too, and as GM, you need to be sure that every character fits. This might not always happen, even with your supervision—I once had a player create a wild fey in a group full of human demon hunters with a vampire slayer and a werewolf. She had no idea where she fit in the group, and that was on me for not working more closely with her during character generation.

Still, you're more likely to get a cohesive group if you allow and encourage kibitzing

around the table during character generation. Encourage everyone to talk about what they're making, and to throw ideas back and forth about character backgrounds. This is also a good time to discuss player knowledge vs. character knowledge. Just because Sarah knows what Nick's character background is, doesn't mean her Chosen One knows his Survivor's background in game.

## The Cast

As your players talk about their character backgrounds, remember that you're mimicking a TV series. A fantastic idea is to have your players choose a famous celebrity to cast as their character. It needn't even be someone that's currently living—you have an unlimited budget of money and time in this game, so if someone wants to cast a young Jimmy Stewart to play their character while another wants Mila Kunis, go for it! Bonus points if player one can do a great Jimmy Stewart impersonation.

Not only does this give other players an instant idea of exactly what the characters look, sound, and even move like, it adds a sense of excitement, fun, and familiarity to the game right out of the gate. Again, if the players can do impersonations of their celebrities, that can be yet another way to encourage immersion, but it's not necessary. Just the factor of knowing that your emotionally scarred necromancer is portrayed by Kate Beckinsale or your mystical gunslinger is Idris Elba is plenty exciting enough to get the message across.

## "The Talk": Respecting Boundaries

Session Zero is the time to get it out in the open, as GM, what you intend to do with the game, and get a feel for your players' expectations, desires, and boundaries. We can already hear some of our old-school fans groaning at this, but bear with us. We know it's a controversial subject for some folks, but really, it shouldn't be.

The key of the game, after all, is for everyone to have fun, and while everyone should respect everyone else, don't ever let a player tell you as the GM that your only job is to facilitate their fun. You're allowed to have a good time as well.

Compromise is key, here, to a degree. As the GM, you need to understand that you may have some ideas for the game that one or more of your players may find distinctly uncomfortable, and not in the kind of way that horror is supposed to make us feel uncomfortable. Try to get a feel for boundaries, and keep these in mind when you plan your campaign.

Some players—especially more old-school gamers—take umbrage at this idea, but really, the concept of respect at the gaming table has been around since day one. If someone's upset or not having a good time, the game has failed. That's *genuinely* all this is about.

For some players, too, this may honestly not be a necessary step. Perhaps you've been playing with the same group of players for 20 or 30 years. In such a case, by this point it's likely that everyone's boundaries have been well established. Still, it's a good idea to touch base every so often, but it's not necessary to have a detailed and in-depth discussion at the beginning of every game. It hurts exactly no one at the table to have this discussion in any way whatsoever, and it can uncover something important that you may not have realized over all these years.

Here's the TL;DR version: talk to your players. Get a feel for what everyone's comfortable with, and exercise common sense, common courtesy, and respect for the other people at your table.

## PLANNING YOUR GAME

We're going to assume for a bit that you've already got an established setting, or you're gaming in the world of your favorite urban fantasy/horror TV show,

movies, novel series, or comics. If you don't, and if you're designing your own setting, don't worry. We'll get to that in a little bit. First, let's talk about the nuts and bolts of good GMing, of structuring a game and building a story.

## To Railroad or Not to Railroad?

Some players in certain circles of gaming believe that the GM's job is to do nothing but sit there and react to whatever the players do, that having any sort of plot or story in mind at all is "railroading." First, the author hates that term. Second, you're running the game. You're allowed to have a story in mind, especially in this kind of game. What is *not* cool is forcing the players to follow your pre-constructed narrative from point A to point B to point C. That's where the term "railroading" came from, and that's the only real railroading—when you rob your players of their choice and free will.

That being said, sometimes players will deliberately try to derail your game and go the opposite of the way they know they should, for no other reason than to be difficult. We'll get to them later, as it can be complicated and unpleasant to deal with these types. The thing to remember for now is that no, designing a story is not by its nature railroading, and it's okay to do it. Once again, remember, you get to have fun as well.

## The Episodic Structure

**Night Shift** is designed to mimic the tropes of urban fantasy and horror-based TV series, novels, film series, and even comics. To that end, when you build a campaign, it can be best to follow the structure of these as well. That means instead of "adventures" or "modules," you run episodes, chapters, or issues. Instead of a campaign, you have a season, novel, or storyline (depending on whether you're working with a TV show, novel, or comic series).

## Avoid the Anthology

Some shows are anthology series. While these can work as RPGs, they require a lot of work, as anthologies completely change characters and stories every week (or every season). That means you'll have a lot of new characters, and no ongoing plot threads. If that's what you and your players want to explore, that's great, but it requires no special planning and it may grow tedious after a while. Players will have no attachment to their characters, since they're discarded after one use (unless you bring them back for a sequel later), and you could easily run out of ideas for completely unique stories running week after week.

## Creating the Outline

Imagine sitting down to plan a TV series in a writer's room. The first thing you'd need to do is outline the general events of the season. That's what you need to do. You're the showrunner and the entire writing team at this point. Your outline doesn't need to be super detailed, nor do you need to feel married to every word of it as you move forward. But having that outline of your planned story arc, from start to finish, will keep you focused and give you a strong jumping off point.

Start with the core concept of your season: the First Vampire, Lilith, comes back and creates a vampire conspiracy to raise the demonic old one who created her, the Crimson Caliph, from darkness to cover the world in a wave of blood. She has found a way to impart incredible powers to vampires, and the various wild factions and nests are flocking to her, creating the kind of organized society vampires have never seen.

After you have this core idea in mind, you can then begin planning individual episodes. Make a bullet point for each episode. List its title and another one- to three-sentence description of what's going





to happen in that episode. This way you've got a start-to-finish outline of your season.

Be sure to mention for your own use the episodes in which your main villain (the "Big Bad," or BB) will appear, and in what capacity. Remember that having them appear too often can potentially result in their defeat and destruction *long* before your season finale when you intend it to happen. The BB should work through agents, plots, and plans, only showing up once or twice early in the season, with more appearances occurring in the last 3-4 episodes. The very last episode of the season (or two, if you're doing a 2-part season finale) should revolve around your BB. Before that, let them stay in the shadows, a threat on which the characters can't seem to close in.

### How Many Episodes?

This is a great question, and it depends on how often you play, and how much time you have to devote to the campaign. There are two general models you can follow if you want to stick to the TV trope. The first is the classic U.S. model, which consists of a 22 to 24 episode season. The second is the British TV and U.S. Cable TV model, which consists of between 10 and 14 episodes to a season.

Choose which one works best for you, and keep in mind that for the longer season averaging 23 episodes, you'll want to do a lot more "filler" and "monster of the week" episodes than you will need to with the British and Cable model, which can be much more tightly plotted. The 23 episode season is ambitious, and while the author has done it several times, the 10-14-episode season can be much more fun to run, as it gets from start to finish with a faster, more pulse-pounding pace.

### What's an Episode?

Something else to consider. Generally speaking, an episode should be one play session in length, with a play session

assumed to be about 4 hours of game time. If it runs longer, you've simply got a two-parter. Those who have shorter play sessions may choose either to have shorter episodes, or to stretch episodes out over two sessions.

Really, an episode is what you make of it, but as you begin writing, each episode should follow a basic four-act structure with a setup, investigation or complication, climax, and denouement.

### The Four-Act Structure

The four act structure is a general framework for any tabletop gaming scenario which works to build almost any adventure.

**Cold Open (Teaser):** Technically part of Act One (or separate from the episode altogether), this is what is often colloquially called the "pre credits sequence." It's a few paragraphs (no longer than a page or two at absolute most) that represent a scene which sets up the episode. In old-school gaming terms, it's what's often referred to as "boxed text." This is because in older adventure modules it used to be presented in a shaded box within the module to set it off from the rest of the descriptive text.

Think of it as the minute or two that play before the credits roll. It can introduce the villain of the piece, or at least the horror the heroes are about to face, and should lead (directly or indirectly) into the first act. It's not strictly necessary, but it can be a great way to set the mood for your players.

**Act One (Introduction):** Act one of this structure is setup that introduces the threat and establishes them as a problem for the heroes. Generally speaking, in a given episode the threat will not likely be the main BB villain of the campaign, but will be either a "monster of the week" unrelated to the BB, or will be a lesser lieutenant of the BB. The players may not know at this point exactly who the threat is, but the existence of a threat and the presentation of a problem to solve occurs here.

**Act Two (Complications):** Act two presents a middle section wherein the heroes research and investigate the problem, running into trouble along the way (and generally ending up in way over their heads at the end of the act). They should probably face a physical threat: a battle with lesser minions or the like, while uncovering more information about exactly who and what they face, and why they are such a threat. They can also discover where the villain might be hiding or likely to be. They should be left in the lurch in some way at the end of this act—the villain sets a trap for them, or some plan of action they took goes horribly wrong, just when they need things to go right.

**Act Three (Climax):** Act three leads us to the climactic section of the adventure. Here the heroes extricate themselves from whatever foul-up they encountered in Act Two, and race to face the episode's main villain. A climactic battle usually occurs, even if it's a battle of magic or wits and not of weapons, and the villain is overcome by the heroes, or survives to escape and become a threat for another day. This is an important distinction: *the heroes don't always have to definitively win*. Their victory can be Pyrrhic, or they can fail entirely. Indeed, the story arc of your season should have at least one dark turn where things don't look good for the heroes, and this may last for several episodes.

**Act Four (Denouement):** Act four, then, is our denouement, wherein the story is wrapped up, and usually, there's a lead-in to the next episode. The players, after a good session, can sometimes drag a denouement on for some time, speaking in character about what happened, where they're going next, and the like.

This basic, four-act plot is the formula for almost every episode of television ever created, and many pulp stories. Lester Dent, the creator of Doc Savage, cited it as the formula for writing a 4,000-word story which he claimed never failed to sell. It's a

near-sure-fire way to adopt a framework for your adventures that will succeed.

### Don't Sweat the Details

Here's where the rubber meets the road. We talked earlier about railroading and taking away player choice. That's where you have to be careful with your plotting. Your four act structure is a *framework* for your adventure. It's not a cage or box for you to use to trap characters. Your players will, inevitably, come up with things you hadn't considered. That's a good thing, not a bad thing, and as the GM, it's your job to roll with it and adjust on the fly.

No matter what you do, *never* tell a player, "you can't do that," without a very solid, in-game reason for it. Whatever they want to do, they can try it unless it's directly in violation of the natural laws of your game world—a Chosen One can't just fly, no matter how strong they are. They can, however, give their best shot at trying to scale a smooth wall, even without climbing materials. The task might just be so difficult that they need an unreasonably difficult roll to pull it off.

For this reason, however, you don't want to sweat the details too much in your episode design. You may have seen commercial adventure modules that seem to cover every angle. That's because they're designed to be linear, to remove the work from GMing, and they bring with them a certain set of assumptions into which the players must buy.

When you're running a game at home, you can't cover all the bases and you shouldn't even try. All it's going to do is upset your players when they see it as robbing them of their agency, upset you when the players aren't doing what you planned, and result in nobody having a good time. The more details you try to plan for in your game, the more likely you are to have problems. That's why you want to use a framework.

## How to Use the Framework

Again, stick to the framework idea. What's the threat, and how does it manifest? What information is there for the heroes to find, and what are some possible ways they can find it? Where is the villain located (come up with a few possibilities for this, to adapt to the players' options), and a general timeline of events.

This timeline should be what will happen *without the involvement of the heroes*. That means that the actions they take can (and should) force the timeline to change. The villain may delay or accelerate their plans, a given encounter could change from the high school gym to the local fast-food restaurant parking lot.

## Adapt, Improve, Overcome

This concept may be very scary to the new GM, who will look at a detailed storyline as a crutch upon which they can lean. If that's a concern, that's fine. Just remember you have to be prepared to adapt and change your story when the players take action. If you keep to a loose framework within the four act structure, you've got a lot more freedom to do that. The hallmark of a great GM is the ability to improvise and adapt to unforeseen circumstances.

Worried that your players will know you're making it up as you go along? Don't. They'll have no idea as long as you don't let them see you sweat. Just make it up and roll with it. That's the exact kind of give-and-take that makes gaming a blast, and creates the most rewarding GM experiences.

One thing you should never, ever do is take it out on the characters if the players make decisions contrary to your plans. Don't get angry about it—embrace it. Heck, reward it. If players do something completely out of left field, which has the potential to be truly awesome, grab onto it and run with it as fast as you can. Give them some sort of story benefit as a reward; something

just happens to go their way at a critical moment, or a point they can call in to make a change to a scene that benefits the players. In the context of **Night Shift**, extra Fate Points are a perfect reward.

## Building Your Story

After you've gotten the hang of your first episode, you'll want to start building your story. It's generally not a great idea to write all of your episodes at once. Getting more than, say, 2 episodes ahead of where you are can set you up for trouble. It's almost guaranteed that *something* in the course of your season is going to take a left turn, forcing you to change your outline, which can negate one or more episode ideas you had originally planned.

If you have the time, take it week by week. If not, you may have to write when you can and plan a few episodes ahead. So let's say you've got three episodes planned, and the heroes do something that completely negates your next episode, and by extension all three you had planned? What do you do?

In the immortal words of Douglas Adams: Don't Panic! First, sit down and look at the episodes you have. Is there *any* way you can adapt them to suit what the heroes did? There almost always is. You can change a monster, change a location, change a MacGuffin (that's the object, person, or goal around which the episode revolves), or make another adjustment and suddenly, you'll find it fits again. You might even be able to rearrange episodes. Perhaps what the heroes did can lead them to your third episode, and then you can re-jigger the other two so that they flow in a different order.

Again, it's all about improvising and adapting. Nobody ever said being a GM wouldn't keep you on your toes!

Worst case scenario: what you had planned didn't work. That means you'll have to come up with a new framework. It

happens to the best of us. Don't pitch your old episodes, though! Tuck them in a folder and remember them. You'll be surprised at the situations in which you can whip them out again. They might even save your bacon the next time it happens. No episode is wasted, even if you don't get to use it right away.

### Structuring Your Season

As you plan your episodes you want to think about structuring your season. If each episode has a self-contained arc, it also forms a part of a bigger, overarching storyline that encompasses your whole season. While structuring the season, think of it, too, in a four-act framework, with one exception: Divide your episodes by three, instead of four. Your season finale—the last episode or two of the season—is going to be the Act 3 climax, and the Denouement will take place at the end of that episode.

That means you'll want to divide the rest of the season among acts 1, 2, and the "race to face" part of act 3. If, for example, you're planning a 12-episode season, that leaves 4 episodes for the introduction of the Big Bad, 4 episodes for the development of the overarching threat they present to the characters, and the downturn that leaves the heroes desperate to defeat them, and 4 episodes to actively hunt down and stop their nefarious plans for world domination or destruction.

It's okay, in each act, to toss in a few "Monster of the Week" episodes, which have little or nothing to do with the BB. These can be side quests which may or may not offer important information about the story, but will present an immediate threat that must be dealt with, despite the BB looming in the shadows. These can provide a fun break from the action, and some tension relief by letting the heroes experience a conclusive victory against a lesser foe.

## WORLD BUILDING

Now let's get into the meat and potatoes of your game: building the world. Your world is also sometimes called your *campaign setting*. It's the overall milieu in which your heroes, monsters, and non-player characters live, work, and fight.

There are several different ways to approach world building. For most people, the campaign setting in a *Night Shift* game will start with a very familiar backdrop: it'll likely be set on modern day Earth. That gives you a very easy, instant frame of reference for your game.

For others, they'll seek to create an entirely new world. Perhaps it will be one set on Earth, but in another era, like Renaissance or Dark Ages Europe. Maybe they'll choose to create a post-apocalyptic future like in the Veterans of the Supernatural Wars setting in **Chapter 6**.

For the truly adventurous, the campaign might even choose to work with an alien world, such as the mysterious world of Hastur with its cities of Carcosa and Yhtill along the shores of Lake Hali, revolving around the red giant star Aldebaran, per the fiction of Robert W. Chambers. The latter two present the greatest creative challenges. Let's look at the different possible approaches.

### Establish the Rules of the Supernatural

This is absolutely essential for your game to have any sense of cohesion. Before you do anything else, determine the rules by which the supernatural plays in your world.

You could, easily enough, just assume that all of the supernatural critters in your world work the way the default monsters in **Chapter 5** are described. There's nothing wrong with that, but it does mean that your players can (and you'd better believe will) look up those creatures so they know exactly what they're dealing with out of

game. We'll talk about metagaming in a bit, but the short version is, it's a fact of life and you'll need to deal with it.

Alternately, and a better approach, is to customize the supernatural to your liking. Most of the creatures in **Chapter 5** have an "in your game" section with tips and ideas on how to do just this. Do the vampires in your game have zero problems with holy items, but silver is like fire to them? Maybe none of the typical weaknesses of vampires apply, but they can be killed by any mundane means, though they only take half damage from attacks.

Maybe something ridiculously mundane is poison to them, like a certain kind of fruit. What if vampires and werewolves are both offshoot from a common ancestor (we've all seen that movie series) and so share common traits and certain common weaknesses?

Again, in **Chapter 7's Nocturnumverse**, there are two different kinds of vampires. The first are the *strigoi*, who when they die have their soul replaced by the essence of a demon, which perverts their personality and reverses their conscience.

The second are the *moroi*, whose souls become inexorably bound to them and refuse to pass to the lands of the dead, but are driven by an insatiable hunger for life, are imbued with legendary powers, but are also cursed to live with the guilt of being a monster for all eternity. The *moroi* view the *strigoi* as bottom-feeders, and the *strigoi* seek to usurp the power base of the *moroi*.

To further complicate things, there are rare *strigoi* who can, through magical curses, quests, or other supernatural rarities, have

their souls put back in their bodies, making them an ensouled *strigoi*, which basically allows them to have their personality and conscience restored, but places them eternally at war with the demon inside them. Not quite *moroi* and no longer true *strigoi*, these rare beasts are outcast by both, but can be come some of the most powerful creatures out there.

As you can see, my vampires are rather complicated in the place they hold within my world. Take some time to work out the rules of the supernatural in your game and how the laws of nature (or supernature) affect them. You needn't do it all at once, but be consistent whenever you introduce a new supernatural creature or species, and keep notes.



Are there communities and laws to govern vampires? If so, how do they work? How do they interact with other supernaturals? Do they even know about other supernatural races? What about the rest of the world? Is the supernatural out in the open and widely known, or is it a shadow collective, hidden from the eyes of the public with only a chosen lucky (or unlucky) few aware of the truth? All of this can give life to your game, provide story ideas, and keep things feeling real, grounded, and consistent.

Getting your supernatural rules in place will provide a very solid groundwork for that end of your setting. From there, determine the world in which the supernatural inhabits.

### The Modern Game: Go With What You Know

Consider, for example, setting your game in your hometown. This provides all the detail you and your players need right off

the bat. If, for example, I tell the players in my game set in Pittsburgh (where we live) that something is taking place on East Carson Street in the South Side, they know not only exactly where that is, but exactly what businesses are there, what it looks like and what the tenor of the neighborhood is. It saves a great deal of time and energy in building your world.

When you go with what you know, the lion's share of your campaign setting is done for you—it's just the world we see around us every day. All you need to do is add some unusual details to reflect your supernatural world.

Another example from the Nocturnumverse: a building that in the real world is a cell phone store (but was formerly an indie café) is the Hive Arcana: a café, new age shop, and live music venue that serves as a base of operations for the heroes' supernatural detective agency.

A few of the bars in the aforementioned South Side have secret extradimensional back rooms that cater to the supernatural community. There's even a Cthulhu-Mythos-associated bar and club that's bi-located in Pittsburgh and New York City!

These are quirky details that give a specific sense of the supernatural, and take the world out of the realm of sheer normalcy, while still maintaining the sense of the familiar. For the vast majority of people, this is quite simply the best way to create a campaign. It's fast, easy, and lets you dive right in.

## Historical Settings

Next up, historical settings. These are the second easiest to do, again, because much of the work has been done for you. Running your game in an historical setting simply requires hitting the Internet and hitting the books. Learn as much as you can about the period in which you want to set your game, and the location. Medieval

Romania was wildly different from Medieval Spain, both are different from Medieval England, and none of them are anything at all like the Caliphates of the Middle East!

Learn the culture of the location you want to set your game, the way people lived and worked, the effects of class on your characters, and above all, study the mythology and folklore of the region. An historical game is going to live or die on getting the folklore right.

## History and Comfort Levels

An important factor to keep in mind when running a game set in history is to consider the impact of racial and gender roles—you need to remember at all times that you're playing a game. In the real world, sexism and racism were rampant, institutionalized, and prevalent in the ancient and medieval world in ways that would make us blanch today.

Playing those aspects out in your game, however, might not make for a fun game to the players at your table. It's okay for you to toss these elements out from your setting entirely, or to find a middle ground and acknowledge that they are there, but not portray them overtly and make your characters an exception to the rule.

Again, consider our section earlier on respecting boundaries. You know your players and your table (and if you don't, make it a point to *get* to know them). Your job as the GM is to make sure everyone has a good time. If someone is going to be uncomfortable at the use of these elements in an historic game, toss them out.

Remember, it's a game, it's fiction, and above all, it's fantasy. Your goal should be to present an atmosphere of authenticity, but you do not need to be tied to the letter of "the way things were" if it's going to ruin someone else's fun.

## Apocalyptic (or Post-Apocalyptic) Gaming

A campaign milieu set in a post-apocalyptic (or even apocalyptic—that is, during the apocalypse) era can be a lot of fun and also quite easy to build. After all, it's got roots in the modern era, so you know what buildings look like, what technology is, where streets and landmarks are, etc.

All you need to do is establish the rules of your apocalypse, and how they affected the world. Has society collapsed entirely? Are there no more cell phone towers? Is the Internet flat-out gone or dangerous to use? Is the air poisonous and tainted by an airborne virus that causes vampirism? Do demons walk the Earth and maintain fiefdoms as infernal warlords?

Further, what's the scope of the apocalypse? Was it global and the whole world is changed, or was it localized? Perhaps something awful happened only on North America, which has now been quarantined by the rest of the world, and you're trapped in a prison-like dystopia overrun with demons while the rest of the world goes about its normal business, beating back incursions as they try to expand beyond the North American borders.

An apocalyptic-level campaign is largely a factor of taking the world you know and deciding what the apocalypse has done to it. For an example of a "during the apocalypse" campaign, check out **Chapter 6: Veterans of the Supernatural Wars**.

## Other Worlds

Other worlds entirely, such as one finds in planetary romance or science fantasy settings, are the most difficult to establish. They require that you build an entire world from the ground up. It may be that you've already got notes in order for this, and if so, have at it! It may be that you only have a loose idea and need to build from there.

A detailed treatise on building a complete alien world is beyond the scope of this text. It involves knowledge of environmental and weather patterns, land masses, ecology, and more. It takes a lot of research and study to make it believable. It can be done—it doesn't require a degree in geology. The information is all out there and books have been written on doing so in gaming and fiction. It's just an intensive commitment.

For those wanting to just dive in, there's a few basic things to consider, which will get you up and running. First, decide on the technology level of your world. Is it medieval? Modern? Futuristic? How are communications handled? What do weapons look like? How about transportation? What about food production and availability? This will give you a baseline for what your cultures will look like.

Second, don't feel like you have to map out the entire world and every kingdom or nation right off the bat. It's okay to start with a single town or city. Build on that. Set some adventures there and flesh it out. You can run entire campaigns set in a single city, and you may never need to grow past that. If you need to, you can add other areas as they arise. This allows you to build your world organically, and you get to discover it as the players do. It can be a very fun way to world build, and it allows you to learn what you need to go as you go.

Finally, stay consistent. Once you establish something, it's a part of the world. It's always there and it always should be there, unless something happens in the campaign to remove it. The more you retcon, the less stable your world will be, and the less grounded it will feel to the players.

## CONSISTENCY IS KING

The idea of consistency goes beyond world building. Whatever you do as a GM, whether it's creating a world, writing adventures, or building and running your

game, remember the next cardinal rule of a GM: consistency is king. It's okay if you don't like the way the rules here handle (or fail to handle) a given situation. It's okay to house rule your game to seek a different solution. When you do, however, make sure you are consistent in the way you adjudicate the situation every time it comes up.

If you're making a house rule, it's likely because it's something you'll need to address time and again. If you change the way you handle it every time it comes up, your players are going to get frustrated. Among the most important tools for any GM are a notebook and pen. When you make a change to the rules, write it down so you don't forget what you did.

The same goes to your non-player characters. When you establish an NPC who plays a role in your world, make character notes about them. How did they interact with the players? What were their core obvious personality traits? Make sure that when the characters go back to that bar later, the bartender has the same basic personality as they did before, or if they don't that there's a reason why their personality is changed.

This gives the world, again, a sense of being consistent and grounded. There has to be something for the characters to hold onto, and on which they can count. Just as in the real world, gravity is a constant on Earth. It works the same everywhere unless there is a specific outside force working on it to change it. Your game world should be the same—things work according to natural laws and according to their own personal proclivities.

## **DEVELOPING NPCs**

Non-player characters are the heart and soul of your world. These are the people with whom your players interact. Every one of their friends, family, and co-workers in the game, everyone that's not one of the

PCs and isn't a monster to be slain, is an NPC. You'll need to develop these NPCs to make them feel real to your players.

There are different degrees to which you can do this, depending on the importance of the NPC.

### **One-Off NPCs**

If the character in question is a one-off, someone the PCs are questioning who is going to die by the end of the adventure, or otherwise probably won't appear again, you don't have to put a lot of work into them. Determine the role they play in the adventure, give them a physical description and a few personality quirks, and run with it. Don't waste time completely fleshing out someone that's only going to pass through your characters' lives.

### **Recurring NPCs**

Recurring NPCs, on the other hand, are those that will play a major and important role in the lives of your characters. They'll appear time and again, providing guidance, information, and fulfilling the role that friends, family, and even enemies play in our daily lives. Your Chosen One's spouse or significant other, for example, should have a full history, including a childhood, formative events in their life, personality traits, quirks, likes, dislikes, habits, even an astrological sign if you like. The more detail you have for a recurring NPC, the more consistently you'll be able to play them.

Nor do your players need to know all of this information. You can dole it out as required, but you should have it there. Again, keep your notebook and keep records on your NPCs, their history and the ways in which they interact with the world.

Here's a secret, though: you don't need to provide statistics for them in terms of their hit points, AC, ability scores, and the like. You can improvise these things as needed if at some point they come up in the game,



but NPCs are going to be a plot point for you in general, so they'll have the abilities you need them to have in the moment. Again, however, once they exhibit an ability, note it and remember that they always have it.

In the end, NPCs are the backbone of your world. Pay attention to them, and pay attention to the way your players react to them. They turn a rote Monster of the Week adventure into part of a living, breathing world. When your characters go into that café they always frequent, make sure they see familiar faces working the barista counter. When they head to their favorite watering hole, populate it with regular patrons. Then, take those characters outside of where the PCs are used to seeing them. Put them on the street, and especially, put them in danger. This gives a sense of gravitas and investment to the lives of the heroes. Suddenly, they're not just saving another random teen from a vampire; they're saving that girl from the café they've had a secret crush on for months.

## DEALING WITH THE RULES

So we've talked about building and populating your world. We've discussed how to build adventures. We haven't talked about arguably the most important aspect of the game: how to deal with and adjudicate the rules. For many picking this game up, this section will be a bit old hat—if you've run games before, much of this will be refresher. For others, what's here will be new, especially if you're a novice GM out to run a game for the first time.

### The Importance of Rules

The rules are an important part of the game. After all, every game needs rules. But the unspoken rule 0 in the game is that it is *your game*. It's not my game, it's not Elf Lair's game. It's not anyone else's game. Once it's in your hands and you sit down to run, it's your game. Certainly your players

should have a degree of agency in it as well, but you are the ringmaster. You're the CEO. You're in many ways the god of your world. You control the weather, the reactions of NPCs, the movements monsters make. The only thing you *don't* control is what the player characters do. That line is sacrosanct—the players control their characters, but you control the world around them.

### The Hierarchy of Play

When you run your game, there's a certain hierarchy of importance. At the top of the hierarchy is, obviously, fun. So long as everyone at the table is having a good time, you're getting it right. That includes you, as GM. You have a right to a good time as well, even as you bear the responsibility for providing a good time to the others. We'll call this "the game as a whole."

Next up, however, is your campaign. Always put the needs of the campaign ahead of anything else in game, keeping in mind that what's fun for all is paramount. Next, consider the fairness of the rules and system. Equity is vital to keeping the fun going and keeping everyone invested and feeling like their character matters.

Finally, your players come into the picture. It's your job to adjudicate rules questions and even interpersonal disputes that arise at the table, making sure that you are putting the game and campaign above everything else. This isn't to say that your players aren't important. On the contrary, your players make up the campaign and the game. It's just that the whole is more important than the puzzle pieces.

Another way to think of it is putting everyone's needs above the individual's. If there's a dispute at the table or one person is unhappy, you need to weigh what's going on against everyone's enjoyment. Find a way to either resolve the situation so that everyone is satisfied, or someone may have to leave the game. This is a decision that's never easy to make nor implement, but in



the end, as tough as it may be, the direct approach is often best. Just be respectful about addressing the fact that there's an issue, and determine whether it can be resolved, or whether it's better for everyone that the player with the issue move on.

If, on the other hand, everyone at the table has an issue with one player, that goes back to the campaign and the game as a whole being threatened. The end of it all, however, remains the same: you need to talk to the offending player one-on-one (preferably these things should always be handled away from the table rather than stopping the game for it) and see if the situation can be resolved.

## Handling Rules Issues

As you play the game, there will be rules issues that will come up. Something in the rule book might not cover what you need it to, and you'll need to come up with a solution for that. You might not *like* the way we've handled something herein, and you want to try it a different way. It's not

an issue of whether these things will happen—they will, absolutely. No game is perfect and no rules system can cover 100% of situations. What matters is how you deal with it when it comes up.

## Be Decisive

The first thing you need to do when handling rules issues is be decisive. Don't let the game stall for an hour while you research the book trying to find an answer that doesn't seem to be there. Don't spend an hour arguing about how to handle something. Make a decision, stick with it, and move on. You can always talk about the issue after the game session and see how everyone felt about how it went. The key while you're playing, though, is to make your call and stick with it.

## Track Your Decisions

Get a notebook and keep score! I'm not talking about keeping score for players, I'm talking about keeping track of the decisions you make. This goes hand in hand with our discussion on consistency earlier.

One of the most important factors of being a GM is fairness and consistency. If you do something one way one session, do it the same way the next session, and the next after that. If you change it, let everyone know you're changing it before it happens. Your players need to have a sense of stability and making sure that you are always adjudicating the same situation the same way is a good first start for that.

So keep a notebook of your decisions, rulings, and house rules. Your players will thank you for it, and you'll thank yourself.

## Know the System

In *Night Shift*, there are three basic mechanics, which should make it quite simple to adjudicate almost any situation. Indeed, the game is specifically built to be fast and intuitive both to play and run. More details about using these mechanics are in

**Chapter Two**, but what's important here is that you understand the building blocks of the system are in place to allow you to make fast decisions on the fly to handle just about anything you need to. Pick what seems to be the right mechanic, throw the dice, and move on. The game, the story, and the play is more important than the rules.

If it's an issue of a class ability, something tied directly to something you think a character class should be able to do, or something resembling a skill check, default to a percentage roll. There are guidelines in **Chapter Two** under "Skills" for setting such a percentage, which can be useful even if you're not using skills in your game. Alternately, you can default to a base percentage of 25%, plus 5% per level of the character making the check, and then modified up or down by increments of 5% for the ease or difficulty of the task.

If it's an issue related to combat or resisting some sort of effect, fall back on an ability check with a d20 as outlined in **Chapter Two**. Ability checks are your quick-resolve catch-all for things that don't fall under class ability/skill-type checks. Just set a difficulty and go, figuring that a base, moderate difficulty for a skill should be between 11 and 13, then modify down for easier and up for harder.

Finally, if it's something you just need to adjudicate on the fly, quickly, without thinking too much about it, go with the Rule of 2. Throw a die and on a 1 or 2, it happens.

### **Don't Be a Slave to the Rules**

The rules don't own you. Never, ever let the rules get in the way of the fun or cool factor of the game. While this does come down to knowing what to roll and when, it also means know when not to bother rolling at all. Is Sarah trying to do something awesome with her Chosen One, her percentage chance with that specific ability is over 90%, and you think the task is so mundane she could do it in her sleep? Don't make her roll! Just let her have it.

Your job as the GM is *absolutely not* to be adversarial to your players. Your job is *absolutely not* to try and kill off your player characters. Your job is to work with your players to tell the most badass story you can. This is a game about heroes standing against the forces of darkness. Let your players be big goddamn heroes!

### **Overcoming the Locked Dungeon**

Along these same lines, let's say you make a mistake (which you will—believe me! We all make doozies now and again). You've got the heroes scouring a room for a piece of information that's vital to moving the campaign forward. Instead of just giving it to them, you're not thinking straight and you call for a roll.

Everyone fails.

Now what do you do? Traditionally, this has been called "The locked dungeon scenario," where the door to the dungeon is locked, and nobody can pick it or break through, so there's no game. Quite frankly, that entire concept is stupid and speaks to people who are slaves to what's on the page. It misses the whole point of role playing.

Look, if you call for a roll and everyone fails, and the result would mean the game can't move forward, the game is not lost. It's very simple. That roll meant something slightly different, that's all. Let's go back to the case of the important information they failed to find. Well, they didn't fail to find it. That roll just meant that they don't find it without a complication. Maybe it takes so long to dig up the information that a security guard blunders in just as they uncover what they need, or better yet, vampires track them down and attack! If it's a locked door they can't get through, same thing. It just takes them a lot longer than it should have to get through that barrier.

Don't ever let your game get stalled because everyone failed a roll. And don't ever think that because someone wrote an

adventure that includes a roll which could result in that, that it's a badly written module. Instead, look at it as an opportunity to be creative and flex your muscles as GM.

## CREATING NEW CHARACTER TYPES

At some point you'll probably have a player that wants to explore a character type not covered by one of the existing character classes. You could sit down and build a new class from the ground up, but that takes work, and the structure for creating XP progressions isn't an easy, linear, or concise formula—we ran statistical analyses on the classes after basing the originals on other old-school games, and went from there. You could probably guesstimate based on what we've offered and get something that's close enough for government work (or game balance), but there's actually a much simpler way to handle it.

### Modifying and Combining Existing Classes

If you'll check out some of our Night Worlds in **Chapters 6-9**, you'll see a few examples of new character types that are built *based on existing classes*. The Nocturniverse in **Chapter 7** has two of these: the Mystic Martial Artist and the Spirit Rider. Both mix elements from several different character classes to create an unique character type, and assign what seems to be an appropriate XP progression (in both of these cases that's the Chosen One, but you may feel yours are different).

### Creating Brand New Abilities

If you feel the need to create one or more brand new abilities for your game, the basic guideline is that it should use a percentile roll for a mechanic, and a solid starting percentage (and progression) is 30-50% at first level (depending on how powerful the ability is), and increase it by 5% per level of experience. In some cases you may modify it by a multiple of an ability bonus (say, 5 times ability bonus), or you may simply

modify it by adding an entire ability score to it (or several if you're feeling frosty). But percentage is the rule of the day when creating new class abilities.

## Adding New Mystic Abilities, Psionics, and Spells

For the most part, adding new mystic abilities, psionics, and spells is a factor of looking at what is there, and building your new ability around the same template. Let's break it down by each category.

### Mystic Abilities

Part and parcel of the game is the list of mystical abilities available to the Witch/Warlock class (and to several others, including Supernatural characters). As you look at these abilities, you'll see that many of them are simply based upon spell effects. If you feel the need to add more abilities to your game, simply take the same approach. Look for a spell that does the same thing (or something similar to it) and work it out so that it fits the paradigm of how existing supernatural abilities work. A solid guideline for modifying existing spells to new effects can be found in the Inventor character class in **Chapter One**.

### Psionic Powers

Adding new psionic powers is something of a balancing act. The field of abilities herein is fairly expansive and should work for most needs. If you need to add another, the first step is to think about what exactly it does, and consider whether it fits with your conception of what a psychic power should be (as opposed to something that's more fantastical, which would be in the realm of magic). Psychics generally manipulate the senses or some aspect of the physical world, be it moving objects, manipulating bodily functions, controlling a specific type of energy in the world (fire, electricity, etc.) or the like.

Once you've determined that there is a need for a new psychic power, stop and

think about what it does in the game world, understanding that it'll be activated using the character's psychic powers class ability, and balancing its power level against existing powers. If you can, look at spells as a benchmark. Using spells as a benchmark for determining the relative power level of an ability is *always* a good idea and gives you a very solid jumping-off point for setting damage, effects, reach, duration, and difficulty.

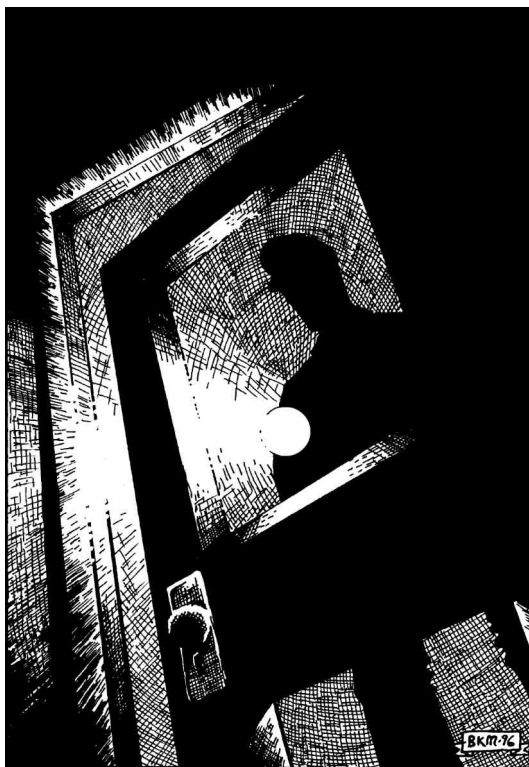
### New Spells

Creating new spells is both super easy and much more difficult. Your first step when you want to add a new spell to your game is to consult the *vast* library of old school games already on the market. Any game that is compatible with Oe, Basic (or Expert, or...), or Advanced versions of the World's Most Famous RPG will be chock full of spells that you can probably just drop in here with no changes necessary.

If you do decide to create a brand new spell, again, the above guidelines still apply. Does your new spell do something that another spell already does? If so, it's probably not needed. Is it a lesser version of an existing spell, or an improved version of an existing spell? If so, set it a level or two below or above the existing spell, and write its mechanics to reflect that. Is it an all new effect that doesn't exist anywhere? Look at the closest spells you can find and use those as a benchmark for setting spell levels.

### Creating New Classes from Scratch

Otherwise, if you do feel the drive to create brand new classes for your game, the existing classes should provide a very solid template for what you will need to account—saving throw bonuses, attack bonuses, AC bonuses, weapon and armor proficiencies, etc. The tools are there; you'll just need to do a bit of studying to find them and apply them to your new creations.



Again, however, be sure to compare your new abilities to existing ones and ensure that your new character class is not overpowered (or underpowered) compared to pre-existing ones. Sadly, there's no easy or obvious benchmark for this. You'll need to playtest the character, and whichever player is running the new class will need to understand that it may need to be tweaked, possibly several times, before it finds its final form. The more you do it, however, the more you'll get a feel for the system and the less tweaking will be needed.

Most GMs end up being tinkers as much as storytellers, so it's probably a foregone conclusion that you'll dive into that at some point. We would encourage you to be as creative with the system as you like, and create whatever you feel you need for your home game!

## Developing Your Intuition

In the end, a great deal of the process for creating new powers, spells, character classes, and the like is intuitive. While there are a lot of statisticians and mathematicians out there who believe that numbers are the Alpha and Omega of game design, the truth is, that's just not the truth. Numbers and statistical analysis is the beginning of game design, but it's every bit as much an art as it is a science, and many things that should work soundly on the page in a strictly numeric system utterly fail when you introduce the human element into play.

The more you get a feel for the game, the better you'll be at adding and modifying elements of it to maintain balance. That's why, when you're first starting out, even if you're an experienced GM, it's usually a bad idea to start adding new elements right

away. Run the game as it sits for a while until you really get to know it.

You might find that those things you thought were missing aren't that necessary, or maybe weren't missing after all, but exist in a different way. On the other hand, you might find more things you want to add. The only way to know is to actually play the game. Get to know it, get to know the system, get to know what's there, and get to know your options. Then you'll be able to make house rules, new additions, and whatever you like with absolute confidence.

Now that you've got this quick primer in hand and you've digested it, it's time to move on to the next fun part of being a Game Master...the monsters!





## CHAPTER FIVE: CREATURES OF THE NIGHT

What's a game of vampire hunters, zombie killers, and werewolf-stalkers without vampires, zombies, and werewolves to fight? In this chapter, we'll take a look at ghosts, ghoulies, and other things that go bump in the night. From your basic shambling dead through ancient undead masterminds of horror, you'll find a whole range of goon- and big-bad-level monsters to threaten your crew as they protect the world from the forces of darkness. While we're at it, we'll also provide some guidelines on putting together new monsters (mostly by mixing and matching the various abilities herein) and several different systems for assigning and awarding experience points to keep your game moving forward, allowing for character growth.

### READING THE STAT BLOCKS

Monsters have very simplified stat blocks, for they need very little game information. Each monster entry will begin

with a description of the creature and the role it might play in your game. Many creatures are customizable, and may be altered for your game purposes. A vampire, for example, could have all the standard tropes such as fear of crosses and garlic, inability to cross running water, and the like. Others might have no aversions at all, nor any tie to religious icons. For such creatures an "in your game" section will be included below the stat block with some basic suggestions and ideas.

Following the description of the creature will be a list of its special abilities, if any, and the effect these have on game. These abilities will be listed in bullet-point format.

Following this will be a table with the creature's basic statistics: No. appearing, the number typically encountered; AC (self-explanatory); Hit Dice, the number of dice rolled to determine the creature's hit points; and special, a summary of the creature's special abilities (or modifications

to listed special abilities, if necessary). Remember that monsters always add their total hit dice to attacks, saving throws, and checks.

Monsters with class abilities calculate the % chance to use said abilities based on the number of levels in the ability they possess. A 7 HD vampire, for example, with the abilities of a 3rd-level Witch, would have the spellcasting abilities of a 3rd-level Witch, not a 10th-level Witch. It would, however, add +10 to attacks, saving throws, and checks.

## MONSTER HIT DICE AND CHECKS

Monsters all use d8 for hit dice. Thus, a monster with 3 hit dice rolls 3d8 and totals the result for hit points. If the GM wishes, to quickly calculate the hit points of a monster, simply multiply the number of hit dice times five, just above the average score on a d8. The only exception is a monster with class abilities; in this case, the monster has the hit dice for its character class *added* to its base hit dice.

A monster, for example, that has 3d8 hit dice normally, but also has 2 levels of Psychic, would have hit points equal to 3d8 plus 2d6, and be considered a 5-HD creature with the class abilities of a second-level psychic. It would, thus, add +5 to all attacks, checks, and saves, but its percentage for using psychic powers would be 20% (the equivalent of a second-level psychic).

This does have the effect of making monsters a bit more competent and tougher than the player characters. This is deliberate, and serves to make monsters—especially those with greater hit dice—much scarier.

## Monsters with Unique Kill Methods

In mythology, films, and books we often see monsters that can only be killed a certain way—vampires must be staked, burned, or decapitated, for example. How is this accomplished in a game without

explicit called shot rules? The answer, of course, is, “in as simple a way as possible.”

In general, a monster is killed by reducing its hit points to 0. This represents the character’s ability to utilize unique kills—zombies that need to be shot in the head, for example, have been hit in the head when their hit points hit zero. Vampires are staked or decapitated when their hit points reach zero. This keeps the game simple and straightforward, without the need for called shots. The rationale is that as a character battles a vampire, they are *always* looking for the means to drive the stake home, while whittling down its combat efficacy until that opening presents itself.

The GM should keep in mind, however, that if a character doesn’t have the correct means to kill a creature, the creature will simply be immune to their attacks.

As characters rise in levels and gain the ability to have supernatural attacks, this will become less of an issue. Still, if a hero would have no way to decapitate, stake, set ablaze, or otherwise kill a vampire, their attacks against the creature will have no effect. Or, at very least, they cannot reduce the creature to 0 hit points. They may, however, at the DM’s discretion, be able to reduce it as low as 1 hit die or less worth of hit points, making it easier for another character to deliver the killing blow. This is left to the GM to determine.

Very often, when heroes first encounter a creature, they may not have the means to destroy it on hand. The first time a werewolf encounter occurs, for example, the characters may not be equipped with silver bullets, and thus, the GM can rule that their Supernatural Attacks don’t harm the creature when it hits zero hit points, but instead merely drive it away. Or they may not affect it at all, requiring the heroes to actually retreat for a change.

Some creatures, however, will have *truly* unique kills that go beyond the heroes’



ability to employ supernatural attacks. A lich, for example, can only be destroyed permanently if its phylactery is found and pulverized. A mummy requires the destruction of its canopic jars, or it will re-form. In these cases, the unique kill will be listed under the monster's statistics. These monsters may be defeated, and seemingly destroyed, only to return months or years later to harass our heroes once again.

## Supernatural Attacks

Many monsters are immune to non-supernatural attacks. This can present a problem, especially to low-level characters without such attacks. At the GM's discretion, possessing the right equipment to battle a monster may grant the equivalent of supernatural attacks against that creature. Outfitting normal humans, for example, with holy water, crosses, and fire can allow them to fight vampires as though they had supernatural attacks, or outfitting characters with silver allows for supernatural attack equivalency against werewolves. *Remember that magic is always considered supernatural, as are supernatural powers.*

## EXPERIENCE AWARDS

Experience is vital to the game; it is the means by which characters rise in level and get better at what they do. It's also, however, important that characters earn experience points based on the creatures they battle.

The base method of calculating experience is a fairly basic calculation, requiring two steps: determining base XP value, and calculating additional XP based on special abilities.

**Calculating Base XP Value:** A creature with 1 hit die or less has a base XP VALUE of 5. Thereafter, the base XP value doubles with each additional hit die, so 2 HD creatures are worth 10, 3 HD creatures worth 20, 4 HD creatures worth 40, etc.

**Additional Experience for Special Abilities:** There are three categories of special abilities. Class 1 abilities are those that include more than 3 attacks per round, spells or supernatural powers equivalent to a 3rd-level Witch or less, or other basic nonmagical special abilities. Class 2 abilities include more than 5 attacks per round, dealing more than 24 points of damage in a round, or Witch powers of up to 7th level. Class 3 abilities include instant death attacks, permanent level or ability drain, or Witch-equivalent abilities of 8th level or above.

What constitutes a special ability of a given level can be somewhat malleable and shift at the discretion of the GM. The abilities listed above are solid guidelines, but there will inevitably come times where the GM has to make a call.

The base XP value for a 1 HD creature with such abilities is 2 for Class I, 3 for Class 2, and 5 for Class 3. Like base hit points, they scale by doubling for each hit die, but starting at 3 HD, round *up* to the nearest increment of 5. Thus, a 2 HD creature's special abilities are worth 5, 6, and 10. A 3 HD creature is worth 10, 15 (round up), and 20. A 4 HD creature is worth 20, 30, and 40, etc. These extra XP are awarded for *each* special ability.

For ease of reference, consult the following table.

**Table: Monster XP Values**

HD	Base	Class		
		I	II	III
1	5	2	3	5
2	10	5	6	10
3	20	10	15	20
4	40	20	30	40
5	80	40	60	80
6	160	80	120	160
7	320	160	240	320
8	640	320	480	640
9	1,280	640	960	1,280
10	2,560	1,280	1,920	2,560

**Putting It All Together:** A 4 HD creature with 2 class I abilities and a class 2 ability would, then, have a value of 110 XP:  $40 + 20 + 20 + 30 = 90$ .

For quick reference, each monster will have a listed XP value; these guidelines will simply help GMs to modify creatures for their game, or who wish to create all-new creatures from myth or legend.

### Story-Based Experience

GMs who wish to very closely control how rapidly their heroes advance can simply adopt a story-based experience system. Under this system, the GM will simply award a set amount of experience to heroes at the end of any given episode of a campaign, potentially with additional awards at the end of a season of play (see **Chapter 4: Earth After Dark**, for the episode and season approach to campaigns).

Exactly how many points to give at each such benchmark is really at the discretion of the GM, but it is suggested that a base level be determined, and that level be then multiplied by the average party level in the game. Thus, if you begin with, say, a 250-point award for your 1st-level party, the award will become 500 when the party averages 2nd level, 750 when they reach 3rd level, 1,000 when they reach 4th level, etc. This keeps things smooth and roughly linear.

### Freeform Experience System

If the GM does not wish to calculate specific XP for a given encounter, a more generic system can be employed. This system will certainly alter the speed at which characters advance, but it also greatly shortens the amount of time the GM must spend calculating experience, instead simply allowing for the use of judgment based on how easy or difficult any given encounter seemed to be for the heroes, while adding extra bonuses for story points, good role playing, etc. For many, this kind of freeform

experience can be a boon to play, encouraging the kind of story-based pursuits for which **Night Shift** is intended. It also allows the GM more of a degree of control over just how fast heroes rise in levels, while still allowing for incremental rewards that players will enjoy.

**Table: Freeform XP awards**

Circumstance	Award
Easy encounter*	100 XP
Medium encounter*	200 XP
Difficult encounter*	500 XP
Deadly encounter*	1,000 XP
Defeating a major enemy*	500 XP
Exceptional Role Playing (per instance)	10-50 XP
Heroic activities	100-500 XP
Putting one's life in danger for the group (Heroic sacrifice)	1,000 XP
Reaching a story plot point	500-1,000 XP
Outside the box thinking	100 XP
Solving a puzzle or correctly theorizing the villain's plans	100-500 XP

\* Multiply XP value by average party level. Thus, an easy encounter for a 5th level party nets 500 XP.

### Granting Level Advancements

A final method, which is *not recommended* in **Night Shift**, is simply granting level advancements instead of XP. The reason this is not recommended is that this game is not balanced by character level, but by experience totals. Each character class gets different abilities of varying power at different levels. Some classes advance more quickly than others because their abilities are less powerful overall.

What that means is a 3rd level Survivor is not equivalent to a 3rd level Veteran. A Survivor with 5,000 experience points, however, is designed to be balanced against a Veteran with 5,000 experience points, even though they may be different levels in game. This may be a difficult concept for some newer gamers to wrap their heads around, given that many games seek to balance classes on a 1:1 basis, but it works well for

this kind of game by keeping the balance and advancement for each class internal. It's neither better nor worse than a "balance by level" approach; it's just different.

## PLAYER CHARACTERS AS MONSTERS

In Chapter 1, we included a "Supernatural" player character race that allows you to custom design supernatural elements for your player character, mimicking the idea that they are a werewolf, vampire, fey, or other creature of the night. This race is designed to balance against the existing character classes so that so-called "monstrous" PCs don't run away with the game.

It is possible, with GM approval, to take a different approach and simply allow monstrous player characters. To do so, instead of the Supernatural character race, players simply choose a monster from this section, and overlay it like a template on their character. A vampire player character, for example, would gain the supernatural abilities and weaknesses of a vampire, including Cannot Cross Running Water, Feed on Blood (life drain), Immune to Normal Damage, Mind Control, Regenerate, Repulsed by Holy Items and Garlic, Shape-shifting, Spawn, Strong and Fast, and Vampire Vulnerabilities.

Regardless of the player character monster species, the character *always* begins play with 1d8 hit points.

Characters using one of these monsters suffer a 2,000, 3,000, or 5,000 XP penalty as per the Supernatural race in chapter 1, with the GM determining the XP penalty based on the general power level of the monster. Vampires have a lot of powers, even with their vulnerabilities to offset them, so the GM would be well within their purview to state that such a character must acquire 5,000 XP before resetting to zero and choosing a character class.



Like the Supernatural race in chapter 1, monster player characters begin with no "to hit" bonus until they choose a character class. Instead of a blanket +3 to saves against supernatural attacks, magic, and spells, the creature is generally immune to, or possesses a bonus against, supernatural abilities that are identical to, or closely mimic, their own. A vampire, for example, would be immune to *charm person*, *domination*, or *polymorph* spells that target them (perhaps unless used by a monster with more hit dice than they, or a character of higher level, at the GM's option).

The GM may also interpret certain "hit die" based abilities in terms of PC statistics. For example, since Vampires are Strong and Fast, the GM may choose to simply award a +3 to Strength and Dexterity instead of the hit-die-based attack and damage bonuses. There is a great deal of interpretation required (and encouraged) when using this method of creating supernatural PCs.

### Altering PC Monsters for Night Worlds

Note also that many monsters in this chapter include an "In Your Game" section which discusses modifying the monster for a specific campaign world. It's possible that the vampire mythology in your world doesn't include garlic or holy items, but that silver is deadly to them. This would apply to player character vampires as well as NPC monsters. Always work with the GM to determine which abilities do and do not translate to player character versions of monsters.

### Novice Monsters: Staggering Abilities

The vampire PC in question also may discover that the GM wishes to stagger their abilities. Their mind control ability, for example, may not impart *domination* until the vampire reaches, say, 6th level in their character class after getting through their XP penalty and beginning advancement.

For monsters with multiple hit dice, it's perfectly within reason for the GM to create such a structured gaining of abilities—such PC monsters begin as "novice" or "new" monster converts and will gain powers as they grow in age and experience.

It's possible for even aged monsters to still be novice in power. A vampire, for example, may be hundreds of years old, but has rarely seen conflict or had to call upon powers. Rather they've focused on easy prey, fed on animals, or have largely stayed out of trouble. As such, they've simply never built the wisdom, experience, and abilities that come with vampires that are in the thick of it.

In the end, take care when allowing full-fledged monsters as characters, and both the player and GM must be willing to work together to ensure that the spirit of the character meshes with playability within the scope of the game.

## THE BESTIARY

### ANIMALS (MUNDANE)

Animals can be easily put together by simply assigning an AC, hit dice, and any special abilities the creature should have. They have very few abilities beyond the pale, so simply assign the abilities you need and go. For creatures like rats, bats, and bees that tend to swarm, see the *Swarm* entry, below.

#### Common Animal Abilities:

- **Enhanced Senses:** The creature sees, hears, smells, or otherwise detects danger, tracks, or has other senses on an increased probability on a d6. An animal with keen hearing, for example, may hear noises on a 1-4 on a d6. Alternately, a creature could have night vision, able to see clearly in very low light conditions, or can have sonar, enabling them to navigate in complete darkness.

- **Alternate Movement:** A creature could be able to swim, fly, climb, or move through trees (brachiation) at a speed equal to, faster than, or in lieu of, the standard ground movement rate.
- **Fast Movement:** Most animals move faster than 30ft. They should have a movement of 40ft. or higher.

#### Animals

**No. Appearing:** 1-100+

**AC:** 2-9

**Move:** 40ft.+

**Hit Dice:** 1-10

**Special:** Varies

**XP VALUE:** Calculate as needed. Most animal special abilities will be of the Class I variety.

## DEMONS

Demons are vile, horrid creatures from the realms beyond the ken of mortals. Each demon, like the realms they come from, are unique. They should each have some form of Unique Kill in addition to other unique abilities. Defeating a demon in general means merely banishing it back to its home plane of existence, which may inevitably lead to the same demon finding a way back to Earth, bent on revenge against those that banished it. The only things demons have in common with each other is their hate for humankind and realms of mortals. They are creatures of pure, malicious evil. Some are corruptors and tempters, while others are agents of pure entropy, chaos and destruction.

They can appear in any of infinite forms. Some are humanoid in the classic sense with horns, wings, and cloven feet. Others are amorphous blobs of flesh with tentacles and teeth. Still others are insectoid, while there are those who look like twisted crosses between beasts that should never be combined. Use your imagination when creating demons for your game.

### Demonic Classes

Demons are often organized into orders or "Classes" of relative power or difficulty to kill. The most commonly encountered member of the class is featured, but they are not the only members. Also, only the most cloistered of academic scholars will refer to a demonic class.

#### Common Demonic Abilities:

- **Gate:** Demons can summon lesser demons to aid them if they desire.
- **Immortal:** Demons are not mortal and immune to aging effects.
- **Immunities:** All demons are immune to fire, electrical attacks and poison.
- **Resistances:** Demons take half damage from acid and cold based attacks. They also take only half damage from the supernatural attacks of non-demons, including player characters who are not Chosen Ones.
- **Telepathy:** All demons are telepathic and can communicate with any creature.
- **Vulnerability:** Demons take double damage from attacks by celestial creatures, Chosen Ones, or blessed weapons.
- **Witchcraft:** Some demons possess the abilities of a Witch/Warlock of anywhere up to double their hit dice, including inherent supernatural abilities.

#### Class I

**No. Appearing:** 1-2

**AC:** 5

**Move:** 30ft., fly 50ft

**Hit Dice:** 1-4

**Special:** 2 attacks (claws and bite), Cause darkness, Demon abilities, Summon Class I demon 50%.

**XP VALUE:** Calculate based on specific demon abilities and hit dice.

### Class II

**No. Appearing:** 1

**AC:** 4

**Move:** 30ft.

**Hit Dice:** 5-8

**Special:** 3 attacks (2 claws, bite), Cause fear, Demon abilities, Summon Class I demon 60%, Summon Class II demon 50%

**XP VALUE:** Calculate based on specific demon abilities and hit dice.

### Class III

**No. Appearing:** 1

**AC:** 3

**Move:** 30ft.

**Hit Dice:** 9-12

**Special:** 3 attacks (2 claws, bite), Cause fear, Demon abilities, Summon Class I demon 75%, Summon Class II demon 60%, Summon Class III demon 50%

**XP VALUE:** Calculate based on specific demon abilities and hit dice.

### Class IV

**No. Appearing:** 1

**AC:** 2

**Move:** 30ft.

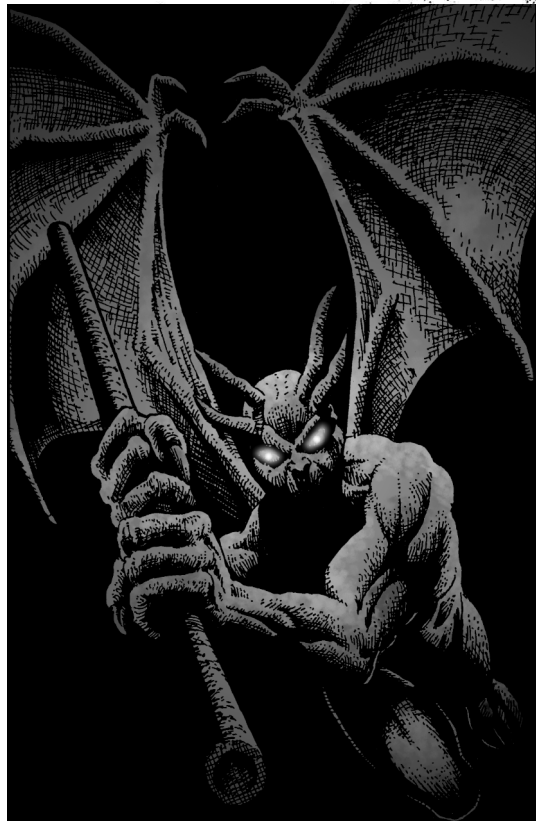
**Hit Dice:** 13-16

**Special:** 4 attacks (2 claws, bite, 1 other of choice), Demon abilities, Summon Class I demon 80%, Summon Class II demon 75%, Summon Class III demon 60%, Summon Class IV demon 50%

**XP VALUE:** Calculate based on specific demon abilities and hit dice.

### Demons in Your Game

Demons can play almost any role in your game. They are as infinite as people. Your game may use the traditional biblical ideal of demons and devils, with pitchforks, bat wings, and with roles as tempters, corrupters, and seducers of humanity. It may use them to represent eldritch horrors that inhabited the Earth before humanity in a Lovecraftian sense. It may even have them be alien invaders from one or more alternate "hell worlds," who see humanity as chattel, slave labor, and food. The core concept behind demons is that they are



purely otherworldly, and almost unremittingly, utterly evil.

### DOPPELGÄNGERS

Doppelgänger are mysterious shape-shifting humanoid that have a single special ability: they assume the form of others for their own ends. They must spend some time observing an individual, but when that is done they can assume the exact shape and likeness of the victim. Sometimes the doppelgänger seeks to replace the victim by killing them. Others may simply wish to cause chaos. The mind of the doppelgänger is so alien that attempts to use mind reading magics or psychic powers will result in a clouded or mixed result. Some doppelgänger have enough "human" awareness to not just pass

as human but to also seek employment with others in need of an operative that can become anyone.

### Doppelgängers

**No. Appearing:** 1

**AC:** 8

**Move:** 30ft.

**Hit Dice:** 3

**Special:** Shape change, Alter appearance

**XP VALUE:** 50

### Doppelgängers in Your Game

What are doppelgängers? Are they an alien species come to this planet to replace humans? Are they some sort of demon, ghost, or fae creature? Or still another creature of chaos? They are many tales in myth, legend and urban folklore about "mystery doubles," "psychic twins," or even bilocating mystics. The doppelgänger of one game might have nothing in common with one from another save for their ability to take on another shape.

## GHOSTS

Ghosts are the spirits of the departed living. Typically the ghost encountered will be human, but animal ghosts are known. Usually only one ghost is found per location since the ghost is often tied to it through its death. There are situations where multiple ghosts can be encountered together, usually when people have died together traumatically.

Ghosts appear as they did in life but distorted, as if it is not possible to fully see one in focus. Ghosts can usually be detected prior to their manifestations by how they can affect some electrical equipment or by "cold-spots" in the areas they haunt. Animals can sense a ghost before a human can and are made uneasy.

### Common Ghost Abilities

- **Incorporeal:** A ghost has no physical form and cannot be hit by mundane weapons. They are only affected by supernatural attacks.

- **Invisibility:** Ghosts can sometimes be invisible. In some cases the ghost can choose to be visible or invisible; in others, the ghost is only visible during certain specific conditions (a certain hour of night, the presence of a specific object or individual, etc.)

- **Scare:** The sight of a ghost causes a supernatural fear reaction to any that see it. This is treated like the *cause fear* spell. This happens only when the ghost is first seen, subsequent encounters with the same ghost do not have this fear affect.

- **Touch:** The touch of a ghost causes the victim to age 10 years.

- **Unique Kill:** A ghost can be put down, but the only way to keep it from reforming in the future is to find its unique method of destruction. Sometimes this means putting a body to rest, or discovering a long lost item, or even the death of a particularly hated enemy. Until these conditions are met the ghost will reform after a loss of all hit points in 1d4 nights.

### Ghosts

**No. Appearing:** 1

**AC:** 4

**Move:** 30ft.

**Hit Dice:** 9

**Special:** Incorporeal, Scare, Touch, Unique Kill

**XP VALUE:** 7,040

### Ghosts in Your Game

Every ghost should feel unique. There is no such thing as a "generic" or typical ghost. Each one has unique motives for not crossing over and each one can only be dispatched a certain way.

In addition, some ghosts may be of the *poltergeist* variety. Such spirits have the ability to manipulate the physical world; they maintain all of their normal special abilities, but also gain the ability to move objects as though they had a Strength score

of 3d6 (average 12). They may attack with these objects as any normal weapon, or may perform fine manipulation of objects to perform such actions as to write, lock or unlock doors, lift a tea cup, or guide a planchet on an *Ouija* board.

## GHOULS

Ghouls are a semi-intelligent undead, similar to zombies, but faster, more vicious, and more bestial in nature. Some ghouls can speak, though they rarely do, and usually their speech is guttural and primitive as they are. Ghouls live on the flesh of the dead; they are carrion eaters, though they do attack living beings for fresh meat on occasion.

Ghouls travel in packs and use pack tactics when on the hunt. They will surround and hem in their opponents, then attack *en masse*.

The fact that makes ghouls so deadly is their ability to paralyze victims with a touch, allowing them to eat at their leisure.

### Common Ghoul Abilities

- **Pack Tactics:** A group of ghouls is a dangerous thing. For each ghoul attacking a character, all ghouls gain +1 to hit and damage, to a maximum of +8 (only 8 can attack a single target at one time). If the target has their back against the wall, the maximum is +5 (5 maximum at once).
- **Paralysis:** Any character struck by a ghoul must succeed at a Constitution save, or become paralyzed and completely unable to move for 1d6x10 minutes.
- **Stench:** About 10% of ghouls are of a greater variety, *ghasts*, which have a horrible stench about them. Merely coming within ten feet of such a creature triggers a Constitution save. Failure means the character suffers -2 to all attacks and saves, and -10% to all class abilities while within 10 feet of the creature.

## Ghouls

**No. Appearing:** 2-24

**AC:** 6

**Move:** 40ft.

**Hit Dice:** 2

**Special:** 2 attacks (claws, bite), Paralysis, Stench, Pack tactics

**XP VALUE:** Ghouls 27; Ghasts 32

### Ghouls in Your Game

In some campaigns, ghouls may not be undead at all, but a degenerate race of creatures who may once have been humans that turned to cannibalism, or who may be denizens of another, darker dimension: the Deeper Dark, where Great Old Ones and insane, Outer Gods reside. They may be primitive and savage, or highly intelligent, albeit with an utterly alien culture and civilization.

## HAGS

Hags are a race of evil Witches of faerie origin and are related to fiends of demonic realms. Hags have a variety of guises, but a few features are common. They all appear to be old, if not ancient, women of horrible appearance. They wear tattered clothing and live in apparent squalor. All hags, regardless of form also have the following powers in common.

### Common Hag Abilities

- **Adapt to Locale:** Hags blend into their environment and become one with it. Not a disguise ability, but an adaptation. Water hags can breathe underwater and swim, cave hags see in the dark and urban hags know all the secret ways of the subway.
- **Cackle:** All hags can cackle which causes *fear* in any that hear it.
- **Spellcasting:** Hags cast spells as Witches one level lower than their Hit Dice.
- **Strength:** Hags, despite their size or appearance are supernaturally strong (17-18 Strength) and add +3 to attack rolls and damage.





- **Vulnerability (Iron):** Normal weapons do not harm hags. Only weapons forged of iron, or supernatural attacks, can harm them. Steel will not work, as it is an alloy. The weapons must be of pure iron.

#### Hags

No. Appearing: 1

AC: 2

Move: 30ft.

Hit Dice: 7-10+

Special: 3 attacks (claws) Adapt to locale, Cackle, Spellcasting, Strength, Vulnerability (iron)

XP VALUE: 1,280 (7 HD), 2,580 (8 HD), 5,120 (9 HD), 10,240 (10 HD)

#### Hags in Your Game

Hags come in a wide variety of shapes, strengths and sizes. Some hags are from folklore, like the water hag Jenny Greenteeth who pulls immodest bathers to their death or the Cailleach Bhuer, the ancient crone of

winter of Gaelic myths. Hags also can be found in the guise of the old woman muttering to herself in the old house down the street; the one with the scary dog that all the neighborhood kids know to avoid.

## HELL HOUNDS

Hell hounds are the foot soldiers of various demon dimensions. They possess serrated teeth and claws, and radiate impossible heat from their slavering jaws and oily, matted fur. They appear as large mangy hounds with glowing red or yellow eyes and a stench of sulfur about them. Their incisors, or canine teeth, are situated closer together than most animals, being front and center in their mouths, which are also full of needle-sharp teeth.

#### Common Hell Hound Abilities

- **Burning saliva:** a hell hound's bite is searing hot, and deals an extra d6 of fire damage on a successful attack.
- **Sulphuric stench:** anyone coming within 10 feet of a hell hound must succeed at a Constitution saving throw or be at -2 to all actions due to the overpowering stench.
- **Iron vulnerability:** Normal weapons do not harm hell hounds. Only weapons forged of iron, or supernatural attacks, can harm them. Steel will not work, as it is an alloy. The weapons must be of pure iron.

#### Hell Hounds

No. Appearing: 1-8

AC: 4

Move: 30ft.

Hit Dice: 4

Special: 2 attacks (claws, bite), burning saliva, sulphuric stench, iron vulnerability  
XP VALUE: 100

#### Hell hounds in Your Game

Hell hounds can take on many roles in your game. In some games they are the foot soldiers of Hell. In others they might be the daytime coffin guardians of vampires. In still others they might be creatures that exist in

the spaces between spaces, owing allegiance to none and existing only to hunt, feed, and destroy. They could be semi-bipedal, a sort of hound-human hybrid, or a mangy dog-like creature with matted, greasy fur that's constantly smoking and sizzling.

## HUMANS

Humans are your average, everyday people. Most do not have a character class and are not inducted into the worlds of the Night. That is to say, they have no idea that the supernatural exists. Humans that possess character classes should be generally created as player characters, save that they will add Hit Dice to all checks, attacks, and saves instead of ability scores, and their percentage chance to use class abilities will be based on their hit dice.

### Common Human Abilities

- **Class-Based XP Value:** Humans with class levels should see their XP Value increased accordingly.
- **Classes Replace Hit Dice:** Humans with class levels do not gain the normal 1HD (-2) for their stats. Rather, they replace this with the hit dice granted by class.
- **Reduced Hit Dice:** Humans use a d6 for hit dice as opposed to the normal d8. They also subtract 2 from their hit dice, but will always have at least 1 hit point.

### Humans

**No. Appearing:** Any

**AC:** 9

**Move:** 30ft.

**Hit Dice:** 1(-2)\*

**Special:** Reduced/ replacement hit dice

**XP VALUE:** 10

\*Subtract 2 from hit die; minimum 1 hit point. Normal humans add +0 to checks, attacks, and saves.

## LICHES

Liches are humans that through vile occult means have extended their lives beyond death. Often, they appear as withered, nearly skeletal corpses with an

evil glow in their desiccated eyes or empty eye sockets. Though some are new to lichdom and appear only as very old, if somewhat thin and "dry", humans. The secrets to becoming a lich are only known to a few and current liches are unlikely to share what they know.

The vast majority of liches were spellcasters such as a Witch or Warlock in life and continue their studies into forbidden arcana in death. A lich can cast spells as a spellcaster of the appropriate type at 10th level of ability. In addition to their spells the lich's touch is cold beyond the grave and will do damage to any living creature.

### Common Lich Abilities

- **Scare:** The sight of a lich causes a supernatural fear reaction to any that see it. This is treated like the *cause fear* spell. This happens only when the lich is first seen; subsequent encounters with the same lich do not have this fear effect.
- **Sage Warlocks:** The lich can cast spells as if they were a spell caster of the appropriate type of *at least* the 10th level of ability. Some of the most powerful liches have the full abilities of a 20th level Witch *and* a high-level Sage.
- **Supernatural Protection:** The lich has been so altered by their occult transformation that only supernatural weapons may damage it.
- **Touch of the Grave:** The mere touch of a lich is so cold that it causes 1d10 points of damage to living creatures. Undead creatures are immune.
- **Unique Kill:** A lich can only be killed permanently if its phylactery, a vessel that houses the creature's soul, is found and destroyed. If it is not destroyed, the Lich's body will re-form within 2d10 months within its original lair, or in the same location as the former lair, if the lair is destroyed. It will re-form at full

power, remembering everything (and will likely seek vengeance against those who destroyed it).

### Liches

**No. Appearing:** 1

**AC:** 2

**Move:** 30ft.

**Hit Dice:** 10

**Special:** 4 attacks (claws, weapons), Scare, Sage Warlocks, Supernatural Protection, Touch of the Grave

**XP VALUE:** 13,440

### Liches in Your Game

Thankfully, these horrific creatures are rare and will spend decades, if not centuries, pouring over obscure volumes and tomes ignoring the world outside. It is only when characters stumble upon them or when the lich needs something when they are encountered by humanity. In those rare occasions, however, a lich is truly a force to be reckoned with, a "Big Bad" level villain that will return again and again to harass and horrify the heroes. Their schemes can be utterly apocalyptic in nature and they themselves can be seen as akin to gods on Earth.

## MUMMIES

Mummies are a form of intelligent undead whose bodies have been preserved by a 70-day ritual of burial in nitrate and lime, wrapping in specially treated bandages, and the reading of incantations from the *Book of the Dead*. There are two reasons one may become a mummy; the most common is punishment for some crime considered so heinous the creature was cursed to an unlife, bound within their sarcophagus for all eternity. The second is by choice, though this is far more rare because the unlife of a mummy is torturous, and they may only re-enter the world if freed from their stone sarcophagus.

Because most mummies spend centuries locked away in a pitch dark tomb, bound in their wrappings, most are purely evil and

utterly insane. They may be obsessed with avenging the perceived wrong that led them to their fate, or they may be possessed of an overwhelming desire to recapture their life and walk among the living once more. Unfortunately, either way requires that they drain the life from the living to achieve a semblance of normal life once more. Whatever their end goal, it rarely ends up well for the living around them.

### Common Mummy Abilities:

- **Canopic Jars:** An Egyptian mummy's true weakness is the canopic jars in which its organs are stored. Unless all of these jars are destroyed, the mummy cannot be killed. There are usually 2d6 of these jars containing the various innards of the mummy including its the stomach, intestines, lungs, and liver. The exact number can vary from mummy to mummy, but the standard is four, and there will be but a single jar per preserved organ. Such jars never contain the heart, which is always left inside the mummy as the receptacle of its soul. In general, the GM should divide the hit dice of the mummy by the number of canopic jars, and for each canopic jar destroyed, the mummy's hit dice are permanently reduced by 1. If all jars are destroyed, the mummy is restored to its full power, but becomes as vulnerable as a mortal; if reduced to 0 hit points thereafter, it crumbles to dust. For this reason, mummies hide and carefully guard their canopic jars.
- **Fire and Salt Vulnerability:** Fire-based attacks against a mummy deal double damage. A fistful of salt hurled at a mummy will deal 1d6 damage as a normal attack.
- **Life Drain:** Upon making a successful melee attack, the mummy deals 5d6 damage and gains the damage dealt in hit points. This can cause the mummy's hit points to exceed its normal maximum.

- **Plagues:** Mummies can summon plagues against humankind. They can use the following spells as spell-like abilities. *At Will:* Bane/Bless, Animal Summoning, Cause Fear, Death Knell, Desecrate. *2/day:* Animate Dead, Cause Blindness or Deafness, Contagion, Curse, Black Tentacles, Enervation, Insect Plague. *1/day:* Blight, Cloudkill, Finger of Death, Pass-Wall, Blasphemy, Control Weather. Only mummies who have achieved a semblance of life of at least half their normal maximum hit dice can use 2/day powers. Only those with a full semblance of life can use 1/day plague powers. Once a mummy comes into its full powers, however, injuring it does not remove its ability to access such powers. Thus, a mummy at full power who later suffers 5d6 damage can still use all of its powers.

- **Semblance of Life:** When first resurrected, a mummy has but a single hit die. It must use its Life Drain power to regain a semblance of life. For every 4 hit points it gains from its Life Drain power, the mummy gains 1 additional hit die. When it reaches its normal maximum, the mummy appears as a normal human being and can pass unnoticed among the teeming masses, though its anachronistic attitudes and misunderstanding of modern ways may give it away.

- **Supernatural Protection:** Mummies are immune to normal attacks that aren't fire-based. They can only be damaged by supernatural attacks.

- **Symbol of Life:** Mummies presented with a symbol of life from their culture (such as the *ankh* to an Egyptian mummy) must succeed at a Wisdom save or recoil in terror. Any who carry and display such an appropriate icon are treated as though protected by a *protection from good and evil* against the mummy.



- **Unique Kill:** Like lichs, mummies cannot permanently be killed unless their canopic jars are entirely destroyed. A mummy destroyed otherwise will re-form within 2d10 months, either within its original sarcophagus, or in its original place of burial if the sarcophagus is destroyed. It will be treated as though newly raised when re-formed (Semblance of Life=1 HD).

### Mummies

**No. Appearing:** 1

**AC:** 3

**Move:** 30ft.

**Hit Dice:** 8

**Special:** 4 attacks (claws, weapon), Canopic Jars, Fire and Salt Vulnerability, Life Drain, Plagues, Semblance of Life, Supernatural Protection, Symbol of Life, Unique Kill

**XP VALUE:** 2,880

### Mummies in Your Game

The mummies most familiar to readers will likely be of the Egyptian variety, and those presented here take a classic horror

movie approach to these creatures. In truth, being mummified in ancient Egypt was an honor, and many people would save years' worth of salary to be able to afford a cheap and fast version of this process upon death. The idea of mummification and eternal unlfe as a curse was popularized by the Boris Karloff and Carl Laemmle, Jr., film *The Mummy*, in 1932, though examples of undead mummies in literature date to the 1827 novel *The Mummy! Or, a Tale of the Twenty-Second Century*.

Other cultures also created mummies, including the native Americans of Central and South America. GMs are encouraged to research the traditions of these cultures to create horrific mummies of different traditions, adjusting their weaknesses accordingly—some cultures, for example, didn't use canopic jars. Such mummies may have a charm or a phylactery like a lich instead. Some may still have all of their organs intact, and be as vulnerable to violence as any creature, relying upon some sort of life drain to retain their humanlike form. Some mummies may not have the Symbol of Life weakness. Indeed, some may not even be evil and may have life-giving powers as well as life-draining powers. Every mummy should be unique and have its own outlook, goals, and desires.

## SKELETONS

These undead abominations are animated piles of bones. They are re-animated by some malign intelligence, whether it's a Theosophist or a disembodied soul. Regardless, they have no intelligence, are clumsy, and pursue a single end to distraction until they are destroyed (usually they are driven to guard something, attack, or destroy the living).

### Common Skeleton Abilities:

- **Immune to Firearms and Stabbing Weapons.** These weapons simply pass through or glance off the skeleton's bones.

## Skeletons

**No. Appearing:** 3-30

**AC:** 7

**Move:** 30ft.

**Hit Dice:** 1/2\*

**Special:** Immune to firearms and stabbing weapons

**XP VALUE:** 7

\*Divide hit die by 2 (minimum 1 hp)

## SPECTRES

Spectres are undead spirits of pure, malevolent energy. They are often formed by the death of a truly evil person, and are obsessed with wreaking horrible vengeance upon the living. While they may possess the memories of a formerly living person, they are in fact a separate creation, the distilled essence of all of the evil that existed in the spirit. As such, it is possible to encounter both the ghost of a mass murderer, and the spectre formed of their evil left behind.

### Common Spectre Abilities

- **Gaze of Horror:** The spectre can turn its gaze upon an individual and deal 1d6 damage. In addition, the targeted creature must succeed at a Charisma save or be stricken with terror, affected exactly as per the *cause fear* spell.
- **Incorporeal:** The Spectre has no physical form and thus is completely immune to all normal weapons. Magical attacks will harm it, as will weapons forged of iron or silver. It can also move through walls and physical barriers as though they were not there.
- **Spawn:** Anyone killed by a spectre spawns a new spectre in their image. In addition, there is a 50% chance that the victim is transformed into a ghost, and a 50% chance that their soul is forever unraveled and destroyed, replaced by their distilled evil essence.
- **Spectral Touch:** If the spectre makes a successful melee attack, its touch deals 1d6 damage and anyone touched

must succeed at a Constitution saving throw, or lose a level of experience. Experience points are set at the midpoint of the next lowest level, the hero loses one hit die worth of hit points, and is thereafter treated as though one level lower, losing any special abilities they gained from their current level until they again gain enough experience to re-earn their level.

### Spectres

**No. Appearing:** 1-8

**AC:** 2

**Move:** 30ft.

**Hit Dice:** 6

**Special:** Gaze of Horror, Incorporeal, Spawn, Spectral Touch

**XP VALUE:** 680

### SWARM

A swarm is a mass of small creatures—rats, bats, insects, or other vermin—that as a whole presents a credible threat. Swarms may have any number of special abilities, but in general they are treated as a single creature whose hit points are equal to the number of creatures in the swarm. That is, a swarm of 50 rats has 50 hit points, whereas a swarm of 100 bees would have 100 hit points. Dividing the swarm's hit points by 5 determines its hit die equivalency, and each 5 points of damage suffered reduces the swarm's potency by 1 hit die. Thus, a 4 HD swarm that takes 10 points of damage now attacks as a 2 HD creature.

Swarms that are reduced to 0 hit points do not necessarily reflect every last creature being destroyed; rather, it represents the swarm being reduced to a point where it is no longer anything more than a nuisance, incapable of doing harm and likely to disperse.

Swarms may have various special abilities. A few common possibilities are listed below, but not every swarm will have all abilities, and some may, at the GM's discretion, possess abilities not listed here.

### Common Swarm Abilities

- **Disease:** The swarm carries a disease. A successful Constitution save has to be made with each successful bite, or the victim contracts the disease. After an incubation period of 1d6 days, the victim loses 1d6 points of Strength. Another Constitution save must be made each period of 1 day, 3 days, or 1 week, depending on the aggression of the pathogen (GM's discretion), with a success fighting off the disease and failure resulting in another 1d6 points of Strength damage. If Strength reaches 0, the victim dies. Medical treatment allows a re-roll of a failed Constitution save, keeping the better result. *Cure disease* removes the disease entirely. Once the disease is eliminated, Strength returns at a rate of 1 point per day of complete bedrest.
- **Flight:** The swarm moves through the air at a speed equal to its ground speed.
- **Poison:** The swarm carries a poisonous bite or sting. The victim must succeed at a Constitution save with a penalty equal to the class of the poison, or suffer additional damage equal to 1d6 per poison class (minimum 1 point). Thus, a Class 1 poison imparts -1 to saves and deals 1d6 damage; a Class 7 poison imparts -7 to saves and deals 7d6 damage. Class 0 poisons impart no penalty and deal a single point of damage. The only exception is Fatal poisons, which require a saving throw every minute, with a progressive -1 penalty, and suffering 1d6 damage on each save until an antitoxin is administered. Even a successful save does not eliminate the poison; it merely delays damage for 1 more minute. Only an antitoxin, professional medical care (GM's discretion), or the *neutralize poison* spell can remove a Fatal poison.
- **Nebulous:** The swarm can move into any space, even one that is occupied by another creature, and can move under

and through tiny cracks.

- **Swim:** The swarm has a swim speed equal to (or in lieu of) its land movement speed.
- **Vicious:** The swarm does 1d6 damage on a successful attack per hit die it possesses.

#### Swarm

**No. Appearing:** 1

**AC:** 8

**Move:** 30ft.

**Hit Dice:** Special (see description)

**Special:** Disease, Flight, Poison, Nebulous, Swarm, Vicious, others at GM discretion

**XP VALUE:** Calculate based on hit dice and specific special abilities.

## VAMPIRES

Vampires are the lords of the undead, creatures of the night. They are a plague on the living, leeches that feed upon life force in the form of blood. The myths and legends surrounding vampires are many and varied; some claim that vampires are created by making a pact with death. Others say that suicides rise with a hunger to feast on the living.

In some tales they are the unholy legions of Hell. In others, they're lost angels of Heaven. The truth in your campaign is likely to be unique. Regardless, there are certain facts about vampires that seem nearly universal (though you can feel free to add or remove strengths and weaknesses as you see fit). The "classic" vampire has the following abilities:

#### Common Vampire Abilities

- **Cannot Cross Running Water.** Not every myth has this element. If it's in play, the vampire cannot wade across a stream, swim a river, or the like. It can, however, ride a boat.
- **Feed on Blood (Life Drain):** When a vampire successfully strikes, it may choose to bite its opponent, dealing 1d3 points of Constitution damage instead

of hit point damage. Constitution damage recovers at a rate of 1 point per day.

- **Immune to Normal Damage:** Vampires suffer no damage from non-supernatural attacks. In a Cinematic game, they may suffer half-damage from non-supernatural attacks, but may not be killed by non-supernatural attacks.
- **Mind Control:** Vampires possess the ability to mind control their intended victims. Vampires can use *charm person* at will, and *domination* once per day. Both abilities work exactly as the spell of the same name.
- **Regenerate.** Vampires regenerate 3 hit points of damage per round, unless they have taken damage from fire, holy water, or sunlight.
- **Repulsed by Holy Items and Garlic.** Presenting holy items or garlic requires the vampire to attempt a Charisma saving throw or remain at least 10 feet from the object presented. The creature may attempt a new saving throw once every four rounds; if it succeeds it manages to overcome its fear and knock the object away.
- **Shapeshifting:** Vampires can turn into mist, wolves, bats, or swarms of rats. Vampires may *polymorph self* at will into one of these forms.
- **Spawn:** Those killed by vampires may rise as new vampires, if their sire wishes it. Any killed by vampires rise as Vampire Spawn within 24 hours (the following midnight) if the vampire who killed them wishes it. Spawn are under the control of the vampire who created them.
- **Strong and Fast.** Vampires gain +2 to initiative rolls, and add half again their hit dice to attack rolls. They also deal 2 dice of damage on attacks, keeping the better.

- **Vampire Vulnerabilities:** Vulnerable to fire, sunlight, decapitation, holy water, and stakes through the heart. Fire, sunlight, and holy water deal normal damage to a vampire. Sunlight and fire deal 1 die of damage per round of exposure. Decapitation and stakes through the heart are assumed to be the method by which a vampire is destroyed when it reaches zero HP. If the person fighting the vampire does not have the means to destroy the vampire, it cannot be killed.

There are three levels of vampire: Spawn, Experienced, and Master. Their stat blocks are as follows:

#### **Vampire Spawn**

**No. Appearing:** 1-6

**AC:** 6

**Move:** 30ft.

**Hit Dice:** 4

**Special:** 2 attacks (claws, bite), Cannot mind control. Do not gain Strong and Fast bonuses. Cannot Polymorph. Cannot create new vampires.

**XP VALUE:** 80

#### **Vampire (Experienced)**

**No. Appearing:** 1-3

**AC:** 4

**Move:** 40ft.

**Hit Dice:** 6

**Special:** 3 attacks (claw, bite, weapon), vampire abilities.

**XP VALUE:** 580

#### **Vampire (Master)**

**No. Appearing:** 1-2

**AC:** 2

**Move:** 50ft.

**Hit Dice:** 8-10

**Special:** 4 attacks (claw, bite, 2 weapon), vampire abilities (May not possess one or more weaknesses).

**XP VALUE:** 900 (8 HD), 1,400 (9 HD), or 2,100 (10 HD)





## Vampires in Your Game

These vampires are designed to represent the typical, mythological style of vampire commonly seen in Gothic horror novels and in many urban fantasy series. You can feel free to modify them for your game. Many "modern" vampires, for example, have no issues with running water or garlic. Some cannot shapeshift. Some are immune to holy objects. Some can fly. It's really up to you; when modifying their abilities, however, be sure you consider the balance in your game.

## WEREWOLVES AND LYCANTHROPES

Werewolves and lycanthropes are the classic humans bitten by a werebeast that transmitted the curse of lycanthropy. Now, for three nights per month during the full moon, they painfully transform into a monster, hunting and killing anyone in their path. The classic lycanthrope is the werewolf, but other forms are possible.

### Common Werewolf Abilities:

- **Curse of Lycanthropy:** Anyone bitten by a werewolf must succeed at a Constitution saving throw with a penalty equal to the damage taken or contract the curse of lycanthropy. Characters afflicted with the curse are controlled by the GM during the three nights of the full moon and will never remember in human form what occurred while they were transformed.
- **Enhanced Senses:** Werewolves have enhanced hearing and smell, even in human form. They possess Danger Sense as a 4th-level Survivor, hear noises on a 1-4 on a d6, and can follow a trail by scent on a 1-4 on a d6.
- **Full Moon Transformation:** The werewolf, under normal circumstances, only transforms during the three nights of the full moon. Any other time, it is found in human form, and if it knows it is a werewolf, may go to great

lengths to protect its secret. For this reason, many werewolves are just as evil in human form as in beast form, even if they hate what they are and seek a cure. They will kill to protect their secret and avoid those who wish to do them harm.

- **Immunity to Normal Weapons:** Werewolves cannot be killed by normal weapons. Only silver or the attacks of another supernatural creature can kill them.
- **Vulnerabilities:** Werewolves are affected by silver in much the same way as vampires are afflicted by holy water, dealing 1 die of damage per round the werewolf is in contact, even while in human form. Silver bullets deal normal damage to werewolves, whereas other weapons don't harm them at all, but silver bullets do not continue to deal damage due to being "inside" the werewolf—its body rejects the metal after the initial impact. Werewolves are also allergic to wolfsbane, and if forced to eat wolfsbane, must make a Constitution save or die. They are affected by the presence of the plant the same as vampires facing a holy object.

### Werewolves

**No. Appearing:** 1-8

**AC:** 5

**Move:** 40ft.

**Hit Dice:** 4

**Special:** 3 attacks (2 claws, bite), Curse of Lycanthropy, Enhanced Senses, Full Moon Transformation, Immunity to Normal Weapons, Silver Vulnerability

**XP VALUE:** 130

### Lycanthropes in Your Game

Lycanthropes can take many different forms in your game. They could fully transform into great, black wolves. They might take on the form of a half-man, half-beast that walks on two legs with claws and fangs. There might be many species:

werepanthers, werebears, wererats, and others with slightly altered abilities. Werecats, for example, may have full night vision instead of enhanced smell. Werebears might have 8 hit dice and an AC of 3, and roll 2 dice for every die of damage, keeping the better result (for their sheer strength).

Some varieties could be fine with silver, but be allergic to gold, platinum, the wood from a holly tree, or another substance. Some may have learned to control their transformation, for good or ill. This could form a quest for the PC infected with lycanthropy—is there a cure that they can track down? Is there a way to reconcile their newly feral nature to give them additional abilities to fight the forces of darkness? In the end, it's left to you and your campaign to decide the mythology behind lycanthropy in your world.

## WIGHTS AND WRAITHS

Wights are pure malevolence incarnate. They drain the life energy from living beings they battle. They are gaunt, their skin stretched taut over their skulls. Their eyes are hollow and blank, and their voices a hollow rasp, when they choose to speak. They are neither corporeal or incorporeal—they show resistance when struck, but do not have the feel of a physical form, almost as if they were gelatin, but with a dry, rather than wet, texture.

Wraiths have the same relation to wights as vampires to vampire spawn; a wraith controls the wights that it spawns; if a wraith is destroyed, all of the wights it has directly created ascend to wraith-hood, while the wights *they* have created remain wights unless *they* are killed, and so on.

### Common Wight Abilities

- **Immunity to Normal Weapons:** Wights are immune to normal weapons, and can only be killed by attacks from other supernatural creatures.

- **Life Drain:** Whenever a wight strikes a foe in combat, in addition to normal damage, the foe also must succeed at a Constitution saving throw, or see their Constitution score likewise reduced by the damage dealt. In addition, they are -1 to all attacks. The effects of multiple attacks are cumulative; thus, a creature struck twice by a Wight for 4 and 6 points of damage, failing both saving throws, would also see their Constitution reduced by 4 and 6 (total of 10) and be -2 to all attacks. If Constitution reaches 0, the creature is dead. Constitution damage recovers at a rate of 1 point per day, and penalties to attack are reduced by 1 per day until they are gone.

- **Salt and Holly Vulnerability:** Wights are vulnerable to weapons made from the wood of a holly tree, which deal normal damage, and suffer 1d6 damage from a fistful of salt thrown at them.

- **Spawn:** Any creature slain by a wight or wraith rises within 1d6 minutes as a new wight, unless burned or beheaded.

### Wights

No. Appearing: 2-12

AC: 5

Move: 30ft.

Hit Dice: 3

Special: Life Drain, Immunity to normal weapons, Salt and holly vulnerability, Spawn

XP VALUE: 60

### Wraiths

No. Appearing: 1-6

AC: 3

Move: 40ft.

Hit Dice: 8

Special: Wight abilities, but wight vulnerabilities are only half effective (half damage from holly and salt) and half damage from supernatural attacks.

XP VALUE: Wraiths 1,920

## Wights and Wraiths in Your Game

Wights and wraiths can fulfill any number of roles in your game. They could be the undead reanimations of the worst of humanity—serial killers, dark cultists, and the like—whom Hell didn't want, or who were recruited to do Hell's work on Earth. They could also be creatures summoned from the reading of a dark book, bound to possess human beings in the name of the Old Ones and spread their plague upon the Earth. The only way to stop them could be total bodily dismemberment...

## ZOMBIES

Shambling hordes of zombies chill the bones of any hardened adventurer. Whether they're raised by a voodoo bokor, a dark necromancer, cosmic radiation, or a retro-virus, they're unnatural to the core. The stat block here is for a basic, shambling zombie. It is left to the GM to customize zombies for their campaign.

### Zombie Special Abilities

- **Slow:** Zombies always go last in initiative order.
- **Pack Tactics:** A group of zombies is a dangerous thing. For each zombie attacking a character, all zombies gain +1 to hit and damage, to a maximum of +8 (only 8 zombies can attack a single target at one time). If the target has their back against the wall, the maximum is +5 (5 zombies maximum at once).
- **Disease:** Zombies are vectors for disease. When hit by a zombie, the DM can require a Constitution save to resist becoming infected with an ailment of their choosing. In campaigns with infectious zombies, this save represents fighting off the infection that will eventually kill and change a character into a zombie. Zombie diseases will deal ability score damage: 1d4 points per day

to a designated ability (a Constitution disease, for example, reduces Constitution by 1d4 per day). A new saving throw is allowed each day to fight off the disease. Medical care grants +5 to the save. If the character fights off the disease, lost ability points regenerate at a rate of 1d4 per day. If the target ability reaches zero, the character dies from the illness, and may rise again as a zombie.

- **Mindless:** Zombies suffer -5 on any checks normally related to Intelligence or Wisdom and roll a d10 on all "rule of 2" rolls to notice anything not related to the presence of fresh meat (for which they roll a d4 with a 1 in 3 chance to detect). They are driven by a relentless need to feed and pursue that goal to the exclusion of all else.

### Zombies

**No. Appearing:** 1-100

**AC:** 8

**Move:** 20ft.

**Hit Dice:** 1

**Special:** Pack tactics, Disease

**XP VALUE:** 9

### Zombies in Your Game

The GM can customize zombies to meet the needs of their game. Not all zombies are slow; there are fast varieties, which could have a special ability that gives them a 40ft. move and +2 to initiative. Voodoo zombies may retain their intellect, though still be under the control of the bokkor who raised them (and such zombies may not even be truly dead). There could also be "demon possessed" varieties with additional supernatural abilities, resistance to non-supernatural attacks, and more. The possibilities are endless.





## CHAPTER SIX: VETERANS OF THE SUPERNATURAL WARS

A Night World by Jason Vey

**Setting:** Post-apocalyptic. The supernatural revealed itself and declared war on humanity.

**Play Style:** Malleable: mostly "Realistic." Firearms using the Cinematic version of "just another weapon."

**Options:** Customizable by GM preference.

**Recommended:** inclusion of Skills and potentially Sanity rules to deal with the survival horror and specialized nature of the setting.

**Special:** Supernatural attacks require possessing some specific equipment allowing the attack to be made. Thus, attacking demons expressly requires holy items or cold iron, attacking vampires requires fire, sunlight, holy items, or wood, attacking werewolves requires silver, etc. Characters who do not possess the Supernatural Attacks ability in any

capacity cannot use such specialized equipment effectively. Magic is always considered supernatural, as are psychically enhanced supernatural attack powers.

*The wars came without warning, tearing through the entire world like we were all made of tissue paper. One day, everyone was living nice, normal lives, complaining about the world's problems on Social Media like we were going to solve everything through Facebook while working midnight to 7 am jobs on the night shift at the local convenience store, going to horror movies, playing games, and drinking way, way, way too much caffeine.*

*The next thing we knew, all that shit was real. There were vampires, and werewolves, and demons. I watched my best friend get torn apart by a succubus before we ever knew what she was. That's how it started for us. That was when the lines were*

*drawn—you were either a victim, or a veteran of the supernatural wars.*

*Suddenly, all those secret societies the conspiracy theorists had warned us about for years were everywhere, larger than life and twice as real.*

*The military rolled out quickly, everyone's heroes out to protect the Western Way of Life (or Eastern, or wherever you happened to live)... and were torn to shreds just as quickly. Those secret societies we all denied existed for hundreds of years? They turned out to be the only ones who had the answers, who had the knowledge and power to fight the forces of darkness.*

*Trouble was, some of them were in league with the vampires, demons and sundry horrors, and for a whole lot of people, it was impossible to tell which until they found themselves on an altar, getting their guts eaten by a horror from beyond the pale.*

*The war lasted for decades before things settled into what some would call an uneasy truce.*

*The truth? The monsters won, and most of humanity is being used as livestock for food, labor...and breeding. There are just a few of us left, hiding in the shadows, fighting desperately to take back our world. Our weapons? The same dark sorcery and supernatural powers our enemies use. We are the remnants of the New World Order. We are the Veterans of the Supernatural Wars.*

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *Veterans of the Supernatural Wars*, a post-apocalyptic supernatural horror and action setting for **Night Shift**. In this setting, you take on the Survivors of a brutal and devastating war between humanity and the horrific creatures from beyond the pale, a war which humanity has all but lost. You are the remnants of secret societies like the Knights Templar, the Freemasons, the Skull and Bones Society,

and even the Illuminati. You are fighting back against the New-New World Order of demonic kingdoms, vampire baronies, and werewolf voivodes that have carved up the world into a new feudalism where humankind are traded like commodities, used for food, for slave labor, and even for breeding with demonic forces.

All that's standing between the world that was and total annihilation is you and your allies. But the forces of darkness seem to have infiltrated every resistance cell. Do you have what it takes to survive as a Veteran of the Supernatural Wars?

## A Note About Organizations

A number of secret societies and organizations are presented in this *Night World* which are based on real-world groups such as the Freemasons, O.T.O. and Knights Templar. It must be stated that these presentations, though using real-world information to create a background for the groups, are not intended to represent the real operations of these groups.

At best, they present a corrupted version of the group which exists in a "Day After Tomorrow" apocalyptic world where sorcery is real and humans are fighting for their very existence against the forces of Hell. At worst, they are completely fantastical in their presentation. No relationship with, similarity to, nor endorsement by any of these groups should be assumed, nor is one intended.

## This is Not the Core Setting

*Veterans of the Supernatural Wars* is the namesake setting of the **Night Shift** role playing game, but it shouldn't be taken to be the "core" or "default" setting. In fact, it's the other way around—this setting was inspired by the name of the game itself. The subtitle was so cool, we couldn't let it pass without a setting that used the title. So that's it. This *Night World* carries the title of the game, and we like the concept, but it's not to be the assumed, or "core" setting.

**Night Shift** has no "core setting." It's built around you, your game, and what you want to do. We do hope you enjoy this one, though!

## TIMELINE OF THE SUPERNATURAL WARS

The event that has come to be known as the Supernatural Wars began quite without warning, about 15 years ago.

### Rise of a Dystopian World

In reality, what happened was largely a dystopia of our own making. The world, to many people, seemed completely normal, going about its digital business with social media, online video games, streaming video, and a society that was both increasingly connected while at the same time growing more distant, apart, and divided than ever. People argued online, shouting into echo chambers of political reflection, dismissing those who disagreed while building coteries of like-minded "with us or against us" communities.

They invited friends over to their homes in the pretense of continuing social activities, only to spend their time staring at mobile devices. Brick-and-mortar establishments like stores and sit-down restaurants closed all over the world in what became known as the "retail apocalypse," as people turned towards home delivery and online purchasing.

The idea of a misanthropic society where people sat at home and didn't deal with others became a reality, and people seemed quite happy with that, on the surface. Behind the scenes, however, mental health plummeted and suicide rates soared. Violent crime skyrocketed, and there seemed to be no answer in sight but to close your doors, lock the world out, and escape into virtual reality. Even schools closed down as people turned to online education, and businesses that didn't allow for telecommuting...simply failed.

Violent, ideologically-driven feuds broke out in remote communities. These were rare but took their toll on a society that was already tired and worn down by the lines drawn by politics, religion, and social issues. Slowly but surely, the Western world was crumbling, while the Far East followed suit, robbed of their economic dependence on the consumerist tendencies of the West when goods and services gradually began to consolidate into an oligarchic few.

In the Middle East, extremists ran rampant, and eventually, their conventional attacks gave way to dirty bombs which left huge swaths of radioactive waste and decay. They had become their own worst enemies, wiping their own movements out as well as their perceived enemies. Similar catastrophes occurred throughout the world. South America, Europe, Asia, Africa, no one was spared from a humanity that was gradually dividing itself and closing off the very bonds of fellowship that held our societies together.

### 15 Years Ago: The First Attacks

It was at this time that the supernatural forces which had been hiding in shadows since the first human crawled forth from the primordial ooze decided the time had come. They revealed themselves, in widespread, violent, and brutal fashion, attacking people in the streets, in their homes, even through the Internet itself.

Seeing humanity at last ripe for the picking, demons from a thousand different Hell dimensions, from the Spaces between Spaces, flooded the streets and homes of the world. This coincided with a massive, worldwide attack on the Internet itself, and every scrap of personal information about anyone who went online was instantly compromised. Billions of people went bankrupt in the course of a week before everyone simply signed off, and didn't go back.

The attack, first thought to be the work of hackers (though every nation blamed

every other), was actually the work of techno-demons who had invaded the Web decades before.

The next attack was a series of electromagnetic pulses that went off over every major city in the world at the same time, shutting down the electronics and electrical grids of society. Again, as every world government (already in tatters) blamed every other, the truth was it was the work of a cabal of black sorcerers, technomancers whose souls were enslaved to the Dark Ones, the mysterious masters behind the invasion. The spell was a one-shot deal; these sorcerers saw their own souls utterly consumed in its casting.

The darkness and confusion led people out of their homes *en masse* for the first time in years...only to be fallen upon by creatures out of their darkest nightmares. vampires, werewolves, zombies, incubi and succubi, and sundry other horrors. It was called the Night of Blood.

Humanity was decimated within the first seven days of attacks.

### Initial Resistance

Of course, the military mobilized as quickly as possible to take on the threat, but it turned out they were ill prepared to deal with creatures of supernatural origin and supernatural weakness. By the time they adjusted to the idea that their guns and explosives were of little use against demons from hell dimensions, their tanks and planes had been torn through.

In the most horrific of desperate moves, a foolish general decided to clear a small town in South Dakota that had been overrun by demons and vampires with the detonation of a 10-megaton nuclear warhead. The device failed to kill the monsters, but took out the entire human population within hundreds of miles from the initial blast and subsequent fallout. Even worse, the demonic forces in play were able to apply the energy from the

radioactive fallout to raise and create more monsters, mutating human victims into their own image.

The military fell apart, its soldiers deserting in vast numbers to hole up with communities of Survivors where they regrouped and worked with scholars to uncover weaknesses they could exploit.

### A Glimmer of Hope

Within six months, reports started to reach outlying communities of victories against the demons. It soon became public knowledge that secret societies had begun to emerge, armed with the knowledge and tools to fight back. These groups—the Skull and Bones Society, the Freemasons, the Knights Templar, the Priory of Sion, the Ordo Templi Orientis, the Rosicrucian Fellowship, and others, even the Illuminati—had for centuries been relegated to the "conspiracy theory" file, but it turned out that not only were they real, they knew what they were doing, and had been preparing for this moment.

Humanity rallied behind these groups, who began actively recruiting members to train to fight what was now known as the Supernatural Wars. The new unified force named itself the Occult Alliance, or OA, and took its first steps towards actively fighting back.

At this point, the conflict which had thus far been a one-sided slaughter, turned into a back-and-forth battle for the fate and soul of humanity. Within months, humanity started to make subtle inroads and victories, pushing back the hordes of Hell (which had by then become known as the Legions) and retaking small villages and towns. Walls went up in a sort of throwback to medieval times, offering some small degree of protection against the supernatural horrors, though when such creatures can fly, walls offer limited protection.

To ward off flying creatures, weapons were set up—heavy machine guns blessed



by priests and Warlocks, and even jet fighters piloted by former members of the military are in place to provide aerial (and anti-aircraft) support to these bastions of humanity.

One of the biggest victories occurred when a force of OA troops staged an early-morning assault on Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio. As the assault began, early victories from the dawn hours that threw the demonic forces off their game reversed and the OA troops sustained heavy casualties, until human soldiers emerged from a secret facility beneath Hanger 18, and engaged the demons with advanced technology. By the end of the day, the tide had turned, and Wright-Patterson was secured.

This led to additional air and military bases being taken, one by one, in the ensuing months, until the OA had legitimate military resources. Even still, the vast majority of the military-industrial complex was still well under the control of the Legions and the OA to this very day fights what on paper appears a losing battle. Still, they have achieved a number of minor, and even a few major, victories, and that glimmer of hope remains...

### The Hidden Threat

All is not well within the OA regions, unfortunately. There are rumors and reports of infighting among the various secret societies that back the alliance, and whisperings that while they may be humanity's allies against the Legions, they certainly are not friends. Other reports indicate that life in OA-controlled towns and villages is every bit as restrictive and oppressive as that in demon-controlled regions, with the same reports of innocent people vanishing into the night with no explanation.

It has not escaped the attention of many scholars among the masses that these are representatives of formerly secret societies—the operative word being "Secret," and that the "New World Order" conspiracy theories



they once represented clearly weren't so "conspiracy theory" after all, but were in fact a dark truth behind the scenes. These folks wonder (some far too loudly) whether we've just played directly into the hands of this New World Order, and are concerned for what it may represent.

Some even have gone so far as to posit that the rise of the supernatural and the arrival of the Legions was in fact orchestrated by these secret societies to allow them to arrive as humanity's saviors. Those who have expressed this idea too loudly, however, have a disconcerting tendency to simply vanish without a trace, or to just as suddenly (and vehemently) change their tone on a dime.

## THE CURRENT STATE OF THE WORLD

Currently, the world is something of a post-apocalyptic wasteland. Earth has, itself, become a very real hellscape. The cities are ruled by demon lords. The outlying villages are ruled by a strange combination of secret society overlords, base human warlords, demonic or supernatural controllers, or gangs.

### Communications

The entire world is at war, and there are no mass communications. Phone service, both landline and cellular, has been cut. Satellite communications have been disrupted. The Internet no longer exists. Every community is isolated from every other. What communications between societies do exist are mystical, either through human sorcery or demonic magic.

Some industrious human societies have taken on the effort of re-establishing secret telegraph lines, but erecting these is an utterly deadly task and only the bravest and most stalwart fighters undertake it. Progress is slow, particularly due to the lack of cooperation between various societies.

Because of the loss of mass communications, nobody is aware of what's going on anywhere outside of their local communities. It's been generally established that most of North America has been overrun by demons. Most people in North America have no idea if the demons have overrun the rest of the world...

They have.

### The Major Cities

To date, no major city has been retaken by the forces of humanity, and all are under the control of supernatural warlords. Most are ruled over by demons of the Class III or Class IV level (or even higher, more powerful Princes of Hell, Hades, and Tartarus). Others are ruled by powerful

and ancient vampires, werewolves, mummies and liches.

In these cities, humanity is little more than chattel and slaves. Humans are expected to go about their daily lives, continuing at their day jobs to support infrastructure, but without pay. Likewise, they do not pay for utilities, food, or shelter, but they work long hours with no breaks, and no mercy. If someone dies on the job, their body is removed and work continues. There are no funerals, no mourning, and every business hosts demonic or supernatural task masters in management roles.

People are simply taken at a whim by demons and monstrosities as food or playthings. If they're lucky, they're adopted as pets or returned home somewhat worse for wear but alive. If they're a bit less lucky they're killed quickly for food. The unlucky are simply tortured and brutalized for years until they die in agony.

### The Resistance

Still, hidden away in the shadows of abandoned buildings and warehouses, the depths of alleys and even in service and steam tunnels, there are humans fighting back in guerilla operations, attempting to undermine the demons wherever they can. In some cities, OA agents have made contact and are working to coordinate strikes between multiple cities, in the hopes that as the insurgencies grow, eventually an organized revolution can take back these power centers for humanity.

**Adventure Seed:** The local Demon Lord of the city is planning a big Blood Night Parade and Festival to commemorate the night when the demons arrived. The heroes have a chance to take out the Grand Marhsall, a powerful symbol of the demons' power. Can they organize the strike effectively and bring a glimmer of hope to the city? Or will their efforts only bring more brutality down on the people?

## Fighting Back

One of the few advantages humans have is that sunlight tends to be anathema to demons, who go dormant during the daytime. Oddly, since the major incursion, the sky remains cloudy at least 85% of days, allowing demons to remain active on all but 15% of the days of the year. Even on those few sunlit days, however, humanity does not have free reign to attack. The demons have offered great power and position to certain pet humans, whom they have turned into *ghouls*, who act as the daytime guardians of the demons. These ghouls work alongside Hell Hounds and lycanthropes, which can easily move around during the day, and some of whom can change at will.

Still, some victories among the human resistance have occurred on the few sunny days of the year, when major demonic power bases have been attacked and dealt great damage. Sadly, thus far such assaults have managed only to be of the surgical strike, probing variety to test the viability of a large scale assault, should one ever be able to be organized. Individual pockets of resistance fighters have yet to garner enough capability to deal large-scale damage.

**Adventure Seed:** An unexpectedly sunny day forces a local Vampire governor to take shelter in a local slum. Can the heroes track her down and eliminate a powerful threat to the populace?

## Sellouts

Nominally, major cities still possess all of the infrastructure they did before the Legion, though it's now maintained by human forced labor. This has opened the door to many greedy, corrupt, and selfish individuals to sell out to the hordes of Hell. Such men and women live nominal lives of luxury, so long as they serve the demands of their infernal masters. They are forced on a regular basis to perform acts of bestial atrocity ranging from cannibalism and

murder to acts so atrocious it's impossible to detail them here (nor should they probably be detailed at the gaming table).

These men and women, almost to the last, are irredeemably evil, their souls utterly the property of one or another demon or devil. Still, there are those among the Sellouts who try very hard to maintain some sort of gray area balance, and who may even be secret patrons of the Resistance. These, however, are few, far between, and are constantly walking a very thin line between being caught, which would be a ticket to eternal torture, never being allowed to die, or simply falling prey to the threat or temptation of utter corruption.

Sellouts maintain vast private security forces, often bolstered by lycanthropes and ghouls, who serve to maintain order in the cities and protect the demons on those days when they must lie dormant.

**Adventure Seed:** A sellout comes looking for the resistance in an area of town and comes across the heroes. It turns out she has information about a major assault on a nearby OA town, and she wants to deliver a warning, along with information that could cripple the demonic hold on the local city. Can the heroes get her out, and if so, can they trust her, or is she a double-agent?

## Occult, Alliance Villages and Towns

Outside of the major cities, the OA has made serious in-roads against the Legions. A number of villages and small towns have been taken back by the OA, even making use of supernatural creatures who have turned against the Legions. Some vampires and werewolves, for example, would prefer that humanity still ran the world, where they can operate with some manner of independence instead of being viewed as bottom feeders on the lowest rungs of the Legion ladder.

Such supernaturals are on occasion used as puppets or a false front, pretending to act as warlords whenever a contingent of

Legion forces comes through, to hide the presence of OA control. This has varying degrees of effectiveness.

More effective, but also more dangerous, are those towns who have openly declared independence. Almost to the last, these towns have seen thick and sturdy walls go up and have turned into fortified settlements, designed at every angle to defend against the Legions as they engage in assaults against the forces of humanity.

Sieges of these towns are common, but with the backing of the secret societies, the humans have thus far been victorious. Blessings at the opening and holy symbols carved every few feet into the walls go a long way to keep out many dark forces, and bristling armaments backed by former military help to deflect direct assaults.

Other towns are run by independent warlords. Sometimes they are supernaturals like vampires or independent lycanthropes. Other times they're simply run by bullies—all-too-human Veterans, Warlocks, or plain old Warlords who oppress and control the populace. The only thing that's true about the world outside the cities is that it's a lawless and wild area where people eke out whatever living they can.

### **Strict Martial Law**

Unfortunately, such towns also tend to exist under martial law with strict rationing of goods, unrelenting curfews placed on the population, and harsh conditions of order imposed by the ruling faction—whoever that may be. Each faction has its own outlook on how things are run.

Vatican-associated factions, for example, institute strict Catholic behavior and morals on their people. The Illuminati tends to operate on propaganda, mind control, and a rewards/benefits method of keeping people in line. The Templars use economic control and, it is whispered, ancient Christian magics to keep the people in line. Each fortified town is as different as the next.

The means by which these factions run their towns gives pause to many refugees, who wonder what humanity is in for if the OA does win the battle.

**Adventure Seed:** The heroes enter a village run by a warlord and his pack of werewolf bikers. The people are downtrodden, beaten, and terrified. Can they organize a rebellion and take the city for free folk? And if they do, will the OA society that takes over be any better?

**Adventure Seed:** The heroes have been pressured into taking jobs as law enforcement in a newly-freed city. The town is all but under siege from a group of bandits calling themselves Cowboys, who have managed to garner significant support among the populace as folk heroes, while at the same time shaking them down for protection money. Can the heroes quell the threat and establish law and order...or will there be a gunfight behind the local watering hole known as the O.K. Corral Bar and Grille?

### **The New Underground Railroad**

Between these settlements a sort of new Underground Railroad has cropped up, with OA agents infiltrating major cities to rescue victims from the demons, and ferry out refugees to the Free Towns, moving from safe house to safe house, much as the original UR functioned during the Civil War, or many refugee pipelines function in war-torn areas across the modern world.

Some of the bravest men and women in the entire resistance forces function as caretakers of safe houses, or ferries along the pipeline. This is because the Legions are constantly on the lookout, going from settlement to settlement, with little rationale needed to simply murder a human and burn their home to the ground.

**Adventure Seed:** The heroes are tasked with helping the Railroad get an important refugee—a doctor with a unique surgical skill, or a high-level defector from the Legions.

They must escort the refugee through a series of safe houses, avoiding demons and patrols until they reach their final goal.

### Technology and Communications Efforts

Another brave effort on the part of the OA are the specialized and highly skilled strike teams charged with re-creating a telegraph network across the nation. The effort requires burying the lines beneath the earth to keep them from being detected, and working only during the day. Still, it's a dangerous and potentially deadly task, as the Legions are aware that something is going on in the wilderness and patrols are constant. More than one strike team has been utterly destroyed, but as yet all have managed at very least to take their attackers with them, and keep the operations hidden.

At the beginning of the game, a number of towns and villages have managed a



primitive telegraphic communications system based on Morse code, with one or more stations in the town manned 24 hours a day by shift workers. Messages can thus be sent from town to town.

Likewise, in some towns, internal communications have been re-established, allowing telephone landlines and even television and radio to function within the town limits. Every town is different, however, and some towns are just a step beyond the 19th century gaslight era in terms of their existing technology. While some towns continue to maintain power plants that supply electricity to the people, others, again, have regressed to the late Victorian and early 20th century in terms of what technology they have available.

**Adventure Seed:** A telegraph crew has gone dark, and no one has any idea what's happened to them. Your group is sent to the site where they were last known to be with a dual mission: complete the telegraph line and find out, if possible, what happened to them.

### Knowledge and Skills

One of the biggest problems of the collapse is the loss of the Internet. The Internet had become the major (some would say sole important) way that humanity kept records and shared information. With the collapse of the Web and even of local intranets, and without physical copy backups, decades of advancement and knowledge were lost.

Some of the most important resources left in the world are libraries. Many are rundown and no longer maintained as demons overran cities, towns, and villages. As strike teams are sent out from towns and villages to acquire supplies that can't easily be produced with the resources available in town, raids on these libraries have become somewhat commonplace. The books therein provide not only entertainment, but sorely needed knowledge on a variety of topics from engineering to science and even medical textbooks.

Indeed, many books are being smuggled out of larger city and University libraries via the Underground Railroad, with sometimes crude copies making their way to fortifications across the country. Doctors, nurses, engineers, scientists, and pharmacists are in high demand as diseases formerly thought gone forever are cropping up in an age where there are no vaccines and medication is in short supply.

**Adventure Seed:** A burgeoning medical school is dealing with a plague. Once upon a time, the procedure for creating an antigen was well-known, but now the knowledge is lost. It's possible that the texts necessary can be found in the library of the medical school at a local university library, and the chemicals in the chemistry or pharmacy buildings. The heroes are a fire team sent into the demon-controlled grounds of the university to retrieve the necessary knowledge and supplies.

## THE SUPERNATURAL IN VETERANS

As one might surmise, the supernatural not only plays a major role in *Veterans of the Supernatural Wars*, it's part and parcel of the setting, the idea around which the entire thing circulates. Let's look at the role of some of the major types of supernatural manifestations.

### Demons

Demons are the major threat to the world in this setting. Class I demons serve as the common foot soldiers of the demonic legions, and are found almost everywhere, assaulting settlements, acting as agents of the greater powers, and harassing humanity. They are of low to average intelligence, and revel in pain, torture, and murder. Class II demons serve as lesser officers, often leading packs of Class I demons in their rampages or patrols. Class III demons serve as administrators and higher officials. They are terrifying to most common humans, and when one shows up, it means that there is a much greater plan

at work. Finally, Class IV demons are those in ruling capacities. Many sit at the tops of high towers, inhabit penthouses, and rule over cities with iron fists.

There is one more Class of demons that may very rarely appear in this setting, however. These are far above Class IV demons. They are the *Principalities*, the Lords, Ladies, Princes, Dukes, Barons, and rulers of Hell, Hades, and Tartarus—the three major demonic realms (though as stated earlier, there are literally thousands of hell worlds from which demons can originate).

These creatures are like Class IV demons, but with 20 to 30 Hit Dice, and all abilities of Class IV demons at 100% effectiveness. They also will possess any number (if not all) of psychic powers, supernatural powers, and spellcasting abilities, with each being a Witch or Warlock of at least 20th level.

A Principality is likely the major antagonist of an entire campaign, and probably can only be defeated by special means, such as a specific ritual (see **Chapter 7 – The Nocturnumverse** for guidelines on rituals). Certainly they are creatures from whom it is better to flee than it is to stand and fight.

### Demons and Sunlight

Demons in this world are affected negatively by direct sunlight exactly as vampires are. They tend to hide and go dormant during the 15% of the year when the clouds part and the sun does emerge. During this time, they use ghouls, lycanthropes, and Hell Hounds to guard their lairs and patrol the cities and other territories they control.

Further, they are baffled as to why the sun *does* appear 15% of the days of the year, as a powerful ritual was enacted that was designed to permanently blanket the Earth in a layer of clouds that would block out the direct rays of the sun for good. There are whispers among the highest levels that perhaps Heaven itself was able

to interfere with the ritual, resulting in the few days per year when the sun still shines, giving humanity a glimmer of hope.

### Player Character Demons

If a player wants to portray a demonic character, it is generally left to the GM to adjudicate this. In general, since demons are as unique as humans, demonic characters can simply be created using the standard Supernatural character race. They are assumed to be Type I demons, but may graduate as they gain hit dice. Again, this is left to the discretion of the GM. In addition, players should be required to provide a very solid back story and reason why their demonic character is not an enemy of humanity.

### Vampires

Vampires are in all ways the standard creatures, as listed in **Chapter 5**. They are legion and there are millions of them scattered across the world. There have perhaps always been that many, but they have forever stayed hidden in shadows, and only revealed themselves in the Night of Blood. Now they serve as both shock troops and lieutenants in the demonic armies, with Vampire Spawn generally inhabit the same ranks as Class I demons, with Experienced Vampires roughly equivalent in the ranks to Class II demons, and Master Vampires alongside Class III demons.

Some cannier and more powerful vampires have taken up places as warlords in outer regions, ruling over societies as large as bigger towns with an iron fist, creating spawn to serve their needs, feeding human slaves their blood to keep them under control, and using the remaining human stock as chattel and food.

Vampires are not stupid creatures; as much as they are seen as base bottom-feeders in the supernatural ranks (just above lycanthropes), vampires can live for hundreds if not thousands of years, racking

up a great deal of wisdom, knowledge, and power in that time. Rarely will a master vampire directly confront enemies; they work through shadowy methods, employing agents both mundane and supernatural, and they can be truly deadly foes. It is rumored, in fact, that the demon lord who ruled over San Francisco has been unseated by a Master Vampire who simply bided her time and struck when the moment was right.

Finally, there are those vampires who have turned on the forces of evil. Vampires, contrary to popular belief, are not inherently demonic, nor are they necessarily inherently evil, though the disease that animates them is a supernatural pathogen spawned from the hell dimensions; they are returned to unlife by a spark of hell-soul, which makes holy items anathema to them.

Still, they possess free will and there are those who don't believe that vampires and humans should be enemies. There are still others who view humans as little more than food but don't see the advantage in a Hell-ruled world. These vampires have actively or secretly joined the resistance and some play major roles in the OA. They have made useful scouts and even Underground Railroad guides...so long as they can keep their fangs sheathed.

### Player Character Vampires

Player character vampires in this setting should choose the Supernatural character race. Instead of the normal benefits of the race, however, they gradually gain the powers of a vampire. They still start with 1d8 hit dice and must acquire 3,000 XP before taking a character class. They gain +2 to Strength and +2 to Dexterity.

Immediately, they gain all the weaknesses and vulnerabilities of vampires, vampire regeneration (replacing the standard Supernatural regeneration) Feed on Life.

When they gain their first class level,

they gain all abilities except for mind control, polymorph, spawn, and strong and fast.

When the vampire reaches sixth level, they gain the remaining powers of a vampire. When they reach 10 hit dice, they may save against vampire vulnerabilities at +5. This save bonus increases by +1 for every 3 hit dice above 10 the vampire gains.

As a final note, player character vampires who try to bestow the "gift" of vampirism on comrades in order to game the system, will find it doesn't work out the way they want. The exact consequences are left to the GM, but it is recommended, for game balance reasons, that one of several approaches are taken to discourage this practice.

1. The new vampire, if it already had more than 4 Hit Dice, is reduced to 4 HD and begins play as a basic Vampire Spawn with no retained class abilities. They are a standard spawn under the control of their new master. They may in fact hate their former companion afflicting them with this curse and servitude. They may also be under the control of their creator's Master Vampire, if one exists. The GM may wish to bring this Master into the game and begin issuing orders to the PC as punishment for their transgression.
2. The new vampire must start over as a brand new player character, beginning as a 0-level 1-hit die Supernatural as standard, and re-learn their former class abilities a hit die at a time.
3. The player completely loses their character, who becomes an NPC monster vampire under the control of the GM.

## Ghouls

Ghouls use the statistics presented in **Chapter 5**, but are not undead. Rather, they are degenerate humans who have become infected with a spark of demonic essence, rendering them a slave to one of the supernatural races. There are two

species who can create ghouls: Demons and Vampires. The process is quite simple—a human is fed the blood of a demon or vampire as that blood flows from the creature's veins. That is to say, the human must drink directly from an open wound on the demon or vampire.

When this happens, the human becomes a ghoul, with all of the powers and abilities that entails. If the human willingly feeds from the vampire or demon who spawn them, the process is automatic; the demonic essence infuses itself with the human's blood and they become utterly devoted, obsessed, and completely in love with their demonic patron, a willing and eager servant and slave even unto death.

If the human was force fed, they are permitted a Charisma-based saving throw to resist, at +10 to the save. If they succeed they still gain the powers of a ghoul, but are not tied to their demonic creator. Still, they become addicted to the blood of demons and vampires, and if they don't feed once every three days, drinking at least one pint of the fluid, they lose their ghoul powers.

In addition, each day after the third, they must succeed at a Constitution-based saving throw or lose one hit die. The saving throw begins at +5, but is decreased by 1 per day thereafter that passes. If the ghoul succeeds at the save for three days in a row, they are cured of their affliction and return to being human once more (although potentially at reduced hit dice). If their hit dice reach zero, the human dies and rises again as a vampire, or as a wight if spawned by a demon.

If the ghoul drinks at least a pint of vampire or demon blood at any time before being cured, the process starts over, with their demonic powers restored. Such ghouls need not drink directly from wounded creatures; draining the blood from a dead vampire or demon will suffice, and such blood can be kept for up to a week if it can be kept chilled. Otherwise, it goes rancid within 24 hours..



## Player Character Ghouls

Players may choose to play as a ghoul. To do this, choose the Supernatural character race as normal. Instead of gaining a supernatural power, however, they gain the Paralysis ability of a Ghoul (though not Pack Tactics), and are only damaged by Supernatural attacks. They also gain claw and bite attacks, and may make two attacks per round. They must then roll percentile dice; if the result is 10% or less they are afflicted with (and benefit from) the ghast's stench ability. The GM should be sure to impose appropriate social penalties on such characters.

A player character ghoul must feed on demonic or vampiric blood exactly as described above. If they fail to do so, they must save exactly as above. If they end up cured, they immediately lose all special abilities of a ghoul and progress thereafter as a normal human (though they still keep their additional d8 hit die, ability bonus, and other benefits of their supernatural race). They are then referred to as a "former ghoul."

## Lycanthropes

Lycanthropes are the absolute bottom of the food chain for supernaturals. They generally come, then, in three varieties. The first are those who have sold out to the demons and accepted their place as attack dogs for their masters, feeling it's better to serve other supernaturals than be hunted by humans.

The second are those that roam in wild packs in the places between towns and as warlords in villages they have taken over. These are often found as gangs and biker packs across the country.

The third type of lycanthropes are those who actively help the humans, believing themselves to be human, in fact, just cursed with an illness. Lycanthropes are roughly divided equally between the three types.



Since the Night of Blood, most Lycanthropes can control their transformations, changing at will, though the full moon still forces the change upon them, and "civilized" lycanthropes will lock themselves away during the three nights of the full moon. This is because during these nights, their uncontrolled change also renders them unable to discern friend from foe, and indeed often reverses the perception. An uncontrolled lycanthrope will attack its loved ones before its human enemies.

Uncontrolled lycanthropes can also be controlled by vampires and demons while in their bestial forms, making staunch allies prone to become deadly enemies if they are not restrained.

## Player Character Lycanthropes

Players who wish to portray a Lycanthrope in this setting should choose the Supernatural character race, but they are not restricted to changing once per day per three character levels; rather, they can change whenever they like and while changed gain the abilities of a werewolf (see **Chapter 5**). This *includes* the curse of

lycanthropy. Player character werewolves must be careful not to afflict others with lycanthropy.

Player character werewolves, however, do not gain the hit dice of a werewolf in **Chapter 5**. Their hit dice remain standard for their current level even when changed—a third level Veteran Lycanthrope has 4d8 hit dice even when transformed: 1d8 for their supernatural race and 3d8 for their Veteran character class. A third level Survivor lycanthrope would have 1d8 + 3d4 hit dice, even when changed.

As an important balancing note, it is a foregone conclusion that a player will try to "game the system" by infecting everyone in their group. When a human is infected by a player character, they may *not* control their change. They *only* change with the full moon, and the change is *always* uncontrolled. The player who bites another is passing on the curse of lycanthropy, not bestowing a gift.

## Other Creatures

Pretty much any type of monster or undead you wish to include can fit flawlessly into this setting. Even if you wish to bring in Lovecraftian horrors of your own design from beyond the pale, you can drop them in as yet another layer in the demonic conspiracy. What if, for example, the Hell-spawned incursion and invasion was just the first stage in the stars going right, and the next is the return of the Great Old Ones? This might see the OA and the Legions required to unite to stop Great Cthulhu itself from arriving on Earth.

In a more "mundane" sense, Wraiths, Hags, Doppelgangers, Mummies, Zombies, and just about any other creature can arrive on the scene as a monster of the week or even major antagonist for your characters.

## Human Supernatural Characters and Occult Groups

Witches, Warlocks, Sages, and psychics form many of the most important agents of the OA in *Veterans*. These powerful human mystics have a great deal of power to wield against the supernaturals in the fight to win back the world. In addition, most of the secret societies that make up the Occult Alliance are formed of mystics of some description or another.

Below we will examine a *very* brief snapshot of a few occult orders and secret societies that may play a role in the setting. Many of these are real-world organizations, and what is presented here is not intended as any sort of scholarly text or detailed presentation of their beliefs, rites, or practices. No part of what is below should be taken in any way as the truth of these organizations, but there are plenty of resources available for those who wish to conduct more scholarly research to incorporate them into your game. No offense or similarity to real world organizations, rituals or people is intended or implied.

### The Freemasons

The Freemasons are a secret society descended from stonemasons in ancient times. They are largely an agency made up of Sages, though they also contain a goodly number of Survivors and even Veterans who entered the organization as legacy members.

The Freemasons are an extremely complex organization of secret rites and rituals, and for centuries have been something of an "open" secret society—that is, they have always acknowledged their existence, but keep their secrets behind closed doors.

With the exception of revealing that they do, in fact, possess deep historic knowledge and mystical powers, nothing has changed. It is unknown whether they are a part of the New World Order, but the simple fact that

some of the most powerful and influential figures in history have held membership in the Freemasons, and their internal workings and secrets are so well guarded, gives many pause and cause to concern.

Equally concerning are the disappearances and sudden "changes of opinion" in Freemason-controlled towns and cities among those who speak out against the organization. The Freemasons, of course, deny any association with such things and indeed on several occasions have produced evidence of Legion interference that has been responsible for a number of said disappearances.

GMs who wish to make the Freemasons an important part of their campaign are encouraged to research the organization beyond the glance provided here.

They describe themselves as "a beautiful system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols." Indeed, they use the traditional stone and compass of traditional stonemasons, the plumb rule and trowel, the ashlar, and other traditional symbols associated with stonework. In general, there are several levels of Freemasonry, each of which is divided into numbered Degrees. These are as follows:

- **Basic Freemasonry, or Blue Lodge** in some areas, has three traditional degrees: with the highest degree being the Master Mason.
- **Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite Freemasonry** is advanced beyond the basic, and is a complex ritualized system comprising 33 degrees (the first three of which are the Blue Lodge degrees), which are administered by the national Supreme Council.
- **York Rite** Freemasonry is dominant in the United States, and is subdivided into three different orders: the Royal Arch, Cryptic Masonry, and Knights Templar, who are treated as a separate secret society, despite their close contact with Freemasonry.

Masons are progressively initiated and raised through degrees, learning deeper symbols, signs, words, sigils, and secrets related to the Temple of Solomon. It is whispered that they may in fact have access to the *True Key of Solomon*, the ancient text that contains the mystical true names of various Goetic demons, and provides powerful exorcism rituals. If this is true, the book should theoretically have the ability to banish even Principalities to Hell, and seal them there. Oddly, no Freemason has ever produced the book to take advantage of its power for humanity's benefit.

### The Knights Templar

The Knights Templar are generally made up of highly trained Veterans. It is rumored that one or more circles in the group are made up of Warlocks. The Templars are the military arm or branch of Freemasonry, and are made up of several degrees or ranks:

- **The Illustrious Order of the Red Cross** – the highest order of the Templars, who comprise the overall rulers, commanders, and administrators of the society.
- **The Degree or Order of Saint Paul** – these serve largely as captains and officers within the society, those who have powerful influence, and may even be in charge of entire villages or towns.
- **The Degree or Order of Malta** – Lower-level commanders in the organization, roughly equivalent to field commanders and lieutenants.
- **The Degree of Knight Templar** – by and large, the rank and file of the Templars, who carry out the greater orders of the organization. Most knights encountered will be members of the Order of the Temple, whose title will simply be "Templar."

## Ordo Templi Orientis

The O.T.O. is an occult organization with origins tracing to the 19th century and possibly earlier, though it was only formally founded in the early 20th century. Its most famous (or infamous) member was the occultist Aleister Crowley. It is an order of Witches and Warlocks who largely follow the teachings of Thelema and believe in following the Divine Will. The O.T.O. is a split organization, with roughly 40% of its members actually supporting the Legions, believing that it was clearly the Divine Will's intent that the demons are here.

The rest still support the OA, but they are incredibly self-centered in their outlook, holding tightly to the mantra that "Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the law." If an O.T.O. member believes that their own divine will should point them in a different direction, they will follow that direction with no regrets and no looking back.

They fancy themselves a gnostic organization when all is said and done, believing in a deep and instinctual wisdom and understanding of the will of the universe. Their organization is comprised of many intricate levels that use ritualized drama as a means of passing from one level to the next, enacting a spiritual wedding and making strong use of sex magick.

Their primary text is the Book of the Law, which today is interpreted through the lens of Thelema. Interestingly, the O.T.O. also includes an offshoot: the Ecclesia Gnostica Catholica, or Gnostic Catholic Church, which shares certain beliefs, approaches, and texts with the greater O.T.O. but has different rituals and functions as the Ecclesiastical arm of the O.T.O. Gnostic Masses are held open to the public and there is nothing secret about the E.G.C. arm of the O.T.O., nor does it have a focus on sex magick as does the greater organization.

There are fifteen formal orders to the organization, divided up among three triads and an "outside" order. The first 6 orders are within the Man of Earth Triad, which is followed by one order that is Outside All Triads. Next are the three orders of the Lover Triad, followed by the five orders of the Hermit Triad. Some orders have multiple levels of titles or ranks. The fifteen orders break down as follows:

### Man of Earth

- 0 – Minerval
- I – Man and Brother
- II – Magician
- III – Master Magician
- IV – Perfect Magician and Companion of the Holy Royal Arch of Enoch
- P.I. – Perfect Initiate, or Prince of Jerusalem

### Outside All Triads

- Knight of the East & West

### Lover Triad

- V – Sovereign Prince Rose-Croix and Knight of the Pelican & Eagle
- V (rank 2) – Knight of the Red Eagle, and Member of the Senate of Knight Hermetic Philosophers
- VI – Illustrious Knight of the Order of Kadosch and Companion of the Holy Graal
- VI (rank 2) – Grand Inquisitor Commander and Member of the Grand Tribunal
- VI (rank 3) – Prince of the Royal Secret
- VII – Theoreticus, and Very Illustrious Sovereign Grand Inspector General
- VII (Rank 2) – Magus of Light and Bishop of *Ecclesia Gnostica Catholica*



- VII (Rank 3) – Grandmaster of Light and Inspector of Rites & Degrees

#### **The Hermit Triad**

- VIII – Perfect Pontiff of the Illuminati
- VIII (Rank 2) – Epopot of the Illuminati
- IX – Initiate of the Sanctuary of the Gnosis
- XI – Initiate of the Eleventh Degree
- XII – Frater Superior and Outer Head of the Order

The structure of the O.T.O. is highly complex and technical, and GMs who wish to incorporate it into their games as more than an outside force should research it in detail. This text makes no pretensions of offering an educated or complete overview or presentation of the organization.

Perhaps the best thing that can be said about the O.T.O, aside from their very real wealth of occult knowledge, is that they are likely not part of the New World Order. As a deeply gnostic society, they are concerned only with the Divine Will, which goes counter to the very idea of imposing any strict control—secret or otherwise—over society as a whole.

#### **Priory of Sion**

The Priory of Sion is a secret order within the Catholic Church that is comprised largely of ordained Sages whose core mission is to battle the forces of Hell on Earth, and to protect the true secret of Christ's bloodline. They operate outside the Vatican's authority and are in fact a secret society within a secret society. Before the formation of the OA, the Priory's existence was vehemently denied even by the Vatican itself. It has been passed off as a hoax created in 1956 by Pierre Plantard, who supposedly created a history for the organization that nobody realized was, in fact, the truth, cleverly hidden in plain sight, then passed off as a hoax to distract any researchers from discovering the truth.

The reality of the order is exactly as it has been publicized: Godfrey of Boullion founded the organization in 1099 AD on Mount Zion. The organization's overriding goal was battling the forces of Satan, whom they believed had infiltrated the Vatican and were plotting to install the Antichrist on the throne. To this end, the Priory's goal was to install the Merovingian bloodline on the thrones of Europe, and eventually oust the Devil from the Church.

The core idea behind the Merovingian Dynasty was that the Church was hiding the existence of Christ's secret marriage to Mary Magdalene and the bloodline that their union established. Their internal war with the Church has gone on down through the ages, a constant game of chess where moves upon moves, secret and complex strategies, and risky plays have created an eternal back-and-forth.

The Priory, while it has thus far failed to install a Merovingian Pope, would claim that its efforts have been successful as the Antichrist has not been installed in the Vatican. At least, until now. The Priory cannot help but wonder if it has brutally failed in its mission, and if the Night of Blood was not in deed the beginning of Armageddon.

One thing is certain: the Priory knows more about Hell and its legions than any other organization, and it seems to be the one group whose members genuinely care about protecting humanity from the encroaching darkness. If there is a true ally with unselfish aims within the OA, it's likely the Priory.

As a decentralized group, the Priory has no formal order or organization; they merely have *agents* who are ruled by a shadowy Merovingian Council. Orders are passed down to agents through equally mysterious men and women who can only be described as so ordinary they are impossible to describe. They show up, deliver a directive from the Council, and simply vanish when their work is done. They may also be one of the best organizations in which PCs in the setting may hold membership. Their members, though largely Sages, certainly also include lay priests, Survivors, Veterans, and may even include a Chosen One or two who are of the Merovingian bloodline.

### **Rosicrucian Fellowship**

The Rosicrucian Fellowship is a worldwide organization of Christian Mystics, formed almost exclusively of Witches, Warlocks, Psychics, Sages, and Theosophists. The Fellowship was first founded in the early 20th Century by Max Heindel, to explore previously forbidden avenues of magic hidden within the Christian Tradition. It was based originally on the ancient Hermetic movement from the 17th century, but with a deeper focus on Christianity, where the original focused as much on Kabbalah and alchemy as it did Christian esoterica.

It is largely focused on spiritual healing and claims to support the selfless service of humanity. Like the O.T.O. it takes a gnostic approach to spiritualism, but is focused on the kind of Gnostic Christianity found in the documents of the Nag Hammadi Library, along with its own approach and spin.

Their primary teaching is that humanity is a spirit being, whose core powers are the same as those of God but will only be unlocked through a series of rebirths, each of which provides an improved body guided by exalted Beings. As humanity gradually grows in will and intellect, so does our moral character improve.

These teachings are highly complex, involving three elements: the Spirit, the Body, and the Soul. The Bible exists to teach us that the Cosmic Christ, His Essence, is reborn within humanity. In lay terms, at its most basic level, it refers to a series of reincarnations under the guidance of a guardian angel, with each reincarnation leading one closer to their final, godlike incarnation.

Similar to the Freemasons, they are organized in Orders and Ranks, with their individual branches referred to as Houses, Chapters, or Gardens.

If there is a down side to the Rosicrucian Fellowship it's that they can be extremely arrogant. They believe themselves to be "more evolved" than other representatives of humanity. This means they are self-assured to a fault, often believe that their own ideas are more fully-formed and proper than others, and view themselves at best as parents and guides for "lesser" humans, or at worst, as bosses and taskmasters. A few who are truly enlightened understand that the less evolved must find their own way, but the majority of the organization has not reached that level yet.

As such, the Fellowship is distrusted by those who are concerned about a New

World Order; it is a near-certainty that they see this as an opportunity to "guide" humankind into a new era. Their controlled regions tend to be stern and dedicated to study, meditation, and clean living, with those who disobey taken to "re-education centers" where they almost always return with a new outlook on life.

### Skull and Bones Society

The Skull and Bones is the oldest senior class society at Yale University, which has a history of exceptionally powerful alumni and an equally powerful alumni organization which owns real estate in the Skull and Bones name, and oversees membership in the society. It is informally referred to as "Bones," "The Order," "Order 322," or "The Brotherhood of Death." Members of the organization are known as "Initiated to the Order," "Members of the Order," or "Bonesmen."

All known members of the Skull and Bones are male; it is unknown if there are rules against female members, or if there simply haven't been any discovered yet.

Traditionally, the Order meets in a facility at Yale known as the Tomb, or Skull and Bones Hall. It was built beginning in 1856 with additional wings added in 1903 and 1912. Prominent alumni include William Howard Taft, George H.W. Bush, George W. Bush, Joseph Gibson Hoyt, Henry Simpson, Henry Luce, John Kerry, and others.

The society is so secret that all that is truly known about it, is its name, and the fact that the number 322 is significant to its beliefs and rituals. It is commonly believed that it refers to the year 322 and the end of the Lamian War, which heralded the beginning of the Plutocratic system of government in Greece.

Members are assigned strange and seemingly meaningless nicknames like Long Devil, Boaz, Sherrife, Hamlet, and others. It has throughout history been

believed to play an important role in the New World Order.

The mystical arm of the Bones is, as one might imagine, an order of Theosophists, colloquially referred to as necromancers and death-watchers. Their power over the dead has proven quite useful against vampires, wights, wraiths, zombies, skeletons, and even ghouls, on occasion.

The truth of the matter is that it is in fact an arm of the Illuminati, and its members, almost exclusively Survivors, are utterly dedicated to using espionage, conspiracy, and propaganda to extend the control of the greater organization. Their areas of control are marked by infighting, backstabbing, betrayal, and conflict, all of which benefit specific individuals in often unforeseen ways.

### Illuminati

The Illuminati is the source of so many myths and legends, many of which are intertwined with elements of truth, that it's all but impossible to understand its true reach and motivations. It emerged from the shadows with the Night of Blood, but even today it remains a shadowy presence operating behind the scenes of the OA. It seems that its members can be anyone, with any skill, any talent, natural or supernatural in nature, and all that is known is that it pulls strings.

If there is a New World Order, the Illuminati is it. No secret society except possibly the Skull and Bones knows anything about the truth behind the organization in its current incarnation.

The historic origins of the society are known. It was founded in 1776 in Bavaria, a group with a goal to oppose the influence of religion and abuses of power by the government. Ironically, part of its mandate was to challenge the practice of obscurantism, given its later choice to operate in absolute secrecy through a veil of shadowy half-truths.

The group was subversive enough that it was outlawed through edict in the years 1784 and then again in 1785, 1787, and 1790, but only after internal strife had torn the group asunder from within.

The group faded into the shadows and adopted a new approach: subversion. Taking a note from its own internal fallout, the reformed Illuminati began to infiltrate and recruit officials from the highest levels of society. They gradually took hold of many world governments, positions that it never let go, through creating a legacy system that brought in the children of existing members down through the ages.

Likewise it recruited powerful Sages, sorcerers, necromancers and the like—anyone with skills, position, mystical or temporal power that it could use was brought in, and enemies made to disappear. Mistakes were (very) occasionally made, but these led only to whispers of a powerful far-reaching society with unbelievable power and control, ushering humanity towards a new order where only the society had absolute control.

These whispers benefited the Illuminati, creating a sense of crippling fear that tugged at the far reaches of humanity's consciousness. The group reveled in them, and both allowed and encouraged them down through the ages.

Along the way, new societies were created: The Freemasons, the Skull and Bones, and others, often without any knowledge at all that the society truly served the aims of the Illuminati. It forgot its original mission to wipe out traces of the supernatural and religious control, and became a godlike figure itself.

Today, the Illuminati acknowledges its own existence, but still cannot be found by any who seek it out. Sometimes, an agent will reveal themselves as serving the Great Conspiracy or as an agent of the New Order, but that's as far as it ever goes.

Inside its ranks, the Illuminati has three Classes, each of which has several Grades. Agents gradually rise through the ranks, learning greater secrets of esoterica as they go. These Classes and Grades are:

#### **Class I: The Nursery**

- The Novicate
- The Minerval
- Illuminatus Minor

#### **Class II: The Masonic Grades**

- The Apprentice
- The Companion
- The Master

#### **Class III: The Mysteries**

- Priest (Lesser Mystery)
- Prince (Lesser Mystery)
- Mage (Greater Mystery)
- King (Greater Mystery)

No Illuminatus of Class III has ever been identified. It is believed that these ranks are filled only by current leaders of the organization, and there may be as few as eighteen members of the Priest, Prince, and Mage ranks (6 of each) throughout the world, and only a single King.

The Illuminati should be played as the mysterious force that pulls the strings behind the entire OA, and potentially, the entire war. They most certainly are not a friendly nor "good" organization, though they may be on humanity's side against Hell's. It could even be that the war has been orchestrated to return humanity to simpler level of civilization, and one that will be easier to control and guide.

To this end, the Illuminati may be the force pulling the strings behind *every other secret society*, manipulating each to its own end. The one possible exception to this is the Rosicrucian Fellowship, who are ancient enemies to the Illuminati, dating back to



their original founding by Adam Weishaupt in the late 18th Century. Certainly the Masonic orders, the Skull and Bones, and the O.T.O. have ties to the Illuminati, whether they realize it or not. The Priory of Sion is something of a wild card—it may be controlled by the Rosicrucians, might be manipulated by the Illuminati, or it may be a separate group altogether, with no overt or secret ties to any other society.

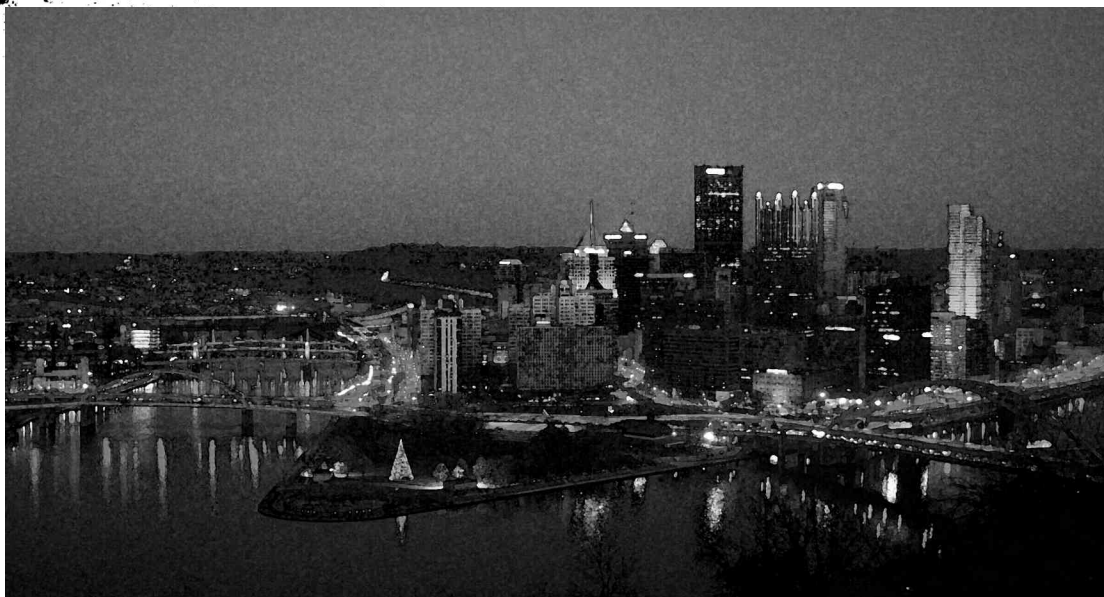
In the end, the key with the Supernatural Wars is that it's a post-apocalyptic setting with a wide range of possibilities. You could have groups of gangs in souped-up cars and motorcycles dueling it out in the deserts along Highway 66 in a classic apocalyptic wasteland.

You can run Western-style games in towns that exist on a new frontier. You can have scenarios set in cities that are quite literally Hellscares on Earth, where technology and utilities still exist, but only because humans are subjected to forced labor to keep the lights on, while people vanish into the night every day. You can funnel refugees from the cities, or have the heroes train a town to face off against a brutal warlord and his gangs obsessed with taking over.

You can run campaigns where the PCs constantly have to balance the necessity of help from the Occult Alliance with the potential that they might be just as bad as the Legions when everything shakes out in the end. The potential is endless, and several adventure seeds have been included throughout as examples of the sorts of adventures you can include.







## CHAPTER SEVEN: THE NOCTURNUMVERSE

A Night World by Jason Vey and Juliette Gouirand-Vey

**Setting:** Kitchen Sink, “shadow world” setting – the supernatural is everywhere, but most people choose to ignore it

**Play Style:** Cinematic

**Options:** All Cinematic options in play. Guns are in play as normal weapons; all character classes are proficient in shotguns. Survivors are proficient in handguns. Veterans are proficient in all firearms, including rifles, assault weapons, machineguns, and other high-end weapons systems and options.

The Nocturnumverse is a world where absolutely anything goes: werewolves, vampires, Witches, Warlocks and Chosen Ones mingle in demon bars, while powerful supernatural factions engage in shadow wars for the fate of the entire world. The forces of the Cthulhu and Hastur Mythoi exist in the shadows and spaces between spaces, and the demons and outer gods of Lovecraft were the original inhabitants of

the Earth, many thousands of years ago.

This is a setting where just about any urban fantasy or horror character, concept or theme you can think of can exist, often just dropped right in with no changes—and have been over the twenty years of its existence as a campaign.

On the surface, the world looks just like our own. The average person is blissfully unaware of the existence of the supernatural all around them, despite mountains of evidence to the contrary, and the supernatural community likes it that way. The various factions (called variously “cabals,” “collectives,” “secret societies,” and by any number of other epithets and chosen nomenclature) all agree that a massive supernatural upheaval is coming, the likes of which hasn’t been seen in decades, if not centuries, on the scale of the Fall of the Roman Empire. While most of these power groups agree that the Upheaval needs to be staved off or stopped

entirely, there are dark cults that wish to actively participate in its arrival.

It is into this world that the PCs are thrust. Most of the campaign is set in and around the city of Pittsburgh, which is a center of mystical convergence due to the confluence of the rivers at the Point, but there are global ramifications to the events here, and most Power Groups are branches of global factions—in many cases, small factions who nominally take orders from much more powerful branches.

As such, feel free to take the concepts here and drop them all right into your home city, or anywhere else in the world you like. The Nocturnumverse is indeed a multiverse, expanding across our world and beyond to many other hellsapes.

Probably the best way to outline the major features of the Nocturnumverse is through the voice of one of its original player characters, and one of its major power brokers: Necromancer extraordinaire, co-owner of the Hive Arcana café and new age shop, CEO of the Black Investigations Detective Agency, and Field Chief of the Pittsburgh branch of the Theosophical Society, Ms. Amanda Black.

## **COLLECTIVES, OCCULT ORGANIZATIONS AND POWER GROUPS**

*The Following information has been added to the Council's knowledge base as of July, 2007, October 2012 and November 2017 by Amanda Black, Grigori Emeritus. It concerns the nature of the power groups operating in Pittsburgh, an event known as the "Collective War," the closing of the Pittsburgh Vortex, and its eventual re-opening with the arrival of "Club Inferno."*

Power groups. Heh. Makes us sound like some sort of new-agey group therapy collective.

In the interest of keeping things simple, which I'm a fan of, the Graced are folks with extraordinary abilities and talents. Like being able to manipulate the forces of nature, do real magic (no cheap parlor tricks here), read the thoughts of others, access powers directly from the Divine, and, my personal favorite...talk to and control spirits of the dead. Stuff like that.

It's possible to be a solitary man, as Neil Diamond says, but if you got to go to Hogwarts, would you want an independent study? I think not. The Collectives are like our Houses. The sorting process we go through is not nearly as cut and dry, unfortunately. I'd have much rather stuck a hat on my head and been told where to go than discover my Gift after raising the family pet from the dead at the tender age of 8...but I guess we all have our crosses to bear. That's what Father Bob says, anyhow.

So here's an introduction to some of the Collectives currently operating in the Pittsburgh area. Do me a favor and don't tell them I sent you.

### **The Covens**

The Covens are, like, real Witches—not the fluffy-bunny-persecution-complex-Silver-Ravenwolf-spouting variety. No, I'm talking the warrior-priestess-defenders-of-Gaia-and-humanity variety. They're not the most organized Collective out there, but they are super-conscious of how easily power can corrupt, and want to avoid all that mess when they can and make sure all folks have a voice. I can respect that, although speaking frankly, sometimes people just need to be told what to do. Granted, I'm usually the one telling them, so I guess my opinion doesn't really count for much. But I digress...the Covens are pretty badass.

There's a number of smaller ones in Pittsburgh for good and ill. My people took down a Shub-Niggurath worshipping "Druidic" cult in Oakland a number of years back. On the other hand we've had great relations

with a very powerful cult of Witches in Adare, Ireland.

### **The Rosicrucians**

The Brotherhood of the Rose Cross is probably the largest Collective in Pittsburgh, and quite possibly in the world. The Witches and Warlocks of the Rosicrucian Order are highly organized, resourceful (the less polite term would be loaded), educated, and powerful. And when I say powerful, I mean it. When I need backup, the Rosies are who I call.

Don't get me wrong; they are arrogant sons-of-bitches, obsessed with their own power and self-importance. But behind that ivory tower, nose-in-the-air façade, they're the good guys. They have never failed to help me out, especially where keeping the Vortex in check is concerned.

I consider myself very lucky to call several of them dear friends. Their library is pretty ridiculous. Again, they can be obnoxious know-it-alls sometimes (being better and smarter than everyone else will do that to you), but I'd say their good traits far outnumber their shortcomings. Oh, and even though all the ones I happen to know are guys, they do have female members, too, contrary to their name. I confess that I was deeply in love with a Rosie at one point in time, but he went bad and we had to send him to Hell.

Well, actually, an Outer God showed up and dragged him to Hell, but that's another story.

### **The Esoteric Order of Gnostics**

The Esoteric Order of Gnostics. Yeah, they can be some scary bastards. Unless you're one of them, as in psychic, you're not likely to know very much about them, and they're very likely to know everything about you. And they like it that way. Several members are regulars of my business. They tend to be very cautious of the other Collectives, with good reason. I

make it a point to stay on their good side.

After all, when the person you're talking to just needs to blink and they can know everything in your head, including childhood moments that you yourself have forgotten, that's not someone you want to make an enemy. There's one or two that aren't crazy about me, but getting drunk and hitting on a psychic's husband will do that to you. Also, I tend to have that effect on some people.

### **The Order of the Dragon**

The Order of the Dragon are the unpopular kids at the moment, mainly because of what happened in the recent war between the Collectives in Pittsburgh, which I'll get to shortly (maybe). These guys see themselves as the soldiers of God, a position which can lead to extreme thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, as my therapist would say. They're nominally backed by the Vatican itself, and yes, they're supposedly descended from *that* Order of the Dragon. The one that Vlad Dracul belonged to before the whole restricted diet thing took hold of him.

Two of the Order of the Dragon I know that weren't wiped out in the course of the war decided to call it quits with the larger organization and fly solo together. One of them is my adopted daughter, Sandra. The other is my best friend, partner, and an honest-to-God Nephilim to boot, Matthew. Can't say I blame them.

### **The Theosophical Society**

That brings us to the Theosophical Society, an organization near and dear to my own heart, as black and little as it may be. The Order is my own Collective which is how I know all about this stuff, and you don't. Ha ha. Anyways, we are the Graced folks who can see, talk to, and control the dead, also known as necromancers. And let me tell you, Pittsburgh, having been a major sticking point in the founding of this nation (at least as far as the white people

are concerned), is chock full of restless spirits who are *constantly* yammering and running their traps. I can't tell you how many times I've had to exorcise my damn house just so I can get a good night's sleep.

But I digress. Now you know my secret.... Well, one of them, anyway. I have lots.

### **The Lost, and The Touched**

The lost and the Touched are kind of like the *Order of the Phoenix*...if they were monstrous and completely insane. These guys have lived through and seen some serious shit, survived to tell the tale, and live to throw off or stop the Upheaval (that'd be the Apocalypse, for those of you not paying attention), of course using whatever means necessary.

The Lost tend to have histories of serious trauma, and it shows in more ways than one. The vast majority of them are homeless and they've suffered at the hands of abusers, rapists, murderers, pushers, and every kind of human filth on top of being hunted by demons who feed on misery.

That tends to have an effect on a person, and in the case of the Lost, it's so bad they became supernatural creatures as a result. Some of them don't even look human anymore, having taken on an outer appearance reflective of the inner horrors they've faced their whole life. But I'm here to tell you, when the chips are down, they're the strongest sons and daughters of bitches you'll ever know, and you could do way worse than having one in your corner.

As for the Touched, they are my absolute favorite Collective, hands down. If it wasn't for a Touched, I wouldn't be sitting here writing you this tale right now, I'd likely be gibbering away in Western Psych, or maybe even down in the county morgue with a hole blown through my skull. In terms of powers, they tend to run the gamut—many were humans who were

transformed into supernaturals through their encounters with the Deeper Dark (don't ask me to explain the Deeper Dark right here; that's a whole paper unto itself), while some remain human, just a bit mad. What separates the Lost from the Touched is that the Touched are, almost to the last person, corrupted. That doesn't make them bad people, though. I mean, they used to be bad people. Some of them super bad. But they came back and they're much better now. Trust me.

### **The Men in Black**

These guys are not a Collective, per se, but they're a power group, nevertheless. They are a secret (government?) organization who despises and hates everything supernatural. The original Grigori Council would've loved them. They are highly trained and to someone with the ability to sense supernatural creatures (a Chosen One, for example) they feel like...like there's nothing there. And they have power.

They've got the power to make your bank accounts disappear, sell your house out from under you and wipe every scrap of evidence that you ever existed off the face of the Earth. That's their real power, in the end—their fingers are in everything. If you run into one, it's best to give him what he wants and try to get out alive. I mean, another option is to knock their soul out of their bodies and shoot them dead in the face, but I understand the Council still frowns upon murder. So yeah, give 'em what they want and run, unless you've got some very, very powerful allies. Like, for example...

### **The Templar Freemasons**

These guys don't exist. They don't have super magical powers, and they don't show up like something out of *The Matrix* to take on the Men in Black. They're certainly not the Men in Black's archenemies and they're not everywhere.

No, seriously. They don't exist.

Don't worry about it. And for God's sake, don't ask questions about it.

## The Grigori

Now it's time for you guys. Of course, you know all this but I think it's important for this report to be complete. For posterity. Also, a copy is going into a certain extradimensional library to which I've recently been granted access. No, I can't get you in, and no, I won't tell you anymore.

The Grigori are hands-down the newest Collective to join our little battle against the Upheaval—well, in the sense of actually joining the rest of us, that is. They've actually been around since before recorded history, back to a tribal group who in a fit of mystical rape, instilled the essence of a demon into a young girl, and created the first of the Chosen Ones, who ever since have randomly appeared in the world, and the Grigori have taken it upon ourselves to guide and train them in their destiny to destroy the forces of the Deeper Dark. Sometimes, Grigori have attempted to mate with Chosen Ones in the hopes of producing more. Shockingly, that never ends well.

They have, as you can imagine, had their problems over the millennia, short-sightedness being their biggest failing. I was on the Council back around '01. I had a Chosen One under my watch. She was like a daughter to me. Then she died. Threw herself into a goddamn dimensional Vortex to shut it down.

They tell me it wasn't my fault, and that's what happens to Chosen Ones, but it hurt enough that I walked away, and I just consult on occasion, now. Matthew, though, I kind of rooked him into being in the group, and he's doing a better job with his Chosen One than I ever did with mine. So bully for him, I guess.

In any case, after the rising of a Great Old One created an apocalypse-level event of its own in a small midwestern town

(don't look; it's not there anymore), what I suspect was the first stage of the Upheaval actually occurred. Thousands of Chosen Ones awakened across the entire world, all at once. The original Grigori Council was destroyed in the crossfire, and only a few of us scattered around the world survived.

It threw magic wildly out of balance for a time, but we got through it. The new Council understands more about true demons, about the Deeper Dark, than they ever did before.

They've aligned with a powerful Coven in Adare, Ireland, and are a premier source of occult studies, magic and warriors. Word is they've got about 500 active Chosen Ones all over the world. They sent one here—Hilda. She's a hell of a fighter, but I can't do the Grigori thing anymore, so I drafted my friend Matthew. Like I said, he's doing a better job than I did. She's still alive.



My other good friend, Drake, forms the third branch of the new Grigori. His estate in Coventry serves as the Chosen One training facility. I couldn't think of a better option. He did used to be a centuries-old vampire, after all. That's a very long story.

People who are up on geography will note that London, Adare and Coventry form a pretty big triangle covering a swath of central and Southern England into Ireland. They say that there's zero hostile supernatural activity in that region, and that black magic won't even work there. I tend to doubt that, and figure monsters just avoid there because, you know, tons of demon hunters. If they did somehow create a sort of nega-Vortex there, it'd be a pretty serious unbalancing of the mystical forces, and I think the consequences may have been felt by now.

Huh. Maybe Cassilda wasn't Darrek's fault after all.

Who needs a drink?

## The Houses

I just learned about these fuckers, and hoo, boy, howdy. So we've known about ensouled vampires for well over a decade, now. As a species, they're called *moroi*, as opposed to the more demonic and commonplace variety, which we called *strigoi*.

To further complicate things, there's rare critters who are strigoi that also happen to have a soul. I can think of maybe three or four of these. In the entire world. All across history. They're a little rare.

What we didn't know until very recently is that the moroi (or the Houses, as they call themselves) are more numerous than we ever imagined, and they have their own full-on society complete with laws and regulations built around their ability to hide themselves from humanity. If I may say so, they do a damned good job of it, because we're pretty in the know about this shit, and they've managed to stay off our radar.

There are three major sects of moroi, and so far as we're aware, somewhere just over a dozen Houses divided up among the sects. The sects are the Shadow Cabinet, who seem to be the law-and-order types, the Creed, who are more "dominate the cattle humans" variety, and the Unaligned, who are somewhere in between, dealing with both, but who, so far as I can tell, eventually have to make a choice by either following the rules or joining the Creed's rabid and anarchic terrorism.

Near as I can tell, they've all got crazy supernatural powers that are tied to their House. Some of them can shapeshift. Others have that mesmerizing gaze. Some can move insanely fast. Others have their own brand of magic. Some can warp your goddamn skin and mutilate with a touch. Some are preternaturally tough. Some can create illusions. Just about all of them can grow claws and fangs. Incidentally, Dracula himself, near as I can tell, is an Unaligned moroi who has somehow managed to play nice with both of the Sects.

They feed on life essence—most on blood, but some on things like sex, pain, emotion or even spell casting. But they've got souls, which makes them stand apart from most of the demons we have to put down. They don't get ugly and demonic when they pop their fangs (though some are always ugly and demonic), and they know right from wrong.

That means you've got to take each on his or her own merits...and put a stake in them if they're on the wrong side of the line. Then cut their head off, and just to be sure, throw it in a volcano. Because these fuckers don't dust, and if you take the stake out, they goddamn get back up and come after you again. I'm going to be honest: I *really* don't like them.

We recently experienced a miracle, when Amara, one of the oldest moroi around, helped me to return Lorelei, a young woman who died back in 2001, from the



dead—actually, from ash—as a moroi. It took almost everything my necromancy had to make it happen, but we pulled it off, and now I've got a gorgeous young woman in the body of a 30-something, with the mind of a 16-year-old, and vast cosmic power on my hands. So that's a fun thing that happened.

Since it's kind of half my fault, it's kind of on me to make sure she doesn't tear the city up. There's a long story there, which I won't bore you with. But mostly I'm just thankful the girl gets a second chance, and she always wanted to be a vampire, anyway. I should be grateful she at least got to be the ensouled kind.

If there's one thing I've learned about these guys, it's that it's best to keep the peace with the Shadow cabinet, and generally stay the hell out of each other's way. If nothing else, they seem to be against the Upheaval, and they don't like strigoi, either, so there's that. Also, their Prince, Sebastian Powell, gives me a little tingle in my nether ya-ya. Again, hoo, boy, howdy. He's a beautiful, beautiful man.

But I don't sleep with vampires. Nope. Never happen. I absolutely did not ever try to sleep with Drake on the Orient Express back in 2007.

## The Cops

Okay, okay, so the police aren't exactly a "power group," per se, but there's one specific cop who has been instrumental in our fight against the Forces of Darkness (trademark) throughout our history. His name is Joe Knaem, and in the early days, before the Vortex War, he was just a normal homicide detective who eventually, along with his partner Lexie Carver (a forensic psychologist), became some of the "in the know" folks in the city.

Despite continual dangers to his own livelihood (not to mention his and Lexie's lives and souls), and despite initial head-butting difficulties and more than a few

threats on each other's lives, Joe has become I trusted ally to Black Investigations, and daresay a personal friend of mine. That's probably more than a little due to the fact that we saved Lexie's ass from her evil doppelganger from a parallel Hell world we call the Dusklands—but we won't get into that particular misadventure here.

In any case, after the Vortex War it got harder and harder for the cops to deny the existence of the Supernatural. Later events in LA and across the world made most government agencies aware of the hidden world, and Pittsburgh and LA became the first cities to establish a Special Supernatural Unit, or SSU, for their police forces.

The Collectives somewhat derisively refer to it as the Special Satanic Unit, as they're lagging way behind on their knowledge and tend to assign everything to the devil. The common folk, who are still unwilling or unable to process the existence of the supernatural, think it's the Special Sanctions Unit, investigating unusual cases.

Regardless, Joe is the Lieutenant in charge of Pittsburgh's SSU, and it's enabled our agency to take advantage of funding and resources we didn't used to have, so that's good. We should expect other cities to follow suit as the years go on, and keep an eye on them. That's my take on it.

## Other Groups

There's more Collectives, to be sure, but the ones I've discussed so far are pretty much the local key players. Which brings us to the Vortex War. Hang on while I go fix myself a stiff drink. You might want to get yourself one, too.

## THE VORTEX WAR

For all our differences, the Collectives are generally united by a mutual desire to prevent the Upheaval, maintain some semblance of balance, and keep mundanes

(that'd be all you Muggle folks out there) alive and well. Remember what I said earlier about power and how easily it corrupts? Well, the Graced are human beings too—most of us, anyway—meaning we're as prone to that corruption as anyone.

So remember a few pages back when I was talking about being in love with a Rosicrucian who went bad, and went to Hell, and that was all another story? Here...we...go!

Back in 2006 or so, a Rosicrucian named Alan Collins III essentially used metaphysical heroin, got hooked, and tried to destroy the world using the Vortex at the Point (we'll get to that in a minute). And one of his strategies in working towards this end involved manipulating the Collectives into an all-out war so that we'd all be too busy fighting each other to pay attention and take notice of what he was trying to do. It almost worked, but in the end, we were able to stop him, though not without many, many casualties, most of which we inflicted on each other.

And yes, because I know you've already put the pieces together, I knew him, I loved him, and I really hate the word, but I guess when it comes down to it, you have to call a spade a spade...I was his victim. I was violated in every way a person can be—physically, emotionally, spiritually—but I'm still standing (better than I ever did, looking like a true Survivor, feeling like a little kid). And as a good friend of mine once said, "That which fails to kill me, has made a grave tactical error." Anyways, I got some more psychological issues, a sweet car, and several friends in high places for my troubles, so all's well that ends well.

## WATERING HOLES

A city like Pittsburgh with such a high population of supernaturals, naturally has gathering places. Two now-defunct bars used to be the prime meeting places for the

Graced and supernatural community in the city. Club Laga had a secret back room where pretty much every demon could be found. We probably should've taken it down when we first discovered it, but it turned out to be a great place for intel, so we left it go. Besides, I've learned the hard way that not all demons are bad.

The Upstage was a bar and Goth dance club on the campus of the local major University, where every coven, cabal, and power group came together to treat, negotiate, exchange notes, threaten each other, and basically just mingle. Unfortunately, both of those are now gone. Someone shut down Club Laga in 2017, and we're still not sure what happened, but first, every demon in there was killed, and then the mystical hidden door to get in there turned into a broom closet. Shortly thereafter, the club itself shut down due to basic economics.

The Upstage...well, it turned into condos and a grocery store. Which really sucks. There was no supernatural drive behind it. The landlords just sold the damn place.

There are three new clubs that are starting to show up. The demons have begun to gravitate to a place called the Succubus Lounge (a little on the nose), which is located at the other end of the South Side and is marked by—wait for it—a huge freaking sign with a glowing purple succubus on it. A Rosicrucian bar called the Acacia Lounge has begun to draw other Collectives, and to their credit, the Rosies have been largely accepting of that, though they're a bit elitist, so some of the Collectives (Gnostics, I'm looking at you) aren't very welcome there. Still, the place is a bit stuffy—all stale dark beer and bad tobacco smells, oak bar, stuff like that. It's no Upstage.

So, what about the third place? In 2012 the Vortex at the Point got re-activated, a few days after Club Inferno suddenly appeared in Pittsburgh. There was a massive fight between several Graced

Collectives (who were, understandably, checking out the Club) and a group of werewolves and zombies that had been tainted by the Deeper Dark. I'm fairly certain that the amount of energy unleashed by both sides is what flipped the switch back on. Anyhow, it's been full of life (ha ha) ever since.

As much as I hate to admit it, I haven't been able to figure out what the deal is with Club Inferno, and neither has anyone else I know. What we do know is that it's bi-located (there's an identical club in New York City), and that there's more than meets the eye where Harold Lamont, the manager, is concerned. Anyhow, the club has become the after-hours gathering place for the Graced and supernatural communities of Pittsburgh since the Upstage closed, but I honestly try to avoid it unless I'm forced to go there. To quote a friend of mine, "It's bloody awful." The music at the Upstage was much better, and sometimes I just want to punch Lamont right in his emotionless face...but I know in my gut that would be a very BAD idea.

...Not that that's ever stopped me before.

## THE VORTEX AT THE POINT

It shouldn't surprise anyone, but the place where the four rivers converge (that's right; four—we have a little-known underground aquifer) is also a major center of mystical convergence, one of the largest in the United States and even in the world. Each of these rivers is on a ley line, or line of mystical energy, and where they come together, a Vortex results. A Vortex is a sort of dimensional nexus point, a tear in the fabric of reality. Some are a gateway to the astral or ethereal plane. Some go straight to Hell. Others go to another world. The rarest ones, like ours, are potential-gateways to an infinite number of other dimensions.

Here's the unfortunate part—for all the garbage that goes on in our world, it's a



freaking paradise compared to most of the other dimensions out there. To say they're armpits and assholes is an understatement. Most of them are sheer, pure, unadulterated, hell. There's a few nice ones, to be sure, but really, if you're in a nice world, you're not looking to escape it, so we don't encounter those very often.

The majority of the power groups and Collectives in Pittsburgh are on a concerted mission to keep that Vortex as plugged up as we can. Back in '07, we managed to completely close and seal it. In 2012, the damn thing blew open again, and it's been rumbling like a goddamn volcano ever since. Keeps things interesting, though, and the authorities have gotten to be experts at covering up major events. We've had a crazy number of mysterious "gas incidents" and "terrorist attacks" here over the years, and people buy into it because, frankly, they want to. It's easier and less scary than the truth.

## PITTSBURGH NEIGHBORHOODS

Pittsburgh is the city of bridges and is generally divided by compass points—there's the North Side (and North Hills), the South Side (and South Hills), the East End, and the West End. The North and South Sides are city neighborhoods.

The North Side is where the Andy Warhol Museum, the football and baseball stadiums, and a number of urban revitalization cultural communities can be found. The South Side is split among the Flats and the Slopes. The Flats are wall-to-wall bars, clubs, and culture shops, as well as riverfront development, expensive apartments, and lofts. The Slopes are an urban residential area.

The North and South Hills tend to be wealthier suburban neighborhoods, though each has its lower-middle-class areas as well. Here's where you find malls, big box stores, restaurants, and business districts, as well as residential neighborhoods. The East and West End are city neighborhoods with urban living—row houses, apartments, "affordable living" housing developments, and a very urban sensibility.

The East End has been targeted over the past decade or so by urban developers who have come under fire for gentrifying the area and driving out long-time residents who could no longer afford their homes there. This includes neighborhoods like East Liberty and Lawrenceville, which are now hip, trendy, and expensive where they were once urban, blue collar, working-class areas.

Let's look at some of the areas of the city in detail. For legal reasons, specific institutions and businesses have not been mentioned by name, but can be found with a basic internet search. Note that a proper writeup of all the important areas in the city would require multiple volumes of text, and in the interest of space and brevity, only a brief overview of certain neighborhoods that have appeared in the Nocturnumverse is given here.

## The City Proper

The City of Pittsburgh, much to the surprise of many visitors, has a relatively small downtown area (it can be walked from one end to the other in much less than an hour) but what is considered the city proper is comprised of 90 neighborhoods spread across miles of land. Pittsburgh is a sprawl, and many areas that look at a glance to be suburban are, in fact, part of the city. A few more notable neighborhoods within the city itself include:

**Beechview/Brookline:** These two neighborhoods to the south of the city proper border the South Hills and the first two "proper" suburbs to the south, Dormont and Mt. Lebanon (see "South Hills", below). These are lower middle-class to middle-class neighborhoods with a somewhat suburban feel, though houses tend towards very small yards and are pressed up very closely against each other.

They are tight-knit communities where neighbors tend to know each other, and each is marked by a walkable main drag—Brookline Blvd. in Brookline, which also serves as the neighborhood's "business district" and includes cafes, eateries, a pharmacy, bars, an ice cream shop, and other small businesses; and Broadway in Beechview, which has a grocery store, café, and a few small businesses of its own. Each neighborhood boasts strong Latin-American and Italian communities, and Brookline is an up-and-coming neighborhood for young Millennial families starting out.

**Downtown:** For the most part, Downtown is a business hub of the city. It is, however, home to the Cultural District, which boasts an art house movie theater, several major, historic, and famous performance venues (including the largest theatre house outside of New York), and at least two campuses for large universities.

The Market Square area of downtown is a hub for many of the city's celebrations,

particularly around the winter holidays. Point State Park, the original location of Fort Pitt which sits on the peninsula at the convergence of the rivers, is a large historic park which is the home of the city's Arts Festival, Fourth of July Fireworks, and many other massive community celebrations every year.

Unlike many major cities, comparatively few people actually live in Downtown as compared to the outlying neighborhoods, though efforts have been made to change this in recent years.

**East End:** The East End is comprised of communities like East Liberty, Swissvale, Greenfield, Lawrenceville, and the like. Some of these neighborhoods were once predominantly African-American communities, but much of the region has been the target of gentrification which is displacing much of the community. Mack and Danny both live in Lawrenceville, as do one or two major NPCs in the setting.

Lawrenceville has become a popular destination for bars, clubs, and dining, especially among the "hipster" crowd, while East Liberty is now the headquarters of major technology firms, and home to many "specialty" grocers and shops, while still fighting to maintain its cultural landscape. Lawrenceville is also a gateway to the North Hills, across the 40th Street Bridge (or any of several other bridges)

Between Oakland and the East End proper (and arguably the beginning of the East End), Shadyside is an upscale neighborhood that houses many million-dollar mansions, but is also the home of another of the region's major universities. It, too, has its own business district. Amanda Black lives in Shadyside.

Also adjacent to Oakland is another borderline East End community: Squirrel Hill. This predominantly Jewish neighborhood tragically made national news as the site of a mass shooting at a synagogue in 2018, but remains a thriving

and vibrant cultural community. It has a major stretch of businesses including movie theaters, specialty shops, restaurants, and cafes along Forbes Avenue (which runs through Squirrel Hill from Oakland) and Murray Avenue.

Other neighborhoods in the East End include Highland Park, an upper class neighborhood with many large historic homes and mansions, and nearby Larimer, which is a predominantly African-American and economically disadvantaged part of the East End.

**North Side:** The North Side of the city houses the region's notable "Deutschtown," or "German Town" area and is largely an urban residential neighborhood that is dotted with neighborhood bars and a few small shops and grocers. It's the home of a famous ketchup and pickle plant, bordering Germantown and Spring Hill. The exception to this rule is the North Shore, along the river, which is the home to a thriving development, the local science center and planetarium, the major stadiums for the city's football and baseball teams, at least one notable concert venue, and tons of sit down eateries, brew pubs, and bars.

**Oakland:** Situated to the east of downtown, Oakland is the quintessential college neighborhood, boasting no fewer than three major institutes of higher education. Oakland is arguably part of the East End, but is such a large neighborhood with its own character that it deserves a separate entry.

In ages past it was known for its subculture, thrift and vintage clothing stores, indie cafes, and the like, but these days it has become a bit more corporate, with higher end dining and fast food, and more upscale stores to cater to the doctors, lawyers, and the like who work in the neighborhood. Still, however, it is very much the "college town" area of the city, and on any given day students can be seen in droves up and down the streets of Forbes

and Fifth Avenue, the two main streets in the area, or along Bigelow Blvd, which the university closes down a few times a year for student festivities.

Also located in Oakland is the major branch of the local library system, the city's natural history museum which includes the largest collection of complete dinosaur skeletons east of the Mississippi, and an important and famed music and event hall.

Oakland is the home of Black Investigations, which is housed in the Hive Arcana Café and New Age shop on Forbes Avenue. This former café, bar, movie theater, and performance venue was closed for a number of years before Amanda Black and her partner Dana Green purchased, re-branded, and re-opened it as a café and live music venue.

**South Side:** The South Side comprises a long stretch of bars and cafes, and is very much the "nightlife" area of the city, bordered by row houses, lofts, and apartment complexes. It's separated into two areas: the "flats," which is the main business district and is almost constantly crowded with people looking to enjoy a drink, good food, live entertainment, and company, and the "slopes," which are on the hills above the flats, and are a strictly residential area comprised of the aforementioned row houses and other small houses. Incomes here range from upper middle class to economically disadvantaged, quite literally depending on which street you walk.

The South Side was once the home of an important Demon Bar, the Lava Lounge, which was recently destroyed under mysterious circumstances related to an incursion of Hastur on Earth. It is rumored that there is an important Rosicrucian bar located on Carson Street, and that the demon bar may have relocated to a Halloween-themed "Succubus Bar," located on 18th Street.

Between Oakland and the South Side, running from downtown to the East End neighborhood of Greenfield, runs Second Avenue. This strip connects the city to the East End and South Side riverfront area, and is also the home of several major biomedical research facilities operated by both private and university interests. It's also the home of a major information broker, a homunculus by the name of Harlan who formerly worked for Black Investigations.

Several of the major characters in the Nocturnumverse live in lofts on the South Side Flats. These include Matthew Canaan, Hilda Heintz, and Yun-Xun Jing. Several NPCs also make their homes here.

**West End:** The West End is home to many varied neighborhoods, ranging from lower middle class to middle class neighborhoods like Sheraden and McKees Rocks to economically disadvantaged areas such as McKeesport, which is a neighborhood that once was home to the city's wealthy elite and even today holds many historic Victorian homes, but has long since fallen upon hard times. In the Nocturnumverse, many of these Victorian homes are haunted places, cursed by the memories of demonic atrocities committed hundreds of years past.

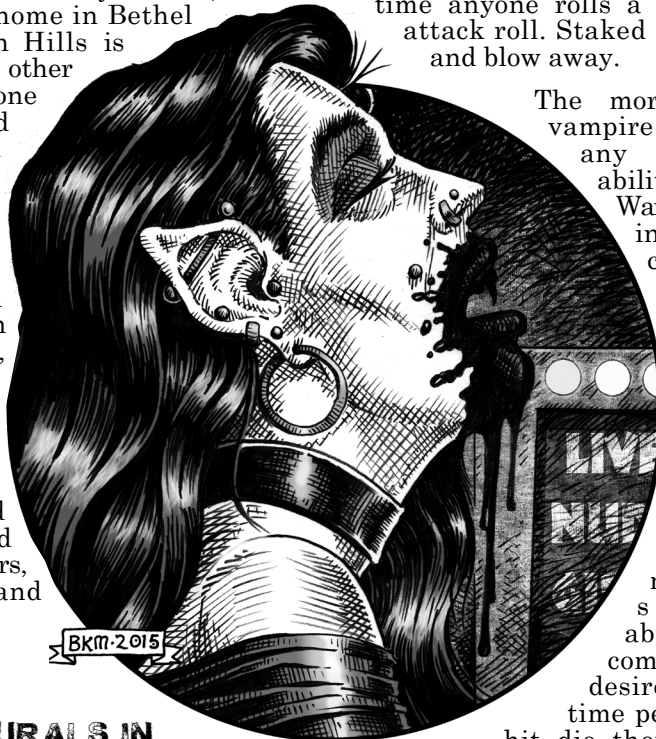
## The North Hills

The northernmost suburban areas outside of the city proper, the North Hills contains a wealth of diverse communities. It is largely thought of as an upper class region, but there are economically disadvantaged and middle-class areas as well. The most well-known road that cuts through the North Hills is McKnight Road, which is a thriving and very busy shopping and commercial corridor and home to one of the area's largest and most thriving shopping malls (even in an era when malls are, in general, not thriving). It also has strip malls and outdoor shopping centers as far as the eye can see, ranging for several miles. Known for its traffic, it's colloquially referred to as "McKnightmare Road" by residents.

## The South Hills

The South Hills are the southern suburbs of the city, made up of neighborhoods such as Dormont, which is a lower middle to middle class neighborhood, Bethel Park, a middle-class to upper-middle class area, and Mt. Lebanon and Upper St. Clair, two affluent neighborhoods. Some of the setting's major characters, Darrek Tinsley, his (NPC) wife Emily, and his ward Henry Anders, live in a large Tudor home in Bethel Park. The South Hills is home to several other major malls, one being located between Bethel Park and Upper St. Clair, and the other in Robinson Township.

Robinson in particular is an important, thriving commercial area as well as the home of the city's international airport, and always jam packed with shop-pers, diners, traffic, and people in general



## SUPERNATURALS IN NOCTURNUM

There are a wide variety of supernatural creatures in the Nocturnumverse, and indeed any kind of creature you can cook up is likely to exist in this world. Due to the presence of the Vortex at the Point, the city is rife with supernatural energy, and there's always some dark cult, cabal, or demonic Collective looking to use the

Vortex energy to bring about the next apocalyptic event. The most common types of inhuman creatures found in Pittsburgh, however, include:

**Vampires:** These creatures, as mentioned above, exist in two varieties: the demon-animated strigoi, and the ensouled walking dead moroi. The strigoi should use the standard vampire statistics as listed in **Chapter 5**, and for any strigoi of less than Master level is automatically staked any time anyone rolls a natural 20 on an attack roll. Staked strigoi turn to ash and blow away.

The moroi use standard vampire statistics, but add any supernatural abilities from the Witch/Warlock class, including innate magic—Spawn can use innate magic spells of up to 2nd level, Experienced can use spells of up to 4th level, and Master vampires may have up to 6th-level innate magical powers. Vampires may even possess psychic powers, if the GM desires. Moroi may use their supernatural abilities in any combination they desire, a total of one time per day (night?) per hit die they possess. Innate magic, however, costs a number of uses equal to its effective spell levels to use. Likewise, moroi, when staked, do not turn to ash, but are simply paralyzed. The moment the stake is moved, they will rise again unless their head is cut off as well and the remains doused with holy water.

**Lycanthropes:** Lycanthropes and werebeasts are common in the Pittsburgh

underworld. They are standard. Werewolves are by far the most common form of Lycanthrope, with others being almost unheard of—Danny is an unique inhabitant of the city.

**Demons:** Demons of every variety can be found in Pittsburgh, Class I to Class V and totally unique demons that don't otherwise fit anywhere. They are drawn to (and sometimes emerge from) the Vortex at the Point.

**Ghosts:** Ghosts and spirits are all too common in the Steel City, which has roots dating back to before the founding of our nation, and which has been the site of major wars hundreds of years ago. It's a haunted town, and the Theosophical Society maintains a strong (if small) presence here.

**Zombies:** Zombies are not unheard of in Pittsburgh, but are usually a sign that something has gone wrong somewhere. Normally they take the form of standard animated dead which can be put down just by dealing a lot of damage—they don't need to be shot in the head or the like. They're usually raised in the service of some dark necromancer or another.

## MAGICAL RITUALS IN NOCTURNUM

Magic in Nocturnum is as much a plot point as it is a list of spells—that is, there are always dark summoning and apocalyptic rituals being performed. These rituals are always outside the standard rules for spellcasting, but cooking one up for the use of your players is quite easy. Simply determine what the requirements for the ritual is, and assign an effective level for the spell.

Ritual spells tend to be very powerful, so they should normally be no lower than 7th level in terms of what they can do. Spellcasters do not need to be able to normally cast a spell of the same level as

the ritual; so long as the instructions are followed, anyone can do it.

### What Can a Ritual Do?

Rituals are generally used as plot points in a game. They should be one-off effects with very specific requirements that can't be easily repeated. Aside from that, they can serve any purpose you desire, from closing a dimensional rift to summoning a Great Old One to this plane of existence.

In the end, whatever you need a ritual to do, it can do for your game. Just be sure you are very careful to set it up as a one-off deal and not something your player characters will adopt to use over and over again, as such a spell can create very unbalancing effects.

### Casting Rituals

Casting the ritual means making a standard spellcasting check as outlined in **Chapter One** and **Chapter Three**, reduced as normal by the level of the ritual. However, each additional caster that takes part in the ritual adds +5% to the caster's chance per caster level involved (each participant adds a minimum of +5%).

For example, if a 7th-level ritual is being performed by a first-level caster with a 55% base spellcasting, and she is assisted by two third-level casters and a fourth-level Chosen One, she gains an additional 15% per each of the third level casters (total +30%) and +5% for the Chosen One (who is not a spellcaster, so she just adds a base +5%). Thus, the caster has a base 90% chance to perform the ritual successfully, but the ritual, a 7th-level effect, reduces this by 70%, leaving her at just a 20% chance of completing the ritual successfully.

Rituals also take *time*. No ritual should take less than five minutes to perform, and especially if you're dealing with longer rituals of ten minutes or more, you use one-minute melee rounds (see **Chapter Two**).



to deal with any events going on the background. A ritual should also occur at the climax of an adventure rather than as a standard rote part. Rituals represent Big Damn Magic and when they're pulled out, people should worry.

### Situational Bonuses and Penalties

The GM can add additional bonuses or penalties based on situation. Perhaps the ritual is being performed under a super blood wolf moon, which the GM decides adds an extra +30%. Maybe it's being performed right on top of the Vortex, adding an extra +50%. The possibilities are endless.

### Maxing Out Bonuses

Of course, all of this means that a very high level group of casters can quite easily pull off very powerful rituals. For villainous casters working out a plot point ritual that you intend to go off anyway that's a big deal, but what about when the player characters try it? If the GM wishes, you can cap the benefits additional casters grant to a ritual casting.

You could rule, for example, that the maximum base chance for the caster leading a ritual is 70%, and the maximum bonus any additional individual caster can give is +20%, with a maximum total circle of 7 casters, which is still pretty obscenely high. 6 additional casters at +20% each, adds +120% for a total of 190%, which even reduced by 90% for a 9th-level ritual is still 100%. In such a case, it would of course be essential to stop the casters before they completed their ritual, as unless you roll a 00, which is always a failure, the ritual is sure to succeed!

### Reducing Bonuses and Keeping It Simple

Another option is to rule that multiple casters don't add to the spell unless they make a magical number, which means a multiple of either 3 or 7. You could then rule that the bonus added is simply 5% times the

number of casters. Thus, a group of 7 casters would simply create a +35% bonus to the roll. This is a much simpler method, but it does tend to ignore the potential power and skill level of the individual Witches and Warlocks in the spell circle. In the end, it's your choice.

### Failing a Ritual

What happens when a ritual roll fails, again, is left to the GM. By and large, at minimum it should require a roll on the Spell Failure Table (see **Chapter Three**), but there may also be far more disastrous consequences the caster (or cabal, or coven, as the case may be) might face. What if the demon they planned to summon decides to show up anyway, though completely out of control, consuming his worshippers first before unleashing chaos upon the surrounding world?

In the end, ritual magic can be a great deal of fun and add a whole new element to the game. As with anything, just be careful that it doesn't throw off the balance of the game, and be careful to judge the power against existing spells in the game.

### Magical Items

There are magical artifacts in the Nocturnumverse as well. These items rarely have powers unto themselves, but often serve as a means to enhance a specific spell or ritual. Still, items do exist that can be of great use to player characters. A *spirit orb*, for example, improves a Theosophist's ability to summon and control spirits by the orb's individual rating (usually managed in increments of 5%). Some characters may choose to place supernatural abilities into weapons or items.

Matthew, below, for example, has Charlemagne's sword, and his Blaster power is focused through the sword. Mack, likewise, focuses his psychic powers through his guns. There's no problem with this, and the GM should feel free to be as

creative as you like when adjudicating the creation and use of artifacts and magical items for the game.

Again, whenever creating a new power, ability, or item, default to the guidelines in **Chapter Four**; in general, simply assign a percentage value to the item, allowing it to have or enhance powers that function based on that percentage roll.

## NEW CHARACTER CLASSES

The two new character classes presented here are, by and large, modified from existing classes and not full classes unto themselves. They could, after a fashion, be considered "sub classes" or "specialty classes" of the Chosen One and Witch/Warlock, respectively. They do, however, fulfill specific roles in the game, and they demonstrate how easy it is to tweak what classes offer to create customized characters for just about any Night World you wish to run.

### The Mystic Martial Artist

Whether sequestered in a Buddhist monastery in Tibet or born with a natural ability to tap into one's own life energy, or *chi*, the mystic martial artist is more than a fighter—they are the ultimate physical warrior. These individuals can dodge bullets and dish out as much damage with their bare hands as any Veteran can with a gun. They are forces to be feared.

Mystic Martial Artists use the experience progression of the Chosen One. They gain the hit dice, combat expertise, improved defense, and saving throws of a Veteran, but are not proficient with any firearms and may not wear armor.

**Martial Arts:** Mystic Martial Artists gain the Brutal Warrior, Melee Combat, Ranged Combat, Stunning Blow, Killing Blow, and Supernatural Attacks of the Chosen One. They gain Combat Expertise and Improved Defense from the Veteran. They are proficient with all archaic weapons,

but do not gain the bonus damage dice from Brutal Warrior when using a weapon.

In addition, they may choose a single arcane ability from the Witch/Warlock list at first level, and may choose an additional ability for every third level they attain (levels 3, 6, 9, etc.) For each ability they possess, they gain one use of any ability. Thus, at level 9, the mystic martial artist has four supernatural abilities, and may use four abilities a day, in any order they like (they may use each ability once, one ability four times, etc.)

### The Spirit Rider

Spirit Riders combine some elements of Chosen One with some elements of Witch and Warlock. These are exceptionally rare magically-active individuals who have become conduits of the very spiritual essence of the region where they live. Their spellcasting is highly amped, but they lose their abilities when removed too far from their conduit, and they have a more difficult time learning spells, as their abilities are innate.

Spirit Riders use the experience progression of the Chosen One. Otherwise, they are treated as a Witch/Warlock, with the following additions.

**Arcane Powers:** Spirit Riders gain new Arcane Powers at levels 1, 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, and 20 instead of every four levels. At level one, they gain two Arcane Powers, one of which must be innate magic. They may choose innate magic multiple times as they level, learning new innate spells.

**Adjusted Spell Casting:** Spirit Riders gain +30% to their base spellcasting chance. However, they add only one spell to their book of shadows per level, instead of two, and do not get the +3 bonus to Intelligence checks to learn new spells through research. This +30% does *not* apply to their Arcana skill.

**Enhanced Spell Power:** When a Spirit Rider rolls to cast a spell, for every 10%

below that which they need to cast a spell with immediate effect, Spirit Riders can increase the effective level of a spell they are casting by one, enhancing any variable effects accordingly. Thus, a first level Spirit Rider casts a first-level spell, which requires a 65% or lower to cast immediately. The Spirit Rider throws their dice and comes up with a result of 25%. The spell's power is bumped so that it is cast as though the Spirit Rider is level 5 (+4 spell levels, as the rolled total beat the required total by 40%).

**Commune with Divine Spirit:** Once per day, they may attempt to commune with the holy spirit of their realm. The base chance to do this is 15% plus the Spirit Rider's Charisma score. A successful communion allows the Spirit Rider to ask three questions of the divine spirit. The spirit's answers may be cryptic or confusing, as it is a vast cosmic entity that is at the same time deeply tied to its own land, seeing all of time in its realm simultaneously, and having difficulty reducing its view to that of a mundane human.

The divine spirit of the Ohio Valley is Kokumthena.

## THE PLAYERS

Some important characters in Pittsburgh include the local demon hunters, representing a wide range of cabals and Collectives.

### Amanda Black

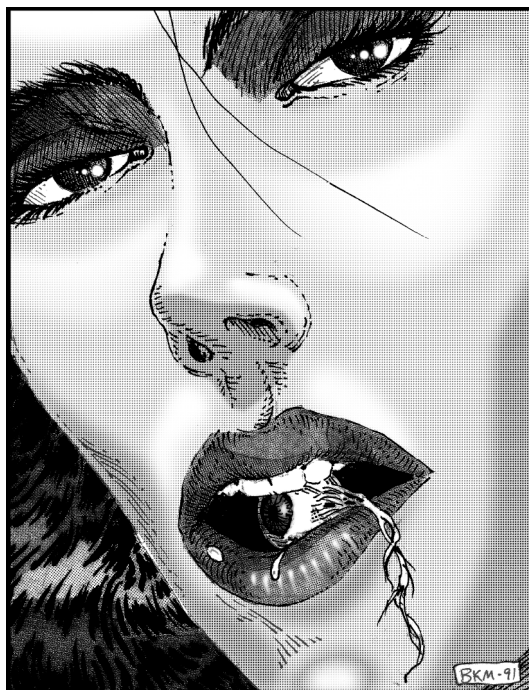
*Owner, Black Investigations and Co-Owner, Hive Arcana Café*

Theosophist 9

Str 10 Dex 14 Con 12 Int 14 Wis 18 Cha 16  
HP: 32

AC: 6 (Dexterity and Leather jacket)

Abilities: See Dead People, Turn Undead 100%, Summon the Dead 95%, Channel the Dead, Command the Dead, Protection from Undead (3/day each), Death Knell, Suggestion (3/day each), Life Drain (Vampiric Touch 1/day), Charm Spirit



### Dana Green

*Co-owner and Controlling Partner, Hive Arcana Café*

Witch 5

Str 9 Dex 16 Con 11 Int 15 Wis 16 Cha 15

HP: 13

AC: 9

Abilities: +4 vs. spells and magic, Arcana 75%, Spellcasting 75% (3/2/1 slots), Arcane powers (*Charm person 1/day, Precognition 1/day*).

*Dana's Grimoire: (1) Bane, Charm Person, Hold Portal, Obscurement, Sleep, (2) Hold Person, Levitate, Protection from Good or Evil (3) Dispel Magic, Plant Growth*

### Danny Santana

*Supernatural (Werejaguar) Demon Hunter*

Veteran 5

Str 15 Dex 17 Con 14 Int 13 Wis 15 Cha 9

HP: 33

AC: 7

Abilities: Wild form (1/day; duration 1 hour; turn into huge jaguar with 2 claw and bite attack; AC 5), Enhanced Senses (1/day; darkvision 60ft, perception 65%, +4 to Wisdom checks based on sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch, duration 1 scene) Regenerate 1 HP/hour, +2 to all saves (+5 vs. magic/supernatural attacks), Combat expertise, Melee combat +3, Ranged combat +4, Increased damage (+1d6/keep best, +1 melee, +2 ranged), Improved Defense (-3), Supernatural attacks, Tracking 75%

### Darrek Tinsley

#### *Rosicrucian Warlock*

Warlock 5

Str 10 Dex 13 Con 10 Int 16 Wis 17 Cha 14

HP: 13

AC: 7 (leather jacket)

Abilities: +1 to saves (+4 vs. spells and magic), Melee +0, Ranged +0, Arcana 75%, Spellcasting 75% (3/2/1 slots), Arcane powers (*Suggestion* 1/day; *Innate Magic - Magic Missile*, 2 missiles, 1/day)

*Darrek's Grimoire: (1) Bane, Bless, Command, Cure Light Wounds, Magic Missile (2) Hold Person, Levitate, Lesser Restoration, Protection from Evil 10' Radius (3) Dispel Magic, Haste*

### Hilda Heintz

#### *The Chosen One*

Chosen One 5

Str 18 Dex 17 Con 16 Int 10 Wis 10 Cha 12

HP: 38

AC: 6

Abilities: Brutal Warrior (+2d6/keep 2d6; +3 melee damage; +2 ranged damage); Attacks 3/2 rounds, Melee +5, Ranged +4, Stunning Blow 75% (exceed score to hit by 5 or more), Killing Blow 25% (Nat 20/ Exceed score to hit by 8), Supernatural attacks, Surprised on 1 in 8, Improved defense (-3), Open Locks 35%, Find Traps 30%, Move Silently 40%, Hide 30%, Climb 60%, Regenerate 1 HP/hour

### Henry Anders

#### *Divine Conduit*

Spirit Rider 4

Str 10 Dex 15 Con 12 Int 13 Wis 15 Cha 16

HP: 10

AC: 7 (leather jacket)

Abilities: +1 to saves (+4 to save vs. spells and magical effects), Melee +0, Ranged +0, Arcana 65%, Spellcasting 95% (3/2), Supernatural Powers (*Innate Magic - Magic Missile* 1/day, 2 missiles); *Blaster - Magic Missile* +1d6 keep 1d6, Enhanced spell power (every 10% below casting requirement increases spell power by 1 level where appropriate), Commune with Divine Spirit 31% (1/day).

*Henry's Grimoire: (1) Detect Magic, Detect Evil, Magic Missile (2) Invisibility, Protection from Evil, 10' Radius*

### Jing Yun-Xun

#### *Demon hunter*

Mystic Martial Artist 5

Str 13 Dex 17 Con 11 Int 13 Wis 13 Cha 13

HP: 23

AC: 7

Abilities: +2 to all saving throws; Brutal Warrior (+2d6/keep 2d6 but only when unarmed), +1 melee damage; +2 ranged damage; Attacks 3/2 rounds, +5 Melee combat, +6 ranged combat, Stunning Blow, Stunning Blow 75% (exceed score to hit by 5 or more), Killing Blow 25% (Nat 20/ Exceed score to hit by 8), Supernatural attacks (*Blaster*; 2/day; +1d6, keep standard on melee attacks), Combat expertise, improved defense (-4)

\*When unarmed, Yun-Xun rolls a total of 3d6+1, totaled damage. Twice per day she can choose to roll 4d6 and keep the best 3d6+1. She is +5 to hit in melee combat and attacks 3 times per 2 rounds.

### Mack Arthur

#### *The gunslinger*

Veteran 2/Psychic 3

Str 13 Dex 17 Con 11 Int 13 Wis 13 Cha 13

HP: 19

AC: 5 (Kevlar vest)

Abilities: Saving throws: +1 (+4 Wisdom saves), Psychic powers: *Psychokinesis* (Bullets and guns)\*; *Body Control*, Supernatural Attacks, Danger Sense (surprised on 1 in 8), Supernatural Power (*Blaster* +1d6), Combat Expertise, +3 melee combat, +1 melee damage, Ranged combat +3, +2 ranged damage, Improved Defense (-4), Tracking 55%

\*Can use his "control" function to create rapid reloads and improve aim, reducing penalties for multiple shots and actually firing around objects; with a psychic power check, psychokinetic damage adds to firearm damage.

### Matthew Canaan

*Ancient Nephilim Warrior*

Supernatural Veteran 6

Str 16 Dex 16 Con 13 Int 12 Wis 13 Cha 13  
HP: 37

AC: 5 (Kevlar vest) or 7 (leather/trench coat)

Abilities: Regenerate 1 hp/hour, +2 to all saving throws (+5 vs supernatural attacks, magic, and spells), combat expertise, Melee attack +5, Ranged Attack +5, increased damage (+1; +1d6/keep best), Improved defense (-2), Supernatural Attacks, Tracking 75%, Sword of Charlemagne (blaster power; normally 2d6/keep 1d6. 2/day: 3d6/keep 2d6).

\*Matthew is also ageless, which makes him functionally immortal unless killed by violence, poison, etc.

For more on the Nocturnumverse, including complete character histories and writeups (albeit for a different gaming system) for each of the characters above, the campaign has an online home at:

[nocturnumrebirth.obsidianportal.com](http://nocturnumrebirth.obsidianportal.com)

## ADVENTURES IN THE NOCTURNUMVERSE

The Nocturnumverse is very much a "kitchen sink" setting. It has been slowly developed and expanded over twenty years of play, and generally speaking, new ideas are simply dropped in wholesale. If you're looking for a catch-all urban fantasy setting that can handle adventure, horror, excitement and even humor, Nocturnum is it.

If there is a downfall to the setting, it's that it's one of those, "don't think too hard about that" settings. Since things are largely just dumped in as needed, the harder one looks into the setting, the more inconsistencies one is likely to find. That being said, it is a setting where quite literally everything goes from rune-casting robots to enormous elder gods, basic vampires and werewolves to deep ones and Lovecraftian Horrors and sorcerers from Howardian ages tens of thousands of years before our modern civilization.

While its internal logic may not survive too close of a deconstruction, it has proven robust enough to last for twenty years of play and three different gaming groups (including at least one player whose characters ran through all three). It is, in many ways, the heart and soul of what **Night Shift** is meant to be.

For those interested in purchasing some of the original adventures set in the Nocturnumverse, there have been three adventures published by Troll Lord Games (again for a different system, but one that is about 75% compatible with O.G.R.E.S.), called the *Deeper Dark Trilogy*. These include *The Nightmare Children*, *The Feast of Black Annis*, and *Don't Fear the Ripper*. All can be ordered from your friendly local gaming store, or can be found online through Troll Lord Games, who are a friend of Elf Lair Games.





## CHAPTER EIGHT: GENERATION HEX

A Night World by Timothy S. Brannan

**Setting:** Young Adult, Modern Supernatural setting – the supernatural is everywhere, and everyone now knows it

**Play Style:** Cinematic

**Options:** All Cinematic options in play. Guns are in play as normal weapons; no character classes are proficient in firearms unless explicitly stated. Veterans are proficient in all firearms, including rifles, assault weapons, machineguns, and other high-end weapons systems and options.

### INTRODUCTION

The characters of Generation HEX live in a world like our own with one notable exception, on December 21, 2012, Magic reawakened, and the world at large learned of the supernatural. Children who were 13 or about to turn 13 suddenly became imbued with magical powers. Older generations came to learn these powers too, but it was a much more difficult task.

The generation born into magic, anyone born in 1999 or later became known as “Generation HEX.” These children soon became the new “It” generation, surpassing any advantages others had due to wealth or technology.

Currently, the world of 2020 is a chaotic place where magic and technology struggle to coexist. Many groups, such as the “Deniers,” feel magic is nothing more than a worldwide hoax spread by the governments to sow unrest. The governments use hallucinogenic chemicals delivered via airplane chemtrails, or in the water or via spraying of insect control. Other groups, “True Believers” and “New Agers,” feel that magic has been with us all along, and now with the arrival of the 13th Baktun of the Mayan calendar, a new age has been born.

Governments, scientists, religions all argue what all this means. Sometimes these arguments spill into violence. In the United States, many families reported that

Thanksgiving 2013 was one of the worst ever since so many families were split on the "magic issue."

There are even those few who feel that magic is a curse. Either their reasons are religious or sometimes just the opposite; magic does not fit their world view. These groups, sometimes called "Truthers" are a much more dangerous version of the Deniers since they prefer to solve their existential crises with violence.

But none of that is the concern of the characters and heroes of Generation HEX. The heroes here are all children going to what is one of the very first Academies of Magical and Paranormal Arts. Characters are 13 and just learned they have what is called Magical Aptitude, and they can choose a magic-using class. Since then, others with innate magical aptitude have come out of the shadows.

The world is on fire, and you have homework due tomorrow.

## BACKGROUND

The world of Generation HEX is pretty much the same world players already know. The sun rises, people kiss their kids and send them school while they go to work. They watch TV, spend way too much time on their phones and not enough exercise. They eat their dinners, say good night to their kids, and go to bed so they can do it all over again the next day. The difference, at least the one that everyone will point to, happened on the Winter Solstice of 2012.

### It's The End of the World As We Know It, And I Feel Fine

Everyone was ready for the year to change from 1999 to 2000. Doomsday preachers had been telling us for months that something was going to happen. The world was going to end. Christ was going to come down to Earth, or the Devil, depending on who you asked.

The scientists were worried that computers that no one was expecting to still be in use since the 1980s would freak out or stop working when their clocks turned from 1999 to 1900 instead of 2000.

The world collectively held their breath and then...nothing.

Nothing at all happened. At least, nothing anyone could then see.

Moving forward, there were more predictions of disaster. First, it was now 2001, then May 27, 2003, with the return of Nibiru, later May 21, 2011, only to be corrected to October 21, 2011. These dates all came and went with nothing more than a splash on social media. Even the great Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn predicted the end of the world in 2010, but only the most cloistered occult scholars talked about that one.

When hype began to grow again for the eventual "end" of the Mayan calendar and the arrival of the 13th Baktun in 2013, it was met with more than a little skepticism and humor. Other predictions were pointing to this date, but they all got overshadowed by the Mayan one.

On Friday, December 21, 2012, at 10:12 am GMT, winter began and the 13th Baktun started. At that time, nearly any child who was 13 years of age began to spontaneously cast spells and displaying overt magical power. Reports came in from all over the world of children teleporting, accidentally setting their homes on fire, summoning armies of animals, and other open displays of magic. The media attempted to report on such happenings and governments tried to hide these reports, but in the end there were just far too many to keep secret for long. By the new year of 2013, everyone with a television or device connected to the internet knew.

### O Children

The first task at hand was to contain the effects of magic. Many worldwide governments



panicked and attempted to round up children by taking them from their parents. The Chilean Uprising of 2013 was one such event. However, the more terrified elements of these governments soon learned one of the first rules of magic. Pain, fear, suffering all can fuel magic. Soldiers came with guns and left empty-handed. That is those who left at all or even the ones that still had hands. Similar reports soon came in from all over the world. While many children had been killed by those who sought to control them, far, far more learned that magic in untrained and scared hands is a truly terrifying weapon. This prompted one US Senator to say, "these children were raised on a steady diet of post-apocalyptic fiction where the children rise up and defeat the forces of evil. Why are we surprised when they do exactly that?"

Magic using children became a protected class in the Act of the 2014 Congress and signed by the President. Other countries followed with similar laws. This led to the creation of the first publically funded "magic schools" or academies. This was not a popular decision, as many among the American people felt magic schools were no different than parochial schools.

One of the first was the Academy of Magical and Paranormal Arts (AMPA). AMPA, as it came to be called, at first worked under the Department of Education but was soon appropriated by Homeland Security. There was a fear that these kids could be used as weapons, either for or against the interests of the United States. In the end, this debate gave way to the larger one of how does one teach magic, a subject no one knows anything about, to children who already have it?

Which brings us to the present day. The entry class of AMPA began in 2014, the class of 2020. Those children are now ready to become the first class of graduates. The player characters are entering AMPA's five-year program in 2019 and will matriculate with the class of 2024.

## SMELLS LIKE TEEN SPIRIT: WHY TEENS?

Not everyone goes to college. Not everyone serves in the military forces, or goes to a trade school or was born wealthy. But everyone that makes it to adulthood was once a teenager, and most of them went to High School. High school is often described as one of the only "universal" experiences we all have.

Characters in Generation HEX will be teenagers in a "high school" for magical kids. While magic is undoubtedly the main feature of the game and of the larger adventures, the games will also focus on the universals of being a teen and being in high school where magic will also take on the double meaning of not just young spell-casters growing into their power, but also of kids becoming adults and the changes life will throw at them.

The idea of the adults not having the same magical potential as the children is a classical storytelling approach to keep the focus on the kids, who are the students and heroes of the game. This idea is often best exemplified by the old *Peanuts* cartoons and the comic strips. In the cartoons you never heard the adults talk clearly. It was always "wah wah wah," and in the comics, they never had any lines. That was because Charles Shultz, creator of the *Peanuts*, felt that it wasn't important what the adults say, the focus was on Charlie Brown and the gang. Comics like the *X-Men* in its first run, *Runaways*, *Teen Titans*, and *Cloak & Dagger* featured teen heroes with little to no interaction with adults unless those adults were mentors, and often distant mentors, or as villains. The same is true for novels like *The Hunger Games* and *Harry Potter*. The list of television programs for this would be a section unto itself.

## The Breakfast Club: Why High School?

As mentioned above, high school is often the one experience that everyone in their country shares. Even people from different parts of the world with different educational systems can still share stories about their formative years in secondary education.

There are also plenty of good reasons to set a supernatural game in a high school.

*All Drama is BIG Drama:* When you are in high school, everything is drama and all drama is BIG drama. Part of this has to do with children becoming teens and teens becoming adults. Several choices are demanded of these students and some are not only not prepared to deal with them, but they also have never dealt with them before and they feel these choices have life or death consequences. Dating Susie or Bill might seem like a small deal to an adult (and adults *always* underestimate how teens feel about these things), but they do to the teen. Adding magic to the mix only magnifies this. Having a boyfriend is tough. Having a boyfriend who is a vampire is a different thing altogether.

*All the Worlds a Stage:* High school students often feel that everyone is watching them. The trouble is that they all think that. With the advent of social media that is truer now than ever before. Whether it is objectively true or not, the teens feel it is and act appropriately. For characters in a game, this is also objectively true. They are the center of attention; they are the focus of everything. So for our teen characters, often, an embarrassing picture on social media will seem much worse than death. A bad grade on a paper? End of the World! You got tongue-tied in front of your crush? That's it, you will die alone! With magical teens, some of these can even come true.

Combined with All Drama, the worse thing to happen to these teens is not death, from their point of view, but rather being exposed.

*What do You Mean I am Grounded?:* Teens have a lot of freedoms that adults do not have, and a whole lot less in most ways. They are minors and are not given access to many of the things adults can do, nor do they often have the money or the ability to get around that adults have. This presents an interesting challenge for teen-focused games.

*Yeah, But She is Just High School Evil:* Cliques, rivalries, frenemies, bullies. High school sounds like a battleground sometimes to hear teens talk about it. High school allows you to have all sorts of conflict that look small scale to adults but is the **ONLY** scale to teens. Teens have friends, cliques, and enemies that will dominate their day, and now with social media, the nights as well. Even local rivalries take a back seat when it comes to that *other* school from the other side of town.

### Graduation Day

Eventually, these teens will move on. They get older, they graduate, they go on to other things. What are those things? In the world of Generation HEX, no one is quite sure yet. What is the career path of a young Witch? What are the interests of Homeland Security or one of the other factions in the world? Where you end up taking your kids after High School is up to you, but you can easily adapt one of the other *Night Worlds* here to continue the story.

*Nocturnum:* While the Nocturnumverse assumes the supernatural is still hidden from the world at large, in many ways it's a natural continuation of this setting; just drop the assumption of widespread knowledge into that world.

*Veterans of the Supernatural Wars:* The Night of Blood happens during high school, or even better, in the middle of graduation day!

*Ordinary World:* Here, the graduates want to fade into the background and be left alone. Sadly the world isn't going to let them do that.

## WELCOME CLASS OF 2024!

Characters in a *Generation HEX* game have two things that separate them from characters in other Night Shift worlds. First, all characters will belong to a magic-using class. Exceptions can be made, and those are detailed below. Secondly, and perhaps most importantly, all the characters will be children, typically aged 13 to 14 and starting in their first year at AMPA, the Academy of Magical and Paranormal Arts. Adventures will be in and centered around the school and problems the students will run into, but will not be limited to these.

The following rule changes differ in this setting from the core rules found in Chapter 1.

### Determining Ability Scores

The characters of *Generation HEX* are children, and as such, they do not have all the same physical or mental maturity of the adults of the default settings.

**Method Ix:** Roll  $2d6+3$  or each ability score, in order, for Str, Dex, Con, Int, Wis, and Cha. After scores are recorded, the Prime Requisite may be raised to a maximum of 15 by reducing another ability score by 2 points for each 1 point the Prime Requisite is raised.

**Method IIx:** Roll  $3d6$  and arrange the resulting scores to taste. This method tends to generate higher powered heroes, who are much more customizable. Only one ability score can be 16. Any other rolls that would result in a 16 or better will be dropped to 15.

**Method IIIx:** Point Buy system. All scores start at 0. Players have 75 points to distribute among Str, Dex, Con, Int, Wis, and Cha. No score can be over 15 though a Prime Requisite can be 16.

These will limit the characters, but not in a severe way.

Additionally, for every level the characters obtain until level 6, they can



add one point to any ability they choose to a maximum of 18. After the 6th level, they can add another point at 8th and another at 10th level. The maximum at this point then becomes 20.

Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary abilities, as well as ability checks, remain the same.

### Classes

Only the following classes are available to the player characters.

- **Artificer** (Inventor)
- **Bard** (new class based on the Witch)
- **Druid** (new class based on the Witch)
- **Ecclesiastic** (new class based on the Witch)
- **Psychic**
- **Sage**
- **Theosophist**
- **Witch/Warlock**

Artificers are Inventors that deal exclusively with magical items. Their magical talents lie in their ability to turn mundane objects into magical inventions. Artificers also include the Alchemists.

The vast majority of the characters will be Witches of some sort. The new varieties are detailed below.

## New Classes

The following new classes are also available to player characters of *Generation HEX*. In all cases, these new classes use the Witch/Warlock advancement for levels, powers, spells, saves, proficiencies and other aspects, unless otherwise stated here.

### Bards

Bards are spell casters that use music in their preparation and casting of spells. Preparation often includes listening to music, writing it, and/or practicing.

Bard characters must choose a musical instrument as their primary focusing tool. This instrument can be nearly anything, including their own voice. The Bard may choose a new instrument every level.

The Prime Requisite for Bards is Charisma.

Bards may choose the following Arcane Powers from the Witch's list: Arcane Bonds, Charm Person, Empathy, Enhanced Senses, Innate Magic, Suggestion, Telekinesis, and Telepathic Transmission.

Bards also gain the following new Arcane Powers from which to choose.

*Counter Song:* A Bard can use his music or poetics to counter magical effects that depend on sound. Each round of the counter song, he makes an Ability check. If successful, any creature within 30 feet of the Bard (including the Bard himself) that is affected by a sonic or language-dependent magical attack may add the Bard's Primary Ability bonus to their saving throw. If a creature within range of the counter song is

already under the effect of a non-instantaneous sonic or language-dependent magical attack, it gains another saving throw against the effect each round it hears the counter song. The counter song has no effect against effects that don't allow saves and no impact on those who can't hear the counter song. The Bard may keep up the counter song for 10 rounds.

Bards must take counter song at the 1st level.

*Dominate:* Same as the Psychic power.

*Inspire Courage:* A Bard can use song or poetics to inspire courage in his allies (including himself), bolstering them against fear and improving their combat abilities. To be affected, an ally must be able to hear the Bard sing. The effect lasts for as long as the ally hears the Bard sing and for 5 rounds after that. An affected ally receives a +1 bonus on saving throws against charm and fear effects and a +1 bonus on attack and weapon damage rolls. This increases every 6 levels; +2 at 7th level, +3 at 13th level and +4 at 19th level.

### Druid

Druids of Generation Hex only resemble the ancient order in the most superficial ways. They are sometimes referred to as "nature priests," "green Witches," or sometimes even "beastmasters."

These casters often learn they are Druids when they spontaneously shift into an animal when they turn 13.

The Prime Requisite for Druids is Wisdom.

All Druids begin with the Witch power Wild Form. After this Druids may choose the following Arcane Powers from the Witch's list: Arcane Bonds (animals only), Charm Animal (Person), Empathy, Enhanced Senses, Innate Magic, Shape Shifting,

Druids also gain the following new Arcane Powers.

*Tree Stride:* This is identical to the Witch power *Shadow Walking*, save that the Druid can use it to move from tree to tree.

*Weather Control:* This functions as the Psychokinesis or Pyrokinesis power save that it can affect winds, water, and other weather-related phenomena. The scale is much smaller than that of a ritual or spell, but it can be used more often.

## Ecclesiastics

Ecclesiastics are spell casters who gain their powers from their faith in a higher power. This higher power is often their God, and magic and religion are very much one and the same for them. They share a lot in common with the Theosophist. Somewhat due to their world view, they see anyone getting magic from a source other than where they get their own as getting it from their opposition. For example, Ecclesiastics of the Abrahamic traditions feel their magic is from the God of Abraham in the Old Testament; therefore, anyone who has magic and is not an Abrahamic Ecclesiastic must get their power from the Adversary, the Devil or Satan. This does not apply to all Ecclesiastics, of course, but enough that the stereotype does exist.

The Prime Requisite for Ecclesiastics is Wisdom.

Ecclesiastics may choose the following Arcane Powers from the Witch's list: Arcane Bonds, Charm Person, Empathy, Enhanced Senses, Innate Magic, and Suggestion.

Ecclesiastics also gain the following new Arcane Powers.

*Healing Touch:* The divine connection Ecclesiastics have also allows them to heal another by touch alone. Once per day they may heal 1d6 hit points of damage. This increases to 2d6 at the 4th level and 3d6 at the 7th level and increases by 1d6 every 3 levels.

*Turn Undead:* This power is the same as the Theosophist power of the same name.

## Experience

Generation Hex uses a slightly different means of determining experience. The focus will be less on hunting monsters and more on learning. Not that hunting monsters won't happen; in fact, it might happen quite a lot! The students here move at a different pace than the adults.

Students enter the Academy as "Initiates" at Level 1. They have shown magical aptitude and know at least one spell. They gain one level per year at the school as follows.

Level	Title	Year In School	Age (Approx.)
1	Initiate	1	13-14
2	Freshman	2	14-15
3	Sophomore	3	15-16
4	Junior	4	16-17
5	Senior	5	17-18

Each campaign arc will coincide with a school year of two semesters. It is assumed that there will be 4 to 6 adventures per semester, or 8 to 12 per school year and level. As students, these characters are not, and maybe should not, go toe to toe with the likes of elder vampires or werewolf alphas. Instead, there will be smaller, but no less dangerous threats.

If this progression feels slow or you want more powerful students, you can change it to one level per Semester.

For this reason, if there is a spell, the characters need to perform in order to complete an adventure, the Game Master can allow the characters to read it from a book of magic as a Ritual spell. This takes longer and often requires more than one caster. Otherwise, the characters will solve most of their problems with their wits alone.

## SCHOOL DAZE

Schools like AMPA have campuses across the US and are signified accordingly. For example, the Chicago campus is known as CAMPA or the Chicago Academy of Magic and Paranormal Arts. New York has NYAMPA. San Diego has SDAMPA, and so on.

Each is loosely affiliated with the other, but all follow similar enough curricula.

Since magic and regular high schools do not mix, any magical child in the United States is shipped off to the nearest AMPA school. This can lead to drama and a starting session of kids being moved from friends they have known all of their elementary school years to now be in a different school. A very, very different kind of school in fact.

### But I Want an Old School

*Generation HEX*, as its name implies, focuses on a single generation and their very brief history of magic. But what if you want an older school? Say a graduate school in New York, or one in Scotland with centuries of history, or even the dreaded Scholomance in the Carpathian Mountains? You can use all the same materials here, just give it a little more background and history. The older the school is, the more likely the game will still have magic as a secret, and that is fine as well. Older schools are also more likely to have only one sort of spell-casting class represented, such as just Witches or just Psychics. But truly anything goes in your world.

### Faculty and Staff

Most of the NPCs the characters will be dealing with are the faculty and staff of the school. Some even can become significant characters in their own rights, but they are not the focus of these adventures. They are here to provide help, background, or even be adversaries for our heroes.

In an AMPA school, the faculty often do not know much more than the students they teach, at least in terms of how to make magic. They can be experts in their fields of education or even esoteric occult knowledge, but when it comes to raw spell-casting potential, the students will always be able to outpace them...eventually. Right now, the children are all still learning.

For this reason, nearly all the faculty members will be Sages. There are some Psychics and even a Witch or two, but most will be Sages.

Some words for clarification.

*The Academy* refers to the entire school, its building, and the grounds they are all on. This includes the dormitories the students will be living in.

*Schools* refer to the individual schools and departments that make up the Academy.

The faculty at a typical Academy will be as follows.

*The Dean.* This is the head of the school and the one responsible for all academic and fiscal (spending money) decisions made for the academy. This person usually has an education background.

*Associate Dean.* This is someone that handles the day to day operations for the Dean. Like the Dean, the Associate Dean comes from an educational background.

*Board of Regents.* Handle all the legal and, ultimately, the financial (bringing in money) of the Academy. These are usually made up of lawyers.

*Department Head.* Often in charge of many faculty members of similar disciplines. Usually, a professor.

*Professors, Instructors, and teachers.* These faculty teach various courses. Titles usually conform with those who have Ph.D.s, Master's degrees, or Bachelor's degrees, respectively.



*Other Faculty and Staff.* Counselors, Food prep staff, Librarians, Maintenance staff, Nurses, and Social workers.

## The Curriculum

A large part of the time, the characters will be in the classroom. While certainly a lot of good game time can be spent here, it will often be the students' extra-curricular activities that will get most of the spotlight. It is still good to know where the students are in terms of classes and how that might affect their day to day lives.

While it might not be necessary to create a complete five-year curriculum of classes for the students, a rough idea of what everyone is doing and taking is a good idea. This also lets you know what teachers your school will need.

Students are permitted to take up to seven "magical" courses per year and one

over the summer. They are also expected to take classes in the natural and physical sciences as well as the humanities (history, literature, etc).

## First-Year Classes

- **Physical Conditioning I:** Each morning will begin with exercise and other physical conditioning training. Often a Witch will be required to stand in a magic circle for hours on end chanting. Weak in the body is as dangerous as weak in the will in this course. As such, students enrolled (the course is mandatory for First Years) will have the full amount of hit points for their Hit Die per Level (typically 4 + con bonus).
- **Herbs and their Properties:** Necessary for material component understanding and a prerequisite for Alchemy and Magical Theory and Thought II.
- **Magical Theory and Thought I:** Double course. Topics cover why and how magic works.
- **Ecclesiastic Studies I:** The nature of gods and the planes. Required for First years and Ecclesiastics of all years, optional after that.
- **Latin I:** Learning to speak, read, and understand ancient and conversational Latin.
- **Mathematics:** Necessary for advanced Magic Theory and Alchemy.
- **Study hall:** Often, this time is spent half in study and half hearing from professors and teachers on various disciplines in magic.

## Summer Apprenticeships

Here students can get practical application knowledge. Internships are on a first-come, first-served basis. Faculty can also make placements as they wish.

## Second-Year Classes

- **Physical Conditioning II:** Students continue their physical conditioning classes.
- **Intermediate Herbology:** Plants helpful and harmful.
- **Ecclesiastics II:** Advanced topics including the nature of Immortality, transmigration of the soul, and the nature of undead. Required for Ecclesiastic and Necromancy students.
- **Magical Theory and Thought II:** The nature of arcane magic, the use of material components. Discussion and case studies of the works of famous, but esoteric wizards.
- **Creatures I:** The three textbooks are affectionately called Monster Manual, Fiend Folio, and Creature Catalog.
- **Greek I:** Learning to speak, write, and understand both ancient and modern Greek.
- **Latin II:** Latin and its relationship to magic are covered.
- **Survey and Seminar:** (half term) Covers the Colleges of the school and their disciplines.
- **Elective:** (half term) First Elective choice.

## Third-Year Classes

Third Year is the year they take their specialization. These will depend on what their character class is.

- **Ecclesiastics III & Magical Theory and Thought III:** This combined double-length class covers the natures of gods, deities, and spell granting powers, including demon lords, Dukes of Hell, and the Fey Lords.
- **Physical Conditioning III:** Advanced finger conditioning. Known by fourth years as "the days of pain."

- **Greek II:** Learning to recognize and speak the "vulgar" dialects of Greek.
- **Latin III:** Conversational High Latin is covered in depth.
- **Creatures II:** Exploration of the significant works, including the Ecologies.

## Fourth- and Fifth-Year Classes

These will be in the student's major area of study.

Courses that continue but are not required at this point are Ecclesiastics, Magical Theory & Thought, Greek, and Latin.

## Other Courses of Study

There is a nearly endless choice of magical and mundane classes that can be created as appropriate. Indeed, given the events that started the eponymous Generation Hex, a course in Aztec, Mayan, or Meso-American history would be in order.

Courses related directly to their character class are also expected. Witchcraft I, II, and III are certainly offered in Years 3, 4, and 5.

## Extra-Curricular Activities

Students spend a lot of time outside of the classroom. Extra-curricular activities are a great source of adventure potential as well.

### Basketball

The sport of choice at the AMPA schools is a form of basketball. Based on the ancient "Mayan Ballgame," this sport combines physical skill and magical prowess. The game is mostly similar to the Mayan Ballgame and modern basketball, with a few differences.

Two teams play on a 169 ft by 78 ft court. At opposite ends of the court on their respective left-hand sides are rings. The



diameter of the ring is slightly larger than that of the ball (9" for the ball, 9.5" for the ring). To score points, the players must get the ball through the rings, two points for "dunking" the ball, and three points for throwing it in.

The game is split up into three 45 minute periods with the teams switching court sides at each period. The home team begins and ends in their home court.

Seven players can be on the court per team. The team can have up to 13 players total, seven on the court, six on the bench. There can be a total of three substitutions per game done between periods or at timeouts.

Players can dribble or throw the ball as in basketball or hit it with their right hip as an homage to the Mayan game.

The most significant difference here is that the players are encouraged and expected to use magic. They can cast any spell or enchantment on the ball itself or any sort of illusion on the court; telekinesis on the ball and illusions of monsters are fan favorites. They are not allowed to cast spells on other players. This includes enhancements on their own team or harm magic on the other.

The spectators are not allowed to use magic on either team.

Boys and girls play on the same team since the game is one of magical aptitude as much as physical skill. Each department has its own intramural teams, and schools across the country also battle in local matches.

Basketball season between schools starts in September with the school's homecoming games in mid-October. Spring is the time for intramural games and a chance to pick next year's school team.

### **Chess Club**

It is believed that chess was a game wizards used to settle duels in a non-violent way. This may be more apocryphal

than reality, but it has been an excellent tool to focus the minds of the students. The following games are played.

*American Chess.* This version is very much like chess played by everyone in the world. However, AMPA students are barred from national chess tournaments against non-magical opponents.

*"European" Chess.* A misnomer, this version has a queen that can only move one space at a time. If another piece is threatened by a queen, they can only retreat by moving backward on the board. If the piece cannot move backward, such as a pawn or because of no free space, then the queen can take "Queen's prerogative" and take the piece. The exception is the rook that can move sideways out of the queen's reach.

*Fidchel and Hnefatafl.* Celtic and Nordic versions of chess, respectively.

### **Dueling Clubs**

There are official and unofficial dueling clubs. These clubs follow the same rules for duels as do other magic-using classes. The official ones are highly regimented and even feature special uniforms for the students to wear. The unofficial and underground clubs are, by their nature, less regulated, and injuries often occur. The faculty and staff of AMPA try to stop these when they can, but they keep coming back every year.

### **Fencing Club**

Traditional French fencing rules. Taught by Coach Jaromir Taran. Popular among the Bardic students.

## **THE CAMPAIGN**

The campaign is built around the school year. It is assumed the students will start in the Fall; end of August or start of September. At this point, the overarching goal of the season should begin to develop

itself. If the main goal is to stop a group of evil occultists from raising some evil god from the depths of wherever. Then maybe that cute new student you met in orientation has suddenly disappeared. 'Cause what else says whacky school hijinks like new students being sacrificed to some god/demon/old one? Or even your straight-laced never got anything less than an A+ roommate has turned into a complete party animal. Maybe literally.

There should be about 8-12 adventures throughout the course of each yearly campaign. I find 12 is a good number since it roughly translates into six per semester and three per quarter. If, like me, you are fond of magical numbers in 13 adventures also gives you a mid-winter break adventure.

The adventures should, but are not required, to focus around the school calendar. This grounds them in a mundane affair (homecoming) but can offer a focus for the magical goings-on.

A typical American school year can be as follows.

- First Day / Orientation
- Homecoming
- Open House / Parents Week / Family Visiting the Campus
- Halloween
- Fall Break
- Finals or Midterms
- Winter Dance
- Christmas Break
- Valentine's Day
- Spring Break
- Prom or Spring Dance
- Finals (again!)
- Going Home or Graduation

Adventures should be a nice mix of both

magical and mundane. A good example would be how to get a date for the Valentine's Day Dance, but also not allow the vampires to attack the school, because that is just like a vampire to attack a dance. On Valentine's Day. Or its Parent's Week and your dad has been "experimenting" with magic. Maybe it is funny, or maybe he causes all the campus gargoyles to come to life. Or perhaps it's finals week and the alchemy kids have a new energy drink. Nothing bad can happen from that, right?

Also, a good mix between the "Arc" adventures and the "Monster of the Week" adventure. An arc adventure adds more clues to the central arc of the campaign. That evil cult? Yeah, they decided to attack during Homecoming because that is precisely what an evil cult would do.

Monster of the Week adventures are just that. A monster shows up, you have to stop it. There are variations on this too. Maybe the monster isn't supposed to be defeated, perhaps it is looking for your help. Or it needs to hide. In a similar vein, there is the "Magical School Day Off" adventure. Here the students decide to skip class and have an adventure outside of school grounds. This can be a light-hearted "Ferris Bueller's Day Off" feel to them. With all the factions looking to control or even kill magical kids, it can turn dark quickly.

### **Faculty, Staff and Other Students**

A big part of High School life will be interacting with others. These people will always have some effect on the students, and they can be an adventure, campaign, or more prolonged results.

### **Favorite Teacher / Hated Teacher**

Nearly everyone has a teacher they remember fondly and one they hated or made their life a living hell. In a Generation Hex game that hell can be figurative or literal hell. An essential part of school life are these interactions with the

teachers. Is a favorite teacher someone that the students can go to for advice? What if the only person that knows the one thing the students need to know is their hated teacher? Maybe more so than other games, these interactions with NPCs are critical. There will be sessions where the students will not encounter a monster, deal with an enemy, or even have a combat session, but they will always be interacting with someone, especially a teacher.

What is true for the teacher is also true for the staff. Will the students have a good or bad relationship with the librarian? What does the school janitor think of these students? What about the basketball coach vs. the chess club sponsor? You won't need to detail everyone, but a few key people.

### Other Students

More than staff, faculty, or any other adult, the students will interact with other students. In this, there are potentials for friends, rivals, frenemies, and more. There are some natural divisions between the students that are ripe for exploitation. How are the Year One students treated by everyone else? Is there a big rivalry between the Juniors and Seniors? What about between the Witches and the Ecclesiastics? There is a rivalry with history. Is your school large enough to divide into "houses"? Maybe the students of one dorm are the rival of another. If the city is large enough, perhaps there are more than one AMPA campuses. Say CAMPA North and CAMPA South for two Chicago campuses. Cross-town rivals are always great. Why are they rivals? For the High School game it is often enough that they are a different school.

### Cliques and Popularity

What crowd you hang out with is one of the most important aspects of the life of a high school student, and a magical high school is no different.



For ease, cliques can be roughly analogous to the student's character class. Witches hang out with Witches, Bards with Bards, Psychics with Psychics, and so on.

The following stereotypes can be used in schools like AMPA.

Artificer = Shop kids, Engineers

Bard = Band kids

Druids = Hippie kids, animal lovers

Ecclesiastics = Religious kids

Psychic = Weird kids

Sage = Nerds

Theosophist = Goth Kids

Witch = Upper-class kids, popular kids

Witches are the "upper class" in the magic schools since they are the ones who are seen as having the most power.

Popularity is the currency of any high school, and AMPA is no different. There are kids who are popular, and they know it.

There are kids that are not popular, and they want to be. Some kids avoid popularity at all costs, but all students feel the effect of it.

Popularity is not just an imagined aspect of a student's life, it can be used to affect some rolls. If a student can use their popularity or lack thereof, then it could affect some rolls. Trying to hide or not be noticed? An unpopular student can do this easier than a popular one. Trying to convince someone of something? A popular student can get this done easier than an unpopular one. Since popularity can be somewhat subjective, players and Game Masters will have to agree on what popularity effects are appropriate for what situations.

Game Masters and players are encouraged to create as many or as few cliques as they need and to mirror their own experiences here.

## CAMPAIGNS AND ADVENTURES

What sort of campaigns can you do with Generation HEX? In truth, anything you can do with any other Night World you can do here, just with younger characters. Though age here is less of a quantitative difference, as in the number of years, but a qualitative one as well.

Yearlong campaign arcs should be about big stories. These should be the big epics that require multiple clues and hints to whatever is coming. Big ideas include:

- A Teacher turns out to be some sort of Eldritch Evil looking for a bunch of magical sacrifices.
- "Truthers" have infiltrated the school board, and things are getting bad.
- A group of True Believers and New Agers have decided that this new class represents the coming of a literal new age, and the students are considered to be akin to angels or gods.

- The entire Sophomore class has disappeared! Where did they go and why?
- Senior year. That is drama enough, but now magic is going away, and what are you going to do about it?
- A former student is taking revenge on the school, but no one knows who or why.
- The captain of the basketball team is missing! Is it because he was dating a succubus?

These are only some examples. Think back to your own, or your kids', high school years. Now add magic to that. Avoid yearlong arcs that focus exclusively on fighting monsters. A monster fight is great for an adventure or two, but these are supposed to be young students, kids. They would not last and really should not last in a fight with a vampire, for example.

## Adventures

Individual adventures can also cover a wide variety of scenarios and situations. At least half of the adventures should cover the yearlong campaign in some manner. Others can be more focused on the problems at hand. The Sophomore class is gone? Yeah, that's sad but we have a basketball final tonight against North, and they cheat! Truthers out to get us? Well, they will need to stand in line behind the rampaging sasquatches this week.

An adventure can even look like a standalone adventure but be part of the arc only a few more adventures in. That rampaging sasquatch? He would not have been here at all if those Truthers had not messed up the campus wards back in October.

## Hooks

Here are some adventure hooks that can be part of a yearlong arc or even just a standalone adventure.

- **I Wanna New Drug.** The alchemy kids have invented a new magical performance enhancement drug called Amp. The side effects are turning the users into satyrs.
- **Monster Mash.** It's the Halloween/Christmas/Valentines' dance. But why are all these monsters crashing it?
- **Teacher Strike.** Why are all the teachers leaving campus?
- **It's Imbolc, Again!** The students wake up to start their day, and tomorrow it all happens the exact same way again! What makes it worse is that exam in 5th period.
- **Everyone's Favorite Teacher.** It's a cliché, but a good one. The new Phys Con teacher is a succubus/incubus.
- **Party!** Classes are stressful. The world is going to end. Did I mention the entire Sophomore class is missing! Only one thing to do. That's right, party!
- **The School Curse.** Every school has some sort of curse. A student will die each year or something. This year all signs point to one of the students in your class.
- **The Nightmare.** Everyone jokes about the nightmare where you come to school with no clothes on. That is everyone but you because that is happening right now!
- **The Big Game.** Tonight is the night you will beat your cross-town rivals. So yeah, of course, there is an attack of something.
- **Guest Director, John Hughes.** You are having a strange day. No. The Strangest! Your secret crush said hi to you this morning, and now you have plans to go together to the school dance. Why do your friends have to ruin it with all this apocalypse stuff?
- **The Second Breakfast Club.** You are in detention. Not only is it bad, but you

are also stuck with your least favorite people in the entire school.

Think of any high school movie from *Pretty in Pink* to *Carrie*, and there are ideas for a game.

## STONE

Setting the tone of the game can also go a long way into determining what sort of stakes will need to be set in your adventures. High School was not one long slog from start to finish, even if that is how some choose to remember it. There were scary times, fun times, sad times, happy times, and sometimes just the aforementioned slog. A high school-based game can do all of these or more as needed.

### Serious or Silly

Is this game more "Horror High" or "Fast Times at Ridgemont High?", "Carrie" or "Heathers?" The tone set for the game goes a long way to facilitate the type of adventures and campaign. Sometimes a bit of both is needed.

### Drama or Total Drama

Is the drama real, or is it just something normal to all high schools? Both feel real to the students and are genuine. One has more real-world consequences. Often the students will not know which is which.

### Lighthearted or Apocalyptic

Is the world going to end? Can it wait till *after* finals? A campaign can have Earth-shaking effects or maybe just the school year. A good balance is needed in any game. An apocalypse every year-end will get dull after a while.

### The In-Crowd or Outsiders

How are the students as a whole viewed? Or how are the characters themselves viewed? Are magical kids the hot new stars in the world, or are they outcasts that only find solace within the sheltering walls of the school? Or even worse yet, are the

students outsiders among other outsiders? Rejected or dismissed by their own kind?

## **SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

There are plenty of topics that would be appropriate for high school-themed games. Not all of these are appropriate for every game group. The only ones that can decide what is and is not for your group is your group. Some may not want themes around death due to surviving a horrific car accident. Or maybe they are okay with sexual themes and not with drugs.

The reasons why are not important. The reasons belong to the players alone.

Make these decisions as part of the initial game sessions.

### **Drugs**

Let's be honest, teenagers use drugs. Not all teens, of course, but enough to make the news and get parents up in arms at school board meetings. Drugs are not necessary for a high school game. In a magical high school, drugs can be substituted with many different things. Maybe drugs like cocaine, heroin and marijuana don't have any effect on magical kids. Maybe other things like Sage, rosemary, and St. John's Wort do have an impact. Or perhaps even something like the full moon or Mercury and Mars retrograde have profound effects.

### **Sex**

Like drugs, teenagers have sex. They are not old enough to make consenting decisions about it despite what they think, but hormones are not rational. Sex is often wrapped up in a metaphor for other things, or it can be precisely what it is. In horror movies, sex is the thing that sets the monsters after teenagers. In comedies about high school, it is the goal of the characters in a somewhat veiled sense. Sadly it can also be overused to the point of cliché. Use sex in games only if it adds to the overall arc or can cause the right sort of

tension. You need to save the world or at least the school, but your would-be boyfriend is off galavanting with sex demons?

### **Death**

Death happens. It is sad and unfortunate, but it does happen. Often death is needed to dramatically show how bad a situation is. You can't have a murder mystery without a murder victim, after all. Like other topics, this is one that some players can have an issue with, especially if the deaths are about minors.

### **Technology**

Wait. Why is this here with all these other serious topics? Like those topics, the one of technology is one that must be considered before the game begins. Some players feel that the inclusion of cell phones, GPS and message apps can ruin their experience of a magic-based game. There are even minor concerns like do vampires appear on a cell phone camera or can a Witch put her Book of Shadows on her phone for easy access? Players and Game Masters will have to decide if modern technology like cell phones, email, or even satellite signals work for magical characters.

## **FACULTY AND STAFF**

Here are some sample staff from the Chicago Academy of Magical and Paranormal Arts, North (CAMPA-N) located on the far north side of Chicago in the village of Glencoe, IL. The students are typically from upper-middle-class families though in 2018, efforts are being made to attract students from lower-income families, complete with grants, and from other suburbs.

CAMPA-N has the distinction of being one of the oldest academies at seven years old. The student population is just over 1,000 students and 150 faculty and support.



staff. They are the historical, if that word can be used in this context, rivals of CAMPA-South and IAMPA-Elgin (Illinois Academy of Magical and Paranormal Arts in Elgin) to the far west in the suburbs.

### **Dr. Scot Elders, Dean**

The Dean of Students is Dr. Scot Elders. Dr. Elders does not appear to be your average type for an academic. He has Ph.D.s in Psychology and Anthropology from the University of Chicago, which he claims makes him a "carpet bagger" from the Southside. He taught at the University of Chicago, St. Andrews College in Scotland, and he spent a term while in graduate school teaching at Malcolm X City College. He is also slightly above average in height, and he appears tan and weather-worn. His hair is either sun-bleached white or prematurely gray at age 52. Scot will claim his appearance is because he spent a

lot of time on an anthropological site in the Middle East. In truth, Scot is a former CIA operative who worked on Project PsiOps. He was a nascent psychic before the 13th Baktun. Now his power has grown. The US Government placed him in this position to keep an eye out for potentially dangerous students. Despite this, Scot sees himself as the students' protector and would prefer he found powerful psychics before the government did so they won't become a weapon like they tried to do to him. In addition to his duties as Dean, Dr. Elder sits on the Board of Regents and he teaches the advance psychic courses.

### **Prof. Heather McHale-Elders**

Professor McHale-Elders teaches all the advanced Bardic courses and is the wife of the Dean. They met while Elders was on a teaching assignment in Scotland. Heather is a small attractive woman with a thick Scottish accent with a tendency to swear uncontrollably when angry and smoke in class when stressed. While many of her advanced students are more advanced than her in their Bardic learning, she makes up for it in terms of her musical ability. She also teaches visual arts, painting, drawing, and sculpting. She is also the campus Fidchel chess co-coach.

Heather is vibrant and always laughs. She is also a devout Catholic and will be found in the campus chapel every Sunday.

### **Larina Nichols**

Larina was friends with Scot Elders when they were at the University of Chicago. They went to Scotland together where Scot met Heather. Larina is the school's head librarian. She also teaches introductory Witchcraft classes and extra-curricular yoga and wicca classes. When not in the library, and if you ask it is "her" library, she is often found with her best friend Heather, even on Sundays where Heather drags her to church to save "her poor pagan soul."

Larina also substitute teaches the courses in Latin and Greek.

### **Prof. Celene Werner**

Dr. Werner is a freshly minted Ph.D. who teaches the religious studies courses and is the new head of the Ecclesiastic department. Her grandfather, Jonathan Werner, had been the former head until he died under mysterious circumstances. She is young, vibrant and very enthusiastic. Her appearance gives the illusion that she is not much older than her own students. She is religious, as her subject expertise would suggest, but she is not a proselytizer. There is a rumor going about the school that she was there when her grandfather was killed by a vampire. That is only a rumor, but what is known she will never enter a room unless it is fully lit.

She also teaches courses in theosophy and Latin.

### **Coach Jaromir Taran**

Coach Taran is practically a walking, breathing Norwegian cliché. A good friend of former Ecclesiastic professor Jonathan Werner, Coach Taran teaches all levels of Physical Conditioning courses and is head of the athletics department. He is loud and boisterous. Everyone is his best friend, and every student, regardless of actual ability, is a champion waiting to happen. While this is his true personality, he is also now, in his private moments, sad and angry over the death of his friend. He is investigating who was responsible.

### **Prof. Victoria Taran**

Prof. Taran is the professor of medieval history. Her areas of interest are northern European paganism and the wars across Europe from the fall of the Roman Empire to the Renaissance. Prof. Taran is a tall woman in her mid-fifties. She wears her long blonde hair in a braid and still moves as an athletic woman half her age.

She is the wife of Coach Jaromir, and she is the faculty head of the Hnefatafl chess club.

### **Prof. Sam Adebayo**

Prof. Adebayo is a first-generation Nigerian-American. He is the instructor of the 3rd year and higher Druid classes and some 1st year Bard courses. He is tall and good looking, making him an object of desire among the faculty and the older students. Much to their disappointment, he only has eyes for fellow Druidry professor Maryah Adaeze. Sam lives on campus with his 3-year-old Husky "Thor." He participates in the Hnefatafl chess club and has a not-so-secret love of country music.

### **Prof. Maryah Adaeze**

Prof. Adaeze is a Sudanese/French expat now living in America. She also teaches courses on Druidry. She also teaches 1st and 2nd-year Ecclesiastic courses and French. She is currently involved with Sam Adebayo, but questions his taste in music.

### **Coach Susan O'Kaleigh**

An import from Boston, she teaches Physical Conditioning and is the Basketball coach. She has a positive word for everyone but is grueling as a coach and teacher. Her idea of a warm-up is a five-mile run on the Lake Shore in the Winter. She prefers to be called "coach." She also plays drums and will teach drumming courses for the Bardic and Witch students. She is also the co-coach for the Fidchel chess club and assistant coach for the fencing team.

She is married to Amy Nakamura. They are both part of Larina's Wicca group.

### **Prof. Amy Nakamura**

Prof. Nakamura is a Japanese-Canadian woman who teaches the Theosophy courses and is head of the department. Her mother is a practicing Druid and father, a Shinto adherent. She and her younger brother were given a wide variety of religious teachings as children, but the one part that



fascinated her the most was what happened to souls after death. She met Susan in Boston while researching an ancient tome at the local university where Susan was getting her degree. She is part of Larina's Wicca group. Susan and Amy had been living in California when asked by Larina to join the faculty here.

This year Prof. Nakamura can also be seen in the third year Bardic courses, not as a teacher, but as a student.

### **Prof. Beata Litho-Berzh**

A new hire, from Hungary. She has her Ph.D. in History, Classics, and Education. She teaches Latin and Greek and medieval history of Eastern Europe from the rise of the Byzantine Empire.

Prof. Litho-Berzh claims her family name is a corruption of the Romanian word for "Stone Mountain." In truth, it is an anagram of "Elizabeth Bathory," and she is

the famous Blood Countess. She is here to steal blood from only the choicest of students, she has been moving from magical school to magical school across Europe and now into America. She is searching for the perfect magical person whose blood will give her the gift of eternal life and beauty without the need for more blood. While she is on school grounds, she can move about in daylight, though the sun makes her weak.

Presently no one suspects who she is. Prof. John Werner did, and she killed him for it.

Despite this, she has no involvement with the missing Sophomore class.







## CHAPTER NINE: ORDINARY WORLD

A Night World by Timothy S. Brannan

**Setting:** Adult, Modern Supernatural setting – the supernatural is everywhere, but only a select few know.

**Play Style:** Cinematic

**Options:** All Cinematic options in play. Guns are in play as normal weapons; no character classes are proficient in firearms unless explicitly stated. Veterans are proficient in all firearms, including rifles, assault weapons, machine guns, and other high-end weapons systems and options.

### INTRODUCTION

The world is mostly what everyone perceives it to be. People get up, go to work or school, come home, eat dinner, watch TV, and go to bed to repeat the same cycle over and over.

At least that's what 99.99% of the world believes.

There are those that know that the world is really steeped in magic, supernatural forces at constant war with each other, and the slightest

advantage to either side will cause the next apocalypse.

And you are one of those few.

Don't you feel so lucky?

### BACKGROUND

**Ordinary World** is about being a supernatural creature but trying to hide in plain sight. Sometimes it's because you are a soldier in a war and you need an advantage of surprise. Other situations and individuals might be fighting against the very humans they are trying to hide as. Finally, others might just want to be left alone and live their life.

Regardless of what kind of supernatural you are, you live in fear of the greatest threat to your entire existence, humanity.

### A Brief History of the Ordinary World

Ordinary World is very much like our own. Very, very much. It takes great pains to

appear precisely like a mundane world full of trivial problems with mundane solutions. Maybe because it is trying so hard to look so ordinary that it sometimes will fail in rather spectacular ways.

Here is what is known.

### **But Wait, That is Not What Was Said Here!**

Some of the material in this Night World has some similar names or history of other Night Worlds in this book. That is intentional. The Night Worlds are designed to be different settings that use the same rules. While there is some overlap, they might not be precisely the same or, at worst, contradict each other. Part of this is the nature of the magical worlds, but it also part of the authors' desires to give you worlds to play in and use.

You may undoubtedly combine Night Worlds into your settings. You get to decide how you want to deal with contradictions. My favorite is to have them both be real, but the different points of view of all those involved.

They are *your* worlds now. *You* get to decide.

A long time ago, the Earth was made. The scientists will tell you 4.5 Billion years ago. Some of the religions will tell you 6000 years ago. There are even some demons that claim the Earth is Trillions of years old or older. Who is telling the truth? No one knows. But every side of the argument has its evidence, and they will live or die by those claims.

After that, the Earth aged and progressed much in the same way as everyone suspects, regardless of what the actual details were. At some point, though, some people became aware of a force that they could manipulate. That force was called "Magic," and it shaped the lives of many. Demons claim that magic came from them; this is the central claim of the archdemon Abraxas. The fey lords claim it came from them. The angels

and heavenly host say magic is an aberration, one that will corrupt humans. It is possible that they are all right, or they are all wrong and know no more than the humans that study magic do.

### **The Dark Ages**

From the fall of the Roman Empire to the rise of the Italian Renaissance, there was about a thousand-year span of European history known as the Dark Ages. While the rest of the world was moving on in their own ways, the Veil had never been so thin as it was in Europe between 500 CE and 1500 CE. It was a time when humans began to feel the power of the other realms in ways they had not till then, and the forces of both Heaven and Hell seemed closer at hand.

It was here that many of the factions of today were first formed. Demons had their names discovered, or were given names, by Sages. The same was true for the angels. Witches began to develop the practices that would be handed down for generations. Psychics, with the stresses of their lives becoming more than they could handle, began their awakenings.

Creatures like vampires and werewolves roamed the streets and desolate places more than ever before. Against the backdrop of the various battles, conflicts, and wars that were waged at this time, their own predations went unnoticed by history.

### **The Burning Times**

The great Witch hunts of Europe have come to be known by many Witches and supernaturals as the "Burning Times," in which thousands, if not hundreds of thousands of innocents, were murdered in the name of religion. The overwhelming majority of these poor souls were innocents that had the misfortune to be in the wrong place at the wrong time or to have made the wrong people angry. There were heavy casualties on the side of the supernaturals as well, most being the Witches and psychics.

The Witches have never forgotten these days. Passed down generation to generation

and alive in court documents from the time, the Witches have also not forgotten who was responsible, the churches, and the mundane courts of law. Many Witches label these groups (somewhat broadly and more than somewhat erroneously) as "The Church."

Traditionally the Burning Times extends from 1200 CE to 1600 CE, though one of the ugliest chapters was the last one in Salem, Massachusetts, in 1692. Old word superstition comes to the new world to claim more innocent lives.

"Die Hexenbunde" or "The Witches' Confederation" was born, with very little pomp or circumstance in an inn in Leipzig, Germany, in 1152. The four founding members decided on a straightforward purpose; protect other Witches and anyone else from supernatural threats. The focus of this group changed with the rise of the Burning Times to protect all human-like supernatural creatures from mundane threats.

### The Renaissance

The Renaissance was not one event but a series of events over a period of several decades, leading to the resurgence of art, literature, and science. One would think that the magical world took a step back, but this like so much else is a false impression. Alchemy saw unprecedented growth, and much of what we know about occult scholarship began here. Contact with the Muslim and Chinese occult scholars caused a boom in understanding. Many great texts of magical knowledge were written or started at this time. *The Book of Abramelin*, for example, was believed to have been translated shortly after the mage's death in 1458.

### The Victorian Occult Revival

The same areas that saw the burning of so many Witches 3 to 4 centuries prior also began to turn a fascinated eye towards the Occult. In the mid-1800s, Europe's attention

turned to all things Egyptian. Items of mystical significance were being pulled out of the Nile Valley, including all sorts of supposed magical artifacts. At the same time, humankind was turning inward with the latest science of psychology. Suddenly the mind became a fertile ground of things that seemed beyond our reach. The first of many psychics began to appear in the public eye, and for the first time, they were considered to be something other than a type of Witch or mage.

Groups appeared seemingly out of nowhere. *The Theosophical Society* of Madame Blavatsky, Alistair Crowley's *Golden Dawn* and the *Ordo Templi Orientis (OTO)*, and many others are just some of the examples of these groups. Some even had some correct ideas about magic and the supernatural world. The majority were looking for truth in all the wrong places, or at worse spreading lies about the truth.

In any case, the public was horrified and fascinated at the same time. The London tabloids told the exploits of Crowley, The Great Beast, in lurid details. The first occult media stars had been born.

Gothic horror and "penny dreadfuls" filled the bookshelves. People read in eager anticipation the latest accounts of Lord Ruthven in "Varney the Vampire," and some even ran from playhouses in terror during the staging of "Dracula." Horror, the Occult and the Supernatural were never more in vogue.

### The Great Promise and the Great Wars

The beginning of the 20th century was thought to be a time of great importance to all members of the supernatural worlds. Many felt that prosperity was ahead, and a great new time was afoot. Many more thought that the 20th century would also be the darkest century to date. The Occult Revival was fading as the public's interest in things magical gave away to things mechanical and industrial.

America was emerging as a new world power, and her industrial might was beginning to grow. Europe was under severe pressure. Age-long conflicts broke out into open fighting, soon this pressure built and exploded into the Great War. Many occult scholars and Sages wanted to find a supernatural cause for these outbreaks in violence and war. But most were left with the same opinion as most mundane historians; never underestimate the power of the evil in humanity's own heart.

It could be that this episode, and the resulting economic depression of the 1930s, set the supernatural world back more than any other crisis. Now they not only could not see the new dawn, the foretold New Golden Age, but many also could not see the point in it if humankind could only bring war, famine, pestilence, and death upon themselves. This also prevented them from seeing the enemy who was still at large.

Sages had been partially correct. There was no supernatural cause for the great wars of the 20th Century, but the human wars spilled over to the supernatural worlds. Demons and angels vying for control sided with all sides of the human conflicts. The realms of Faerie, already devastated and in retreat due to the Industrial Revolution, were nearly wiped out by the wars. The Faerie Lord Oberon is believed to have almost died during this time.

Many demons came forward claiming responsibility for this or that atrocity, but many in the occult and supernatural circles disbelieved their claims. It became apparent that normal humans can outdo the evil of demons.

Though likewise, they could also be more angelic than the hosts of Heaven.

After World War II the supernatural world began a time of deep introspection, they began to gather up in groups again a try to figure out what it truly meant to be a supernatural person in this new world.

Many Witches found themselves called to action in rounds of protests and getting

involved in the counter culture movements of the 1950s and 1960s. The material from the Occult Revival was gone over again, with new eyes and ideas. Many once again felt they were on the cusp of something great. Old religions were being looked at again, Timothy Leary was quoting Thelema and Witches were being portrayed in the popular media as something other than old, evil hags.

### Roswell and the Alien Threat.

The 1940s and 50s saw America, and then the world, lose their interest in anything magical. We had split the atom! We were sending satellites into orbit around the Earth. The Space Age was here, and we had no business dealing with the monsters of a forgotten time.

Someone forgot to tell the monsters that.

True. Supernatural occurrences were at an all-time low. While the occasional ghost sighting happened or someone would have a run-in with a creature, they were infrequent.

Until Friday, June 13, 1947. On this day, the United States Air Force shot down what they believed to be an "Unidentified Flying Object" or UFO.

What they shot down was the Archangel Uriel.

Uriel is, or was, in charge of guarding the Gates of Hell. He keeps demons out and keeps unsuspecting humans from going in. On this night, he was flying over New Mexico when he was shot down. He crashed, scattering bits of his silver heavenly armor everywhere. His body, unknown if he was alive or dead, was taken west to Area 51 in Nevada.

The very few in the know have heard that Uriel remains a prisoner of the US Government who see him as a threat. While he has been locked away, they spun the story of UFO and Aliens crashing. A story they quickly retracted on purpose to keep everyone looking to space for aliens and not the threat the United States truly believed: the threat of supernatural invasion.

Meanwhile, the gates of Hell have been left unguarded for over 70 years. Slowly the

demons on the other side have discovered this. They have since been spilling out in more significant numbers. The US has, in effect, created the exact problem they had meant to solve.

Many of the supposed alien abductions, cattle mutilations, UFO, and bigfoot sightings have been, in fact, supernatural in origin. The demons are learning about humanity all over again.

### The New Age Movement.

The 1970s was the beginning of a new golden age for supernatural, or as they said, then the New Age. Occult philosophy was taught openly again. The trials of the 1960s were beginning to fade away as people instead looked for a brighter tomorrow. The civil rights movements were making progress, and many Witches believed it would only be a matter of years, if not months before they could practice magic in public. Many began to teach classes on Witchcraft, occult thought, and beliefs openly. Interest in the New Age was high, and the "Age of Aquarius" had not just dawned, it was here. Many even began to publish books and appear on television proclaiming with great pride, "I am a Witch. Magic is real!"

So, they waited. And waited. Rally organizers saw the same faces among crowds that drifted in and out. Magic was not filling the air; popular culture seemed to regress backward as if to erase the memories of the 1960s. The seventies dragged on to the eighties where people became more interested in tangible, earthly matters, such as money, cars, drugs, and MTV. At the same time, double-digit inflation and joblessness hit the land.

If the 1970s failed to deliver, the 1980s made no promises at all. Still, there was one group within the supernatural that grew, and would not become a force till much later. Sitting in their parent's basements, college dorms, or rooms at home, the next generation of Witches discovered the world of computers. For the first time, magic and machine began to blend. To be sure, it was not a harmonious



blend. Debates such as what platform or operating system were common already, to add another level of spells and magic made the scene chaotic on good days. And these Witches, the Techno Pagans, as the soon would be known would not have had it any other way. They chatted, over small homebrew machines, or large university mainframes, or via BBS's. They traded their knowledge, their stories, and their hopes for the future. They connected.

When the 1980s gave way to the 1990s, the occult at an impasse, the enemies of the *Burning Times* were still among them but weakened. The Techno-Pagans began to unite in online circles, using the Internet to connect to even more around the world. Technology was catching up with magic.

Instead of the apathy that the Witches felt with the Industrial Revolution, they met the Information Revolution with open

arms. Even supernaturals that were not self-described Techno-Pagans were meeting up online. New technologies gave new insights to old magic.

### **The Millennium**

After the turn of the Millennium, the occult world finds itself at a turning point. The promises of the 1970's lay unfulfilled. The Millennium came and went, without even so much as a flicker of extra magic. Many were left trying to figure out what to do next. Of course, there are others that say, "just look around!"

The rise in supernatural occurrences is even beginning to be felt in the mundane world. Others note that only two short decades ago, they marked *any* supernatural phenomena with awe and wonder, now see ghosts, vampires, and shapeshifters on a daily basis.

This brings us to the present age, 20 years into the 21st Century.

### **The Truth Is... Oh, You Know**

The world of Ordinary World is much the same as our own. Very much the same. The difference, of course, is that the supernatural is real. Not just some of it, all of it. If there is a monster, an urban legend, or a rumor, then likely someone in this world knows about it or knows someone that has seen it. To make matters even worse, the monsters are everywhere. They live down the street, they teach in the schools, they hold public office. Most just wanted to be left to their own devices; not everyone wants to destroy or even rule the world. Others are fine unless they are bothered. And others still, well, we will get to them in a bit.

The vast majority of the population is blissfully unaware of the world around them. They are too busy looking at their phones or TVs at one end and the other, just trying to survive. Many deal with the all too real monsters found in their fellow humans.

The supernatural monsters of Ordinary World are hidden, or at least kept secret, from humans by many factors.

### **Heaven Beside You, Hell With Me**

There is a war, sometimes a cold war, sometimes a hot war, but always going on since the dawn of time, and there is no sign of it stopping anytime soon. Why do you care? You are living in the battleground. The forces of Heaven battle the forces of Hell, and Earth is the middle ground and the only place where all the forces can fight. Note, these are not described as "Good" vs. "Evil" as these are entirely human mortal concepts. There are times when the soldiers of Heaven have decided that what is best for humans is to destroy large populations of them. The Great Flood, The Great Fire of London in 1666, and the Tunguska Event are just a few examples. Likewise, the forces of Hell have created situations where thousands of humans live.

These two forces keep fighting, and they do what they can to keep the humans ignorant of their existence. Imagine knowing that Heaven and angels are real? Think of the droves of people that would stampede to a church just to make sure they don't end up in Hell. Likewise, the same would happen if the knowledge of demons became public. The forces of Hell do not want to lose potential converts and damned souls this way. Angels, if they care at all, are careful not to let any enter their kingdom save for the ones that deserve it.

Both sides work to keep everything hidden behind The Veil.

### **Every Angel is Terrifying**

Simply put, the forces of Heaven are broadly called "Angels," and the forces of Hell are generically called "Demons." Demons are dealt with in many parts of this book, and they do not differ significantly here. The only significant difference is that, of The Veil, and that is discussed below.



Just as the forces of evil have their foot soldiers in the demons, the forces of good have their hierarchies of angels. Angels, while they are commanded to protect humanity and not kill them, don't actually like humans all that much. Some say it because the Creator prefers humans to the angels. Others say it because humans are so imperfect that they appear more akin to demons in the eyes of the angelic hosts. The simple answer, though, is arrogance. Angels can't believe that something so imperfect, so close to demons, can be the primary goal of all these wars.

Like demons, angels are subject to the Veil.

### Drink Before the War

The characters of Ordinary World are not participants of this eternal struggle. At least not willing participants. For characters of this game, the primary goal is not some cosmic Good vs. Evil chess game, but whether or not you can go one more day without being discovered. One more day without giving in to your base desires and killing every mortal around you. One more day where you don't have to take back up your sword and rejoin the war.

### THE VEIL

The mystical barrier that protects the supernatural world from the mortal, mundane world is "The Veil." It is often described as a barrier, but it is much more than that. The Veil hides magic from the unsuspecting; it masks a supernatural creature to appear human; it bends the laws of magic to conform to what the mundane world expects.

The Veil was created long ago, and it is one of the very few things that all participants of the magical worlds can agree. Humans need their world to make sense with predictable laws and rules. Knowledge of demons, for example, would send flocks of people to the nearest church, and thus the loss of thousands of potential souls. Knowledge of magic and its destructive

powers would be akin to handing nuclear codes to the most immature people imaginable. Neither side wants that.

There are places and times when the Veil is thinner, metaphysically speaking. Sometimes, like local midnight or Halloween are widely accepted. Places like graveyards, places where significant trauma or death took place like a battlefield are also accepted. Others are rarer and often have thinner borders. An old house with no history of supernatural occurrences suddenly starts spilling out ghosts. A modern office building attracts an excessive number of vampires. Something happens to a place, and you feel a chill every time the clock reads 10:08 PM. There does not need to be a reason that makes sense to mortal, human logic. In fact, that is the purpose of the Veil to hide what is happening under a glamour of what is expected to be happening.

### WHO ARE YOU?

Some major factions are calling the shots on what is happening on the Earth. The characters of Ordinary World will often try to avoid these guys.

### The Archangels

These are the most powerful of the heavenly hosts. It is hoped that the characters will never run into anything more powerful than these. They are as removed from humanity as humanity is from insects.

**Michael** is the commander of the Archangels and thus all of the heavenly hosts. He is the eternal enemy of the Satan. He deals with humans as little as possible.

**Gabriel** is the herald. When he blows his horn, cities fall, and thousands die. He likes humans in the same way one keeps a pet mouse.

**Raphael** is the healer and genuinely likes humanity.

**Uriel** guards the gates to Hell, or he used to; he has been missing for over 70 years, a blink

of the eye for an archangel, but a long time for humans getting attacked by demons. It is Uriel that our attention falls to here.

Once Uriel left his post at the Gates of Hell, demonic and supernatural attacks have been increasing in frequency and severity. It is believed it is only a matter of time before the Veil falls altogether.

### The Archdemons

These creatures are too numerous to count, and some go by many names. While their goal is the subjugation of all life or something akin to that, they are not stupid and can play the long game. Of the Archdemons, the following interest us.

**Abraxas** is the great scholar. If knowledge is power, then Abraxas desires to be the most powerful of all. His loyalties shift constantly, and even among demons, he is a schemer and planner.

**Astoreth** is known as the destroyer. Some demons do want to watch it all burn. Astoreth is one of those. His grand plan is to destroy everything so that the Creator must come out from wherever he or she has been hiding for millennia. To do this, he will burn Earth, Heaven, and Hell.

**Belial** is the deceiver. This demon delights in testing the boundaries of the Veil and seeing what he can get away with. If the Veil falls, then Belial wants to be ready with an army of demons to take the Earth.

**Mammon**, the Lord of the This World. Not all demons want to destroy, or conquer, or control the lives of others. Some, like Mammon, like the world just the way it is. He amassed wealth, power, and a network of associates to provide him whatever it is he needs. He is in the business to provide anyone whatever they desire. Anyone, that is, providing they can pay.

### The Faerie Lords and Ladies

These rulers of the faerie realms are powerful fae and wield authority somewhere

between a King or Queen and a god. While there are numerous Lords and Ladies, the focus of recent years has been on only three.

**Lord Oberon.** The king of the fae, though some will say his power is lesser now than it ever has been.

**Queen Titania.** The ruler of the Summer Court of Faeries. Do not confuse "summer" with "good," either. Titania is a queen and one that is as different from humans as the angels are. There is also no love between the Summer Court and the forces of Heaven.

**Queen Maeve.** The ruler of the Winter Court. She is the dark counterpart to the bright Titania. While it is never wise to assume anything about a faerie, you can be assured that Maeve at least is always looking out for her own self-interests.

### The Government

Since Roswell, in 1947, the United States Government has had a vested interest in combating any and all supernatural threats. That holds equal for angels, demons, vampires, Witches, and any human they suspect might have the supernatural potential. They could be in a very real sense, the biggest enemy the supernatural world has. They could also be the most significant potential ally.

Attributed to Winston Churchill, the popular saying, "You can depend upon the Americans to do the right thing. But only after they have exhausted every other possibility" is valid here. There are roughly two factions in the Government that apply to the supernatural world.

### The Bureau

Not the FBI, but a secret organization of within the government from many different branches. Each member knows who they are working with, both who answer to them and who they take orders from, but nothing higher or lower. It is rumored that there is a Director in charge of everything, but no one can confirm this save for vague and

cryptic orders “from the Director.” There are members of the Bureau that work for the FBI. Others include local police and sheriff’s departments. There are members in the Air Force, and there are some that are suspected of also being in the CIA. In the 1950s, these were the mysterious Men in Black.

The one thing that keeps the Bureau from being a more substantial threat is the same thing that keeps powerful; their secrecy. They will do anything to keep their existence a secret. If this means not moving against a larger threat, then so be it. But when they can keep their anonymity intact, they will move.

### The Others

These are Government agents that know the truth about the world. Either they experienced it, or they have always been a part of it. These members are even more loosely organized than the Bureau. Unlike



them, they can act as they see fit when they see fit. This can be good or ill, depending on the individual in question. Some genuinely hate all supernatural creatures and see little difference between a demon fresh out of hell and a Witch school teacher with three kids and a mortgage. Others are more accepting. Typically these accepting individuals will find their way to Sanctuary (see **Chapter Ten**) to help others when they can.

## PLAYING IN THE ORDINARY WORLD

Characters in this game are all supernatural types, and all the character options are open. Normal humans can be played, but they will have some connection to the supernatural world.

### Classes

Only the following classes are available to the player characters.

- **Inventor** (heavy on the weird science)
- **Psychic**
- **Sage**
- **Theosophist**
- **Techno Pagan** (Sage variant)
- **Witch** (Family Witch)

Chosen Ones and Veterans can be used, but since these classes are built on the assumption of fighting monsters and the supernatural, their roles will need to change somewhat.

Survivors are also playable, but again this class is defined by its relationship to the supernatural creatures in the world. Survivors will make up the bulk of NPCs, ordinary people with some experience with the supernatural.

Psychics, Witches and to a lesser degree Theosophists and Chosen Ones are all considered to be supernatural, and not exactly human. To many, they are more akin to vampires and demons than other humans. Whether or not that is true, and

there is a debate in many occult circles, that is how they are treated.

## NEW CLASSES

The following new classes are presented here for use in Ordinary World. They can be used in other Night Worlds as the Game Master permits.

### Family Witch

*Your mother was a Witch. So was her mother and mother before her going back generations. You are another Witch in a long, unbroken, and proud line of Witches. While you intend on doing things to set yourself above and beyond these noble women, you are still very proud of your heritage. You will do nothing to dishonor your family or discredit yourself.*

*You were raised in a Witch family. While other kids were waiting for Santa Claus, you celebrated the Return of the Light. The mysteries of Witchcraft and magic were your daily life. Your mother and father would tell you stories about brave and kindly old Witches and the mean and evil young princesses that would attempt to do them harm. You would watch Wizard of Oz and boo at Dorothy. Sure, kids at school called you names, but you dismissed them; you knew the world was larger, scarier, and more dangerous than they did. If anything, you both envied and pitied them for their ignorance.*

*On your thirteenth birthday, you were given your great-grandmother's Book of Shadows. It was then when your adult life in the Coven began.*

Family Witches are Witches with a strong tie to their family and their history of Witchcraft. This gives you certain advantages, and some not so subtle disadvantages.

All Family Witches must take an Arcane Bond at the 1st level. This bond is with other members of their family. If the Family

Witch is ever estranged from her family for whatever reason, she loses this arcane bond. Though while she is with her family though few things can stand in their way.

This bond and being brought up as a Witch also means that the supernatural world is much more aware of you. You are not some random new Witch on the scene, you are the Seventh Daughter of a Seventh Daughter, and the supernatural world knew all about you before you ever picked up your first wand.

Family Witches progress as Witches.

Family Witches also gain the following new Arcane Power.

**Thicker than Water.** The Family Witch a nearly preternatural sense when it comes to their family. They know what they are thinking; they know how they feel. Beneficial magic used on a family member always has a +15% chance to all spellcasting rolls.

Also, once per day, a Family Witch may cast a spell at a distance that would benefit a family member. Spells that normally require touch like Cure Light Wounds can be cast at a distance to a specific family member. Both family members need to be aware of this casting for the contact to happen.

**Roleplaying the Family Witch.** Family is your life. You will do anything to protect them and nothing to dishonor them. You know you may call on them in times of need, but you have a desire to prove yourself on your own. Not because you want to distance yourself from them, but rather to prove yourself worthy of them.

You have a strong sense of honor and obligation. Your coven is made up of family members, and your High Priestess is often a blood relative.

### Techno Pagans

*Okay, so they call you a Techno Pagan. Whoever came up with that name should be*

*shot. Well, it could be worse, they could have called you an "iWitch" instead.*

*Regardless of what they call you, there is no denying what you are. You are the next level of magic. Save the waving of wands and boiling cauldrons for Hollywood. Besides, that all went out in the Dark Ages. This is the 21st Century, and you are a 21st Century Witch.*

Techno Pagans are the newest among the supernatural types. These types intersect with technology and magic in ways that look like pure magic to even those used to dealing with magic.

Techno Pagans advance as Sages. Their Prime Requisite is Intelligence.

Unlike the Sage, a Techno Pagan does not have the following powers: Mesmerize Others or Suggestion.

Techno Pagans may choose two of the following Arcane Powers from the Witch's list: Arcane Bonds (technology), Blaster, Enhanced Senses, Innate Magic, and Telepathic Transmission.

Techno Pagan also gain the following new Arcane Power.

**Arcane Bonds (technology).** This works as an arcane bond, but it is with a piece of technology such as a laptop, smartphone, or tablet. The device acts as an additional Techno Pagan (Witch) at Level 1, + 5%. This bonus can increase due to the complexity of the item. The Techno Pagan can also create a virtual circle of other Techno Pagans via this device. This is treated as an arcane bond with all the Witches holding hands.

The limitation of Techno-magic is such that Techno Pagans are limited to spells of Level 4 or lower like that of a Sage.

**Roleplaying the Techno Pagan.** You are a character of contradictions: old religion and cutting edge technology. You work to bridge the gap between the two and maybe gain a deeper understanding of both.

The nature of your views of magic makes you an outsider among outsiders. You can play up these confrontations if you have any social disadvantages, or you can become a moderator between the two. Most Witches cast a wary eye towards your work. You either are working to gain acceptance in their eyes or, more likely, challenging them to catch up with you or be left behind.

## SUPERNATURALS IN THE ORDINARY WORLD

All the supernatural creatures in this book and more are part of the Ordinary World. The Veil imparts on all of them, including supernatural Player Characters, a Glamour that makes them appear human. This does not protect the creature from harm; vampires still catch fire in sunlight, silver is as deadly to werewolves as iron is to the fey.

Supernatural creatures can also be Player Characters, as discussed in **Chapter 1** and **Chapter 5**. Since most of these creatures are destructive to humans and many to everyone but themselves, care must be extended when using these types. Not just in terms of power, but why that particular creature is there. Want to have a family of zombies as the party? Ok, strange, but not undoable according to the rules. Everyone should agree in their Session 0 about how this will all work out.

The most common types of inhuman creatures found in an Ordinary World include:

**Demons:** Thanks to the US Air Force shooting down Uriel, demons of every variety can be found in the world, Class I to Class V and totally unique demons that don't otherwise fit anywhere.

Demons of a lower level, are less able to survive in a world where intelligence and subtlety are essential to survival. Demons of the Ordinary World are not physical manifestations. They are spirits inhabiting

the bodies of the possessed or the recently dead. While they possess a body, they are limited to the feature of that body. They can still be supernaturally strong, but they are not likely to be able to breathe fire or fly away.

Demons that have been in possession of a body for a while may attempt to convert their human forms to their demonic ones. Typically, they have a chance based on their Hit Dice x 5%. If they role under this amount, then their human form is destroyed, and they take on their demonic form. If their demonic body is destroyed, they are unable to reform it usually for a number of lunar months equal to their Hit Dice. If their human form is destroyed, they merely need to seek out another.

Player Character demons are assumed to be of the weaker sorts, Type I or something like a Succubus/Incubus. Since they are attempting to hide out as a human for whatever reason, they are given a -5% for changing their forms. This is offset by their willingness to pass as human.

All demons are subject to the Exorcism rules in **Chapter 3**.

**Half-demons:** The particular case of half-demons needs to be mentioned. When a demon-possessed human impregnates, or is impregnated by a human (but more often another possessed demon or Witch) a half-demon can arise. This creature has no human form vs. demonic form. They have one form. That form may appear human, but there is always something off about them. Half-demons maybe become any class save for Survivors.

They can take an Arcane Power at level 1 regardless of class, but they must expend 1,000 XP first.

**Faeries:** The fey are a race in decline. Your typical fey noble will appear as human but have the abilities of a Witch. The Veil mutes their features, but even non-magical humans can feel there is something wrong about them. Their features

are too sharp, their eyes too bright, or they do not blink enough. The Fey can't tolerate our world anymore, and only the nobles are capable of entering it at all. Most encounters with the fey will be in areas where the Veil is thin and the characters, human or otherwise, cross over.

Faeries and demons in the Ordinary World cannot tolerate each other. A demon cannot possess a faerie noble.

**Ghosts, Specters, and Wraiths:** These creatures have no physical form but are among the most numerous of the supernatural creatures encountered. The Veil prevents non-magical creatures and humans from seeing them. But in places where the Veil is thin or weak, then spirits can manifest to humans and interact with them.

**Liches:** These creatures are very rare and should be used sparingly. The Veil makes them appear extremely old, and something about them is not right. It can't hide the deathly cold they radiate.

**Lycanthropes:** Werewolves the most common form of Lycanthrope, but they are not the only ones. It is believed that wererats live in the sewers below most large cities. Wereboars roam the countrysides at night under the new moon. Other creatures, more dangerous than the werewolf, exist.

The **Naagloshii**, or skinwalker, is a Witch that can change to a large predatory animal. Something like a cross between a wolf and a bear. They are treated like werewolves but are not harmed by silver.

The **Wendigo** is an undead version of a lycanthrope, a cross between a werewolf and a ghoul.

**Vampires:** These creatures use the standard vampire statistics, as listed in **Chapter 5**. They are the apex predators of humans outside of demons and can come in a variety of forms, weaknesses, powers, and diets. It is dangerous to assume that any two vampires will be the same.

## CAMPAIGNS AND ADVENTURES

What sort of campaigns can you do with Ordinary World? There are essentially two types of stories that Ordinary World can do very well with. The first is to take a mundane situation and add the supernatural. Need to take your kid to the doctor for a flu shot? Okay, fine. What if your kid is a wererat? Now what?

Another type of adventure is the reverse. Take a supernatural story and add the mundane. A vampire lord wants to take over the world, but you have taxes due tomorrow, and you are certainly going to be audited for writing off "wooden stakes" as an expense.

Ordinary World is the intersection point between the two worlds: the mundane and the magical. Both have their problems, and the characters are stuck in the middle.

### Character Focused, Not Adventure Focused

The most significant difference in Ordinary World over other settings is that the stories should be character-focused as opposed to adventure-focused. This means that the characters need a hook into the scenario. It isn't so much that a vampire is attacking innocents. The innocents are the characters or their friends. The vampire is known to the characters, or more likely, their grandmother, and there is *history* here. This is not a random vampire. This vampire tried to turn your grandmother, or maybe she was responsible for him becoming a vampire in the first place.

Here are some ideas on character-focused hooks. In each case, work out some details of why these hooks should, or should not, be used in the game during your Session 0.

### The Class Struggles

What is the makeup of the characters playing? Are they all supernatural monsters trying to blend in, ala *The Munster's*? Is it a family of Witches? A group of mixed types?

The classes the players choose for their characters can also help decide what sorts of games will be useful to play. A family of Witches can deal with their family's history and their good or bad deeds in the name of magic and Witchcraft. Monsters might spend a lot of time hiding from the government. Any group can help out others from either side of the supernatural divides. Good vs. evil. Magic vs. mundane. Super-natural vs. human. The cast can, and usually will find themselves in that intersection area. Which side do they choose to protect?

### The Curse

You, your family, people you love are under a terrible curse. Maybe it is something you did, more often it was something an ancestor did. Did they deserve the curse? Do you? Undoing the curse can be an opening set of adventures or a campaign arc of several adventures to undo the damage. The Greek gods cursed Tantalus never to be able to eat or drink in the afterlife for serving them human flesh. Maria Owens cursed her own family line after her own heartbreak in *Practical Magic*. The curse should fit the crime, and the undoing of the curse should also fit. The Owens' Witches finally showed that love was stronger than pain to break the curse. Tantalus, though still cannot reach the grapes or water in Tartarus.

### The Double

Someone in the group of characters has been replaced. It can be due to a doppelgänger,



a fetch (a type of ghost), or a magical or weird science clone or some other *thing*. All the characters know that something is not right. The idea here is to find out who has been replaced, where they are, and why they were replaced.

This works best if the player works with the Game Master as a confederate.

### **The Evil Ancestor**

Similar to the Family Enemy below, maybe the ancient enemy of the family is none other than dear old Great Grand Dad himself! Maybe your family enjoys a modicum of wealth, but don't ask about the literal skeletons in the closet. What can you do in the here and now to fix this? What other repercussions are about to occur?

Related to this one is the ever-popular Evil Twin. One of the characters has a twin they knew nothing about previously.

### **The Family Enemy**

What would *Dark Shadows* be without Barnabas Collins and Angelique? Dracula without Van Helsing? Frankenstein and his Monster. Sometimes it is also difficult to tell who is supposed to be "good" and who is "evil." The same is true for the family or ancestral enemy. Someone or something that has haunted your family for generations. Is it a banshee, keening to announce the death of a loved one? Or was it someone your family wronged, and now their vampire, ghost or revenant is out for revenge. The enemy can even be something of a tragic figure. Maybe they were wronged, but that doesn't make you responsible, does it?

### **The Haunted House**

The character or characters live in a haunted house. Not in the "I feel a cold chill here" or "there are some strange noises" sort of haunted. No, this is the "the walls are dripping blood, and the screaming never stops" haunted. What caused this to happen? Why can't you call the local realtor and be done with the place? No, this house

has dangerous secrets and the only ones keeping the evil inside from getting out are the characters.

### **The Kid**

Great for later sessions, but suddenly the characters get saddled with a new kid. It can be a baby or kid sister or an annoying nephew or cousin. In every case, no matter the origin, mundane or magical, the character(s) have a built-in need or desire to keep them safe.

### **The Mob**

Well. The characters did it. They outed themselves and their party, and now the humans are out with torches and pitchforks. Or maybe not as dramatic, but there are humans now who know who and what they are and unlike a vampire or demon they can't just kill them. What are the characters going to do? How will this play out in the long run?

### **The Trail**

Something that usually only works well in a character-focused game is the trail. Either the character can be on trial or be a witness. Or even be a member of the jury that knows that the accused is a supernatural creature. How do you navigate the legal system, with plenty of innocent, mundane people with supernatural knowledge?

### **The World Tyrant**

Many games can feature a world-ending tyrant or apocalypse, causing mad man. This setting is no different. What is different here is said world-ending maniac is an ex-boyfriend or ex-wife.

Why do they want to end the world? Was it the character's fault? Was it something they could have stopped?

## **· TONE ·**

Setting the tone of the game can also go a long way into determining what sort of stakes will need to be set in your adventures.





Real-life is not one long slog from start to finish, morning to night, birth to death, even if that is how some choose to see it. There were scary times, fun times, sad times, happy times, and sometimes just the aforementioned slog.

### Character vs. Adventure Focused

Often the attention on a game is the problem to be solved or the "Big Bad" to be defeated. Another tactic is focusing instead on the character. The problem of the day becomes less important to how the characters are going to solve it. Even a simple issue

can grow into something epic if there is more going on in the character's life than just the problem.

### Good vs. Evil or Us vs. Them

In a supernatural style game, it is easy to run things as a Good vs. Evil set up. But that doesn't have to be the case here. Angels think they are good and so do most people, that is, until they smite all of northern Russia to deal with a little demonic threat. Demons are evil, but maybe some demons just want to get out from under Hell's influence and maybe run a couple of harmless con jobs on some billionaires. Running games at the character level give Game Master more latitude in terms of black and white or shades of gray.

With so many factions, it should not be difficult to place the characters in the middle of something.

### Light, or Dark

What is the tone of the game? Is this a light game where being a supernatural is part of the background, and the real adventure is the absurdity of life? Or are the forces of good and evil bearing down on the characters every day? There can be a good mix, and in fact, there should be, but what is the overall tone? Most of the Night Worlds here are skewed towards the dark. But what would *The Hangover* be like if all the characters had been werewolves? Too silly? Maybe, but this is the place to do that. Unless, of course, the Alan Garner character ate the baby.

### WELCOME TO WITCH HAVEN

West Haven is a medium-sized town located in upstate New Hampshire but can be placed anywhere the campaign needs. To all appearances, this sleepy bed-and-breakfast town of about 18,000 people is precisely that. Quiet, peaceful, and easily overlooked. The city council brags about their Fall Festivals and claims the trees

boast "over 1000 colors!" They are proud of their world-class hospital, a gift from the Montblanc family, and their Carnegie Library that is the envy of many towns all throughout the Haven Valley.

It is also reasonably notorious as being a town full of Witches.

West Haven has more Witches, vampires, and other supernatural creatures per capita than any other town in the United States, maybe even the entire Northern Hemisphere. The town is so strange that even normal humans know something is going on. In nearby East Haven, they even have given the town a nickname, "Witch Haven." The Veil here is particularly thin at night, but more solid during the daylight hours.

### **West Haven, East Haven and the Haven Valley**

If West Haven is a sleepy town, East Haven to the east (logically) and little south, is a bustling city of 35,000. The town of East Haven is as ordinary as their Apple Fest each fall and their giant Christmas Parade. The locals whisper about "Witch Haven" and tell anyone who will listen to stay away from the place. They all know a rumor, or several, about the place, and all the locals tend to avoid it.

Haven Valley is as idyllic as the name might suggest. There is a river running through the valley, with woods that everyone claims are haunted in the north. It really is the last place one would expect to find a stronghold of supernatural creatures, but there it is.

West Haven and East Haven began as one town three and half centuries ago, back when Europeans first came to this country. They established a colony here in the 1640s. At first, there was peace. The new Europeans called the valley they had settled in Haven and built their community. Through a confluence of events, the new settlers even managed to maintain cordial, if not good, relations with the local Abenaki

tribes. The settlers asked for little and were willing to work the land. The local tribes had not used the valley, despite its natural resources, but kept an eye on the locals. Soon divisions grew in the colony and town with the more expansionist Haveners wanting to expand more and more outside the valley and the more settled ones wanting to stay put and keep the balance they had at the time.

By the 1690s, tensions had grown to the point where two-thirds of the town was accusing the other third of Witchcraft. A local midwife and healer, Goodwife Montblanc, was set to be hung when a torrential downpour began. Lightning struck the gallows, setting it ablaze and freeing Goody Montblanc. The lake in hills burst its banks and sent a flood into the town. When it was all over the next morning, twenty townsfolk had died, including the local magistrate, a Calvinist minister, and the accusers of Goody Montblanc. The townsfolk gathered what they could and went their separate ways, the most going east, but some going west. The original town of Haven lies in a swampy lowland near the river, between the two settlements of West and East Haven.

### **The Montblancs**

If West Haven had a premier family, it is the Montblancs. They come from a long line of healers and have been so successful as doctors and medical researchers, they are also one of the richest families in the Valley, if not the richest.

The Montblancs are powerful, not just in terms of human wealth and position, but in magical power and connections to the supernatural. While the family certainly was good, and good members remain, the current members enjoy their power a little too much. There are plenty of rumors that they are now demon worshippers or worst.

The demon worship is not true, of course, since every Montblanc thinks they are better than any demon.

### **Pierce Montblanc**

Pierce Montblanc is the family patriarch. He appears to most as an aged, wheelchair-bound man of ancient appearance. He is well known to have made millions in medical research, and the Montblanc Center for Health and Wellness in West Haven bears his name.

In truth, Pierce Montblanc was a healer. However, his healing career began in 1859. He was a gifted doctor and credited his ancestor, Goody Montblanc, with the "Gift." He was a good man and did everything in his considerable skill and power to heal the sick and injured. It was during his time in the Civil War as a war-time doctor he saw true horrors. He determined then that the greatest enemy of humanity is Death, and he would do what he could to fight that enemy. He spent years researching all sorts of scientific and then magical means, and at last, he discovered it, the cure for death. Pierce Montblanc became a lich and continued his work on how to defeat death altogether. To normal mundane humans, he appears as an old man, but to any supernatural such as his family, he appears as a living corpse.

### **Christine Montblanc**

The current matriarch of the Montblanc clan and the oldest living member. At 65, she has remained active in the family's business and philanthropic enterprises. She sits on the Board of Directors of the hospital and is involved in local government. To all, she appears as a wealthy socialite who still has her family's trademark blond hair. Christine, though is a powerful Witch and coven leader of the Montblanc family Witch coven. If she is tied to the local human politics, it is because she is also tied very intensely to the supernatural factions in West Haven. She is shrewd, intelligent, and not someone the characters want as an enemy.

### **Johnnie Thompson**

Johnnie is a Montblanc, but she defied her aunt Christine's wishes and married a mundane human named Charles Thompson. She is a

sweet 30-something stay at home mom. She likes making cookies for the neighbors and hosting play dates for her daughter's Kindergarten class. Johnnie, like all Montblancs, is a very powerful Witch. She got away, for now, her family's influence, but she is certain they will try to drag her back in. She still has an arcane bond with her family but tries not to use it. Her biggest fear is her daughter will choose her Montblanc blood over her Thompson blood.

### **Kim and Kelly Montblanc**

Kim and Kelly are a bit of a mystery. They are Montblancs, no one denies this, but they are also identical twins with fiery red hair. All other Montblancs are blonds. At age 18, they are the biggest source of town gossip. They are odd and wild even by Montblanc standards and are rumored to have the power to match. They seem to communicate telepathically, complete each others' sentences and even talk in perfect unison. They will each claim to be "the evil twin." Among the rumors are they killed their mother in childbirth, and when their father also suddenly died, they arrived here. Christine is their nominal "mother," but everyone knows it is Pierce himself who is taking a hand in raising them.

### **Katherine Montblanc**

If the Montblancs have a "black sheep," it's Katherine. Granddaughter to Christine, she defies her parents and family at any chance she gets. If Johnnie is rebellious because of her honest and true love of Charles, Kat is rebellious because she can't stand her family. She even goes as far as dying her hair black so she won't look like them. She works as a social worker in the Montblanc family hospital; she wants her family to know what it is she is doing. She also works in the local Sanctuary Chapterhouse. She is the one with whom the characters are most likely to interact.

### **Other Townsfolk**

#### **Katia Crane**

Katia runs the local herbal apothecary. She is an attractive woman in early thirties. Her young son, Henry, is often found at her

shop. She is the go-to person for any herbal knowledge. She is also a member of an underground dark coven who wants to have all Witches ascend to rule over all humans. She is not quite ready to reveal her plans yet.

### **Edwin Grey**

Grey was the magistrate that tried to have Goody Montblanc killed in the 1680s. He died the night of the flood, struck by lightning on the gallows. Since then, his ghost has haunted the lands around Haven Valley for over 400 years. He has a hate for all supernatural creatures, including himself, and has a special hatred for the Montblancs. He will do anything in his power to see them all dead and is suspected of killing the parents of Kim and Kelly. He will ally himself with player characters to fight against the Montblancs but will turn on them at the first chance if they are also supernatural creatures.

### **Eris and Harmony**

Eris is a succubus, and Harmony is a lesser angel. Together they run the Blue Angel nightclub and bar. It is an excellent place to find out any information about mundane or supernatural occurrences within a 50-mile radius. They also happen to have some of the best hot wings in the valley. The one bit of information they will not divulge is why they are working together.

### **Ethyl Critchlow**

Ethyl appears as the very stereotype of an old Witch. But that is just a glamour. Ethyl is, in fact, a Hag (see Chapter 5). She has claimed an ancient right and lives in West Haven. She may remain as long as she does not eat any children or murders anyone. Though she did eat a couple of door to door Missionaries visiting from East Haven a few years ago, but no one has asked about them.

### **Gerald**

Gerald is a vampire that runs the morgue. If asked why he runs a morgue when as a

200-year-old vampire, he could be anywhere, he will only claim he finds it peaceful. In truth, Gerald is running out of reasons to stay undead and suspects one morning when his work shift is over he will just walk into the sun. He stays alive because he has a past with Pierce.

### **Charles Thompson**

Husband of Johnnie Thompson, nee Montblanc. He is a local engineer working for the county. He is human but knows all about the supernatural world he lives. He tries to get his wife to renounce her family but knows she never will.

### **The One True Way**

This group, mainly based in East Haven, is a non-denominational group of human terrorists that have learned the truth about the supernatural world. They make excursions into West Haven to frighten the locals when they can, but it is only a matter of time before they kill someone. Presently they have their sights on the vampire Gerald and the urban hag Ethyl.

### **Playing in Witch Haven**

West Haven, or Witch Haven, makes a great place for little dramas and a potential home for the characters who might not be ready to hide what they are but still don't want the rest of the world to know who they are.

Characters can easily find themselves caught between the machinations of the Montblanc clan members, or even caught in a turf war between two rival covens.



## CHAPTER TEN: NIGHT SPOTS

Most urban fantasy stories involve the hero having contacts at a local bar or somewhere in the city's seedy underground. Doing a bit of research can turn up real-world locations that can easily be spun for fantastic inspiration for your clandestine group, religious cult, or international conspiracy. Here we present a few such locales which can be dropped into just about any game. The nightclubs, cabarets, cafes, bars, groups, and locales that follow can tie into your secret societies, covens, and conspiracy groups. They can become a supremely creepy or fun recurring theme in your game.

### HALFWAY

Located in the middle of the Arizona desert on a lonely stretch of forgotten highways lies one of the strangest sights, one that the characters might not see again in their life. It is a bar, in the middle of nowhere. The parking lot is often full of motorcycles and semi-tractor trailer trucks. Its bright, but broken neon sign proclaims this place is called Halfway.

Inside the clientele are of all shapes and sizes. In addition to humans, demons, vampires, were-creatures, and even an angel or two can be seen inside. The curious thing is no one is fighting. Not that the place is quiet or sedate; it is quite loud, and the occasional argument does break out. Anytime it looks like an argument might escalate to a physical or magical fight, glances are haltingly directed to a man sitting in back playing cards. The man, only known as The Dealer, never acknowledges these glances, in fact he never sees them, but the fight loses steam as soon as it almost started.

The Dealer continues his game. The cards he uses appear to be about a hundred years old. They seem to be playing cards but also look like an old set of Tarot cards written in Spanish. When playing he keeps the Major Arcana tucked away, but that is not why people come here. People come here because this blind man can see the future.

The rumor is that the Dealer made a deal with Fate hundreds of years ago. To

gain his ability to see the future, his eyes were burned out of his head. He now wears dark sunglasses to cover his injury. He came to this bar and challenged the then demonic owner to a game of cards. The demon, seeing the burned-out eyes of an otherwise average human, took that bet. That is when Fate played Her hand. Within hours the Dealer, as he was now calling himself owned the bar, the former demon owner, and much of the money of the other players at the table.

Since then, people come the world over for the contacts that only Halfway has, but mostly they are here to get insight into their own futures.

There is also quite a bit of speculation what the name Halfway means. Most assume it is because it is half-way between Las Vegas, NV and Santa Fe, NM. Though most of the clientele say, it is half-way between our world and Hell. The Dealer, when he comments about it at all will say that it is halfway between where you were and where you need to go.

### **The Bar**

Halfway has a perplexing way of never looking the same way twice nor the same way to different people. All will agree on the generalities. There is a long bar to the left as you walk in. Tables spread out in front of you and to your right. As you walk in, the room wraps around the bar to pool tables, darts, and more tables. There is a mezzanine level above the floor where others are gathered. There are no apparent stairs to this level unless someone has business upstairs. Typically the only business anyone conducts upstairs are private deals with other-worldly creatures or similarly powerful individuals. Halfway is known for its protection, so power interests on any side of a supernatural conflict can meet here.

What Halfway does not provide is anonymity. You come here at your own discretion.

### **Jack**

From behind the bar, the bartender, only known as Jack, fills drinks. Nearly any kind of alcohol can be found here, but there is no food service. Halfway is bar for drinking and deals. Jack is aloof and a bit standoffish. He appears human, though even creatures or beings with the ability to detect such things are unsure. Upon later recollection people find it difficult to remember exactly what it was that Jack actually looked like. Some claim tall, others short. Most agree balding and irritable, but no one is ever sure of his age. Jack is, like the bar itself, seemingly impervious to being committed to long term memory.

### **Beth, Amy, Pearl**

The three waitresses are continually running from the bar to customers at various tables. As with Jack, their exact appearance is a bit fuzzy to the memory. Beth appears as a brunette, Amy, as a redhead and Pearl as a platinum blonde. Beings and characters with the ability to perceive true forms will reveal that they are all a type of fae, but not one that has been seen before. They are bound to this place and cannot leave it. It is unknown if their curse is related to that of the Dealer or if they are a part of the bar and can't leave it as long as it remains. Although people have claimed that on the infrequent occasion that they have found Halfway again later in life that at least one of the girls is different.

### **The Dealer**

The Dealer has no stats. He does not enter into combat of any sort nor does he seem to need to sleep. Attacks on him always fail to do some random occurrence. For example, if a character pulls out a gun to shoot him the gun will jam, or as the bullet is fired, someone from the upper level falls over the railing and connects with the bullet. Spells deflect, and physical attacks fail. Whenever the characters come

to Halfway he is sitting at the back table playing cards. He is typically found with a 9ft tall demon with deep red skin, black horns, and wings who spits fire when he laughs, and an angelic humanoid of indeterminate gender. Depending on the level of realism the game has, these two Guardians will either appear as humans or as themselves. In any case they both radiate a strong feeling of both power and unease.

Typically all three will be playing cards, usually poker, with a fourth. When the characters arrive, he will address them, not so much by name, but by their recent deeds and actions. For example, if the characters just finished off a group of demons, the Dealer will work that into conversation. He will deal the cards to whoever wishes to have their fortunes read. This is not a gypsy-style fortune-telling, and he will say a much. He will refer to sacred geometries of chance or the ebb and flow of probabilities. He will only deal three cards representing the characters' past, present, and future respectively. In cases where the future card is especially dire he allows the character to keep the card.

Game Masters need to work hard in preparing for the characters' visit to the Dealer and Halfway. If they are there for information, it is likely that they will get it for a price. For a fortune read (and never ask the Dealer to read your fortunes he will only reply, "What makes you so sure you are going to be fortunate?") the typical price is something personal. The Dealer will claim he has no need for money or material goods. The characters will need to exchange some special and unique for any fortune read.

## The Guardians

Azrimelchon is a demon and quite a powerful one at that. His job is to sit on the right hand of the Dealer and attempt to influence him towards evil in any way he can. If the campaign allows it he will appear

as a large demon with deep red skin, a long tail, and wings. Fire comes from his mouth when he laughs, which is often. If he must appear human, he will be a tall man with dark hair and expensive tailored clothing. He always has a lit cigar in his mouth. He will greet any newcomers with a warm welcome offering a seat next to himself. He will attempt to get the characters to play poker, even offering them chips. This is a ruse the only thing that Azrimelchon wants are their souls. He considers that a paltry winning since what he truly wants is the soul of the Dealer.

Prosidereal is an angel and equally as powerful. Their exact gender is difficult to determine. They are pale and austere in either form with limited to no emotions ever betraying the stern countenance of their face. In their angelic form they are also very tall but still very thin and pale. While characters get the feeling that this creature means them no harm, they also feel like there are being judged as Prosidereal looks down on them, somewhat literally, from the pince-nez balanced on the bridge of their nose.

Like the other guardian, they attempt to swing the Dealer into favoring good. Mostly Prosidereal works to counter the machinations of Azrimelchon. The dealer keeps them both in check.

## Coming to Halfway

Characters almost never find Halfway. It finds them. It is always found during the night and when the person seeking it needs it the most. The primary hook is the fortune reading done by the Dealer, but nearly anything else can also occur here.

Among some of the odd occurrences that have known to happen here are a few.

1. A woman at the bar presses a baby or small child into your arms and tells you to leave and take the child far away. Soon members of some supernatural faction are chasing the

characters down hunting for the babe who is part of a prophesy.

2. A fight breaks out in the bar involving the characters. The Dealer and the Guardians want to know what is so special about you that the magic keeping violence at bay is broken here. Also, what does that mean for the world at large?
3. One of the characters gets involved in a game and loses their soul in a gamble. What will everyone else do now to get it back?
4. A Trickster spirit has made off with the Dealer's Death card. Now people that should die don't, and a random string of dead bodies leads from Halfway to elsewhere. The characters are charged with getting the card back.
5. The characters run into someone they knew, but thought was dead. The person has no idea who the characters are.
6. You hear a rumor of a brothel using trapped supernatural creatures such as fae, succubi, and other exotic beings. The trail leads you the upstairs level of Halfway and into the hands of Azrimelchon.

### **Returning to Halfway**

For most, Halfway is a once in a lifetime experience and for most, that is also plenty. Sometimes, when it is rare, a character may return to Halfway. When this occurs, there needs to be a very good reason. Often the characters that find their way back here are Chosen Ones with a special task. Here they can be given the opportunity to change fate. A card game with the Dealer to change one's destiny. Does this change bring back a loved one, give the Chosen One a second chance to save the world, or do they get the rare opportunity to just walk away from being a Chosen One and live out their lives like everyone else.

If, by chance a character does return to spot where Halfway stands, and they are not allowed a second visit, they will find only an old and abandoned bar, neglected by the ages and patronized only by the elements. They could find something they left behind, something readily identifiable, but it too will seem old and forgotten.

### **THE LIBRARY OF ALEXANDRIA**

The Library of Alexandria is exactly what its name would indicate. The original Library of Alexandria, which was, according to legend, destroyed at any of three different times throughout history. It is the largest repository of information in the world, considered by many to hold the sum total of all human knowledge. This, of course, is not true, but it does hold almost every book ever published or written—even those that have been destroyed or banned.

The truth of the Library's history is that it has been burned to the ground four times in history: during Julius Caesar's fire during his civil war in 48 BC; during the attack of Aurelian in AD 270–275; by the decree of Coptic Christian pope Theophilus of Alexandria in AD 391; and during the Muslim conquest of Egypt in (or after) AD 642. In every one of these periods, the group later known as the Men in Black was behind the attack, feeling the library was too dangerous to be allowed to survive.

After the fourth attack on the library, the Powers that Be stepped in, and a mysterious being known as the Head Librarian took the total of the Library's resources and brought them to an extradimensional space. During this process, and over time, the library gained a sentience of its own and grants access to its vast sums of knowledge only to those the library itself deems worthy.

### **About the Library**

Inside, the library is vast. Indeed, it seems infinite and it may well be, as it





expands to accommodate any new information it needs to absorb. It has entire wings full of scrolls from prehistory, and enormous computer labs with private terminals offering the fastest Internet access (the current WiFi password is "AlexandriaRox3461!"). There are also countless "private collections" wings which can only be accessed with the permission of the wings' owners.

The library exists for one purpose and one purpose only, and that is to absorb and preserve the knowledge of humankind. When a given collection becomes too large or threatening, the library mystically absorbs that collection into itself, where members of its thousands-strong staff of librarians catalog and store the new information. Anything deemed of value to general knowledge is copied and placed into the general collection, while the entire original collection is placed into a "special wing" dedicated to the original owner of the

absorbed collection. This is how the millions of "private collections" in the library have come to exist.

Each special collection is assigned a liaison, a special reference librarian tasked to always be the point of contact for those with access to that collection. The liaison to the Amanda Black Special Collections Wing is Kathryn Stoddard.

### Time and the Library

Time and the library enjoy a strange relationship. It is entirely possible while wandering through the library to meet and interact with someone from any period in the span of human history, though imparting of future knowledge to those from the past is strictly forbidden. This means that someone from Ancient Rome will never find a computer lab, nor will they be able to retrieve information from the 19th century, no matter how hard a Victorian scholar might try to impart that information. To the listener, such information simply comes out garbled.

The only people who have access to knowledge from the full span of human history are the librarians themselves. There are several thousand of these, drawn from periods throughout history, and they live eternally in the library. They may be allowed to leave only for special occasions, and only to their home time period, and while they are outside of the library, they lose access to knowledge beyond that of their home period (though they are aware that that they have such knowledge and they retain their own personal sophistication).

Oddly, the staff's knowledge of human history and knowledge ceases somewhere in the mid 53rd century. What that means, even the library doesn't know. Does humanity end at that point? Did they cut off access to the library for some reason? Is there some advanced knowledge that the Universe itself deems too dangerous to know until humanity gets closer? Theories abound, but no one has been able to uncover the truth.

While inside the library, time does not pass for patrons—that is, they cease to age while inside and do not require sleep, food or water to subsist. However, outside the library the patron's personal timeline continues to advance. That is, if one spends three days in the library, they will not age a second, but when they exit, they will exit three days later in their personal timeline.

### **Time Travel and the Library**

It is not possible to use the library for time travel—one cannot enter in 2017 and exit in 1842. Theoretically one could use it to travel into the future, simply by staying in the library for thousands of years, but it would be a one-way trip at best, and no one knows what effect that might have on the traveler. Theoretically it may be possible to go to specific points in the past by having a librarian from that period as an escort, but no one has ever been granted such a privilege; the danger to the timeline is too great.

To minimize dangerous effects on the library and on patrons, the library has a strict 72-hour policy. If someone remains in the library for 72 hours, they must immediately return to their home and may not return for one week. In any case, remaining in the library for at least 24 hours means that upon leaving, one cannot re-enter until spending double the amount of time in the real world that they spent in the library. Spending less than 12 hours at a time in the library is not regulated.

Certainly throughout history there have been patrons who have abused these effects to live extraordinarily long times, but it is said that after so long, the Library will permanently cut off access to those who take such abusive actions.

### **The Problem of Research**

In game terms, access to the Library of Alexandria represents an Occult Library quality at a value of 10. However, the fact that all information is there, does not mean

that it is easy or quick to access. Research still takes time, and sometimes finding rare books in a collection that spans the entire history of human existence can take a very long time. The librarians have access to 51st-century era cataloging and research technologies, but even with that, searching literally ten thousand years or more of knowledge can take time. Add to that the fact that the rarest books are certainly all held in private collections and it can sometimes take days, weeks, months or even years to locate the collection holder.

For this reason, the Library is a major boost for those who value unprecedented library access, but is not a magic fix for all research-related problems. Access may grant significant bonuses to all occult or mundane related resources (at the GM's discretion), but the results of such research could take some time to gather.

### **The Library and Forbidden Knowledge**

One of the big problems that confronts patrons of the Library is researching cosmically-forbidden knowledge like that of the Hastur or Cthulhu mythoi. The difficulty here comes in two varieties. In terms of the Hastur mythos, these writings are so alien and rare that even the library's collection is scant at best, and what it does have is firmly entrenched in restricted, private collections.

In terms of the Cthulhu mythos, the library certainly has a broad collection of mythos tomes, but the vast majority available to the public are heavily abridged. Those that are unabridged are, again, entrenched in restricted, private collections.

For the most part, requests for these kinds of mythos information will be met with a red, "refused; restricted information" card. If the patron can justify their need for the information, a yellow, cautionary approval will be issued, and the librarian will do their best to help the patron locate the information in question. Again, however, the process could take ages to find, and still may come back as "unavailable."

## Accessing the Library

Accessing the library is personalized to each patron. Every patron will have a unique access point from where they can enter the library and to where they will always exit. This location is often the area where the patron had their personal library collection before it was absorbed; for others it's a convenient place where they were first invited to join the library. In some cases it has even been a bedroom closet.

Moving this access point can only be done in the situation of a permanent move, or other permanent loss of access to their original access point. The library knows when such things occur and will contact patrons if a new access point need be established.

Gaining entry to the library requires a card scan, a handprint analysis, a DNA pinprick test and a retinal scan. Considering that nobody has ever been able to counterfeit even the access card, the security may seem excessive, but then again, it is the Library of Alexandria we're talking about. The information therein could be exceptionally dangerous in the wrong hands.

Patrons may bring guests that they trust, but such guests must be accompanied by the patron at all times, and Patrons are held responsible for any misuse of library resources by guests. In addition, upon exit, guests have all memories of the library itself, and the means by which they got in, purged. They keep their knowledge of having been there, and any knowledge they gained while inside, but they have no evidence to prove the library's existence and no knowledge of how to get back or even what it looked like inside.

## BOHEMIAN NIGHTCLUBS OF PARIS

While these clubs were at their peak of popularity in the 1890s (making them ideal

for a Gaslight campaign), they survived past World War II and even into the 1950s. This makes them perfectly suited and even ideal for any Urban fantasy era campaign. These clubs were Caberet l'Enfer (Club Hell), Cabaret du Ciel (Club Heaven), and Cabaret du Neant (Club Nothingness, or Club Death). We'll look at each as a separate locale, but they are intended to be used in concert as they complement each other.

The clubs examined here are all historic but can serve as inspiration for any sort of strange bar, club, or exotic and unusual location for your characters to explore, anywhere in the world.

What if, for example, a club themed around El Dorado contained clues to the ancient city's real location? Or a cafe dedicated to Shangri-La was in fact the gateway to finding that strange paradise? Creating a club, cafe, or bar as a safe house or strange location to launch your game or as a recurring locale for your characters is just a matter of drawing from dark themes and strange mythologies and applying them to modern(ish) concepts. Search the Web, your local library and the darkest corners of your imagination, and have at it!

The information on the following locations was gathered at:

*[io9.com/5910963/the-awesomely-insane-heaven-and-hell-nightclubs-of-1800s-paris](http://io9.com/5910963/the-awesomely-insane-heaven-and-hell-nightclubs-of-1800s-paris)*

*[voyagesextraordinaires.blogspot.com/2009/10/cabarets-du-ciel-et-de-lenfer.html](http://voyagesextraordinaires.blogspot.com/2009/10/cabarets-du-ciel-et-de-lenfer.html)*

The above-referenced articles also contain photographs of the clubs described here.

### Cabaret de l'Enfer

Paris in the 1890s was a hotbed of bizarre bohemian locations where people went to feed their most bizarre, arcane and divergent desires. Among the strangest was the Cabaret de l'Enfer, or Club of the Inferno...Club Hell. This club was Satanically themed and located in Montmartre. It was one of the most popular

hangouts of the day and treated guests to such sights as a snake turning into a devil, heckling by a performer dressed as the Devil, and a strange dichotomy of walls that seemed to melt although the temperature was bordering on uncomfortably cold.

An author visiting the club described a chorus of harsh voices calling out, "Enter and be damned, the evil one awaits you!" As patrons entered, they would see a cauldron suspended over a fire, in which danced a number of demonic musicians both male and female. Imps with pitchforks would stab and poke the musicians who played such demonic selections as pieces from "Faust." these imps danced throughout the club, harassing patrons even as they served drinks and stoked the fires throughout. The walls "ran with streams of molten gold and silver, and here and there were caverns lit by smouldering fires from which thick smoke issued, and vapors emitting the odors of a volcano."

### **Club Hell In Your Game**

What if, in your game, Cabaret de l'Enfer represented the den of a powerful cult dedicated to the dark forces of Occultism, where the darkest secrets of the forbidden world could be had. . . at a price? Your heroes could track cultists here, call in favors for information, or trade favors for the same. The club could be untouchable, operating brashly in the open while dealing in secret information because of some hidden but very powerful patron.

Alternately, in a campaign that includes supernatural themes, the club could be the headquarters of a powerful cabal of sorcerers and occultists, access to an occult library, or even contain portals to Hell itself! When using this place in your game, be sure to stress in detail the creepy elements: the stone walls, the hard benches, the demons dancing about, and the overall sense of evil and debauchery about the area.

### **Cabaret, du Ciel**

In direct contrast to Club Hell, and located right next door, was the Cabaret du

Ciel, or the Cabaret of the Sky... Club Heaven. This bar was divinely themed and featured greetings from figures such as Father Time and Dante himself. Beautiful women costumed as angels would flit about the room, teasing the patrons, and St. Peter himself presided over the revelries and at various times each night would appear through a hole in the sky to gaze upon the crowd while blessing them from a bin of holy water. Following the blessing, he would gradually vanish into a thick mist.

The teasing angels served as waiters and waitresses in much the same manner as the imps of l'Enfer, and featured white robes, sandals, gauze wings and brass halos. The greeting in this establishment was delivered by a bearded man who shouted, "The greetings of heaven to thee, brothers! Eternal bliss and happiness are for thee. Mayst thou never swerve from its golden paths! Breathe thou its sacred purity and Novating exaltation. Prepare to meet thy creator and don't forget the garcon!"

### **Club Heaven in Your Game**

Club Heaven can form a similar role as Club Hell in an urban fantasy game. It can be the secret headquarters of groups like the Freemasons or Rosicrucian Order who are dedicated to religious rites and benevolence. St. Peter himself could be a voice for these orders, either a leader or a representative, providing aid and succor to worthy player characters, or even information along the same lines as that from Hell, and at similar cost of favors.

An interesting twist could be to make Club Heaven a sinister place in the guise of goodness. It uses its benevolent imagery to draw in those who need help, making its victims more and more dependent upon its services with each visit. In a supernatural-themed game, the figure of St. Peter could actually be a mystic oracle who speaks in riddles and delivers arcane knowledge hidden in nonsense. A portal to an occult

library could be accessed from somewhere in the club's various rooms.

### Cabaret, du Neant

The Cabaret of Nothingness, or Club Death, was located in Montmartre. Visitors to the club would sit and drink at coffin-shaped tables while contemplating and being reminded of their own mortality and the idea that all things, no matter how wonderful, eventually snuff out to nothingness.

William Chambers Morrow, in his 1899 work *Bohemian Paris of To-Day* described the club as being peppered with heavy and large coffins resting on biers. Their arrangement, he said, was "in an order suggesting the recent happening of a frightful catastrophe." He described the walls as being decorated with skeletons, skulls-and-bones, reliefs of battle images, guillotines. The decor of the place was dominated by carnage, assassination and death. It was, in many ways, a modern Goth's dream club.

A creature at the far end of the room emerged from a black hole to announce, "One microbe of Asiatic cholera from the last corpse, one leg of a lively cancer, and one sample of our consumption germ!" Waiters dressed like pallbearers would deliver beer and wine, designated as various toxins and disease, to patrons, entreating them to "Drink, you Macchabees! Drink these noxious potions which contain the vilest and deadliest poisons!"

### Club Death In Your Game

This particular club is a natural safe house for death cults or assassins' guilds throughout Europe in the Victorian or Urban fantasy eras. If one needs to track a murderer or hire a killer, Club Death may well be the place to go. Just be careful that you know the right pass phrase and who to talk to. Otherwise a knife in the dark could be waiting for you when you get home. In addition, they say the dead know things the living cannot.



What if dark rituals at this club allowed the living to ask one question of a dying man? Such power could corrupt even the noblest of souls, and watching a man murdered in front of them could terrify and madden the hardest of demon hunting heroes.

The club itself, of course, is untouchable for reasons the PCs may never divine, and no one is ever arrested or charged for the atrocities that take place within. Perhaps only the homeless and derelicts are targeted for death. Perhaps the true benefactor of the society is none other than the Illuminati themselves.

Whatever reason, PCs using this option would have to make a Charisma-based save to retain the presence of mind to ask their question at just the right moment; otherwise, the victim expires and they get no information. Alternately, what if the club offers the ability to experience the knowledge that resides at the doorway to death? What if the rituals therein allow--at great and vast personal risk--the character to glean knowledge otherwise unachievable by being brought to the very brink of death?

In such a scenario, for example, PCs would be brought to -9 hit points and have to make a Constitution-based save to survive and experience the promised visions, and then make an Intelligence check to retain the information when (if) they come back. Strange and foul concoctions available only to those who go through the ritual could be available to restore them to health within a day or two, but of course would not come with out a price. Many who undergo this experience have been said to go stark, raving mad in the process....

## **THE ASYLUM OR SANITARIUM**

Though not one of the historical Parisian nightclubs above, an old, battered asylum or sanitorium can be a chilling location for any urban fantasy game, especially those that deal with eldritch and arcane horrors

from beyond the pale. If you are running a horror-themed game, the stereotype of the darkened asylum on the hill can play a major role. It never seems to grow old or become overly familiar to your players.

Sanitariums in the urban fantasy era are often built into huge, mansion-like complexes that carry feelings of elegance and extravagance at the same time as elements of decay and corruption. They could even juxtapose the two--the idea of a dungeon-like basement that hides unimaginable horrors is a staple of horror fiction. Alternately, they can function as places of healing and succor for those characters who need to recover from grievous injury or the lingering effects of madness. A quick web search can easily turn up floor plans for asylums and sanitariums across the world; the GM can easily adapt these plans into his game, which saves a great deal of time on mapping the building.

## **The Asylum in Your Game**

When using an asylum in game there are several approaches you can take. First, the PCs can head there to visit a contact who has gone completely mad but has vital information. The doctors can be either helpful, hinder the investigation, or even be a dangerous part of the conspiracy the PCs seek to uncover.

Secondly, the PCs can themselves wake up as prisoners in the asylum, having upset a powerful foe who wishes to do away with them. They will need to escape while dodging sinister attendants and plots to subject them to torture, ECT treatments or even lobotomy. Indeed, an interesting campaign would be to have the characters awaken in a filthy asylum with no memory of who they are or how they got there. In the course of escaping they recover their knowledge and skills, and begin to pull back the threads of a dark, global conspiracy. Thirdly, the PCs can target the asylum as the source of the villains' power,

and the base of the dark forces against whom they struggle. This requires them infiltrating and taking down the facility, possibly with extreme prejudice, while avoiding the attention of the authorities.

In a supernatural-themed game, asylums both in-use and abandoned can be full of creatures like ghosts, phantasms, vampires, shadows and ghouls just waiting for unwary intruders to invade their terrain. Such locations are part and parcel of Lovecraftian horror games and should prominently feature in the heroes' investigations.

Finally, in the vein of the cabarets presented above, what about creating a "Club Madness," which is asylum-themed? Such a club could be owned by a former psychiatrist who was drummed out of the profession for performing unethical experiments. Perhaps certain patrons are kidnapped and subjected to a bizarre form of lobotomy that turns them into zombie-like slaves, eager to do their master's bidding. The club manager, of course, is quite mad himself and his plan is to cause chaos and destruction, watching the city burn for its crimes against him.

Alternately, knowledge or power might be gained through illegal experimentation, but at great risk, just as above.

### **THE EXPLORER'S CLUB**

The explorer's club may be most appropriate in a setting set between the 1800s and the 1940s. Every society of intrepid adventurers and explorers needs a place where they can swap stories and rumors, gather information, and seek out old comrades and experts for help in their exploits. The explorer's club is a staple of early urban fantasy works. Usually situated in a lavish lounge-like club, membership is often restricted to members of a specific adventuring society or to those who have proven themselves through a reputation for noteworthy accomplishments in adventuring or exploring.

### **The Explorer's Club in Your Game**

Many arcane locales in an urban fantasy game are going to be mysterious and sinister places where the PCs will go to find information or track down villains. The explorer's club is the exact opposite. It is a place of safety for the characters, where they can swap stories and information and find experts to help them when they are stumped. As such, these places should always be presented as warm and welcoming. They should present a respite from the dangers of adventuring. They should have an open bar, friends and relaxation.

What the club looks like will largely depend on where it is located. A club in New York City will likely have a dark wood bar, comfortable tables, couches and lots of earth tones. A similar location in the Middle East may be structured as a group of open-air patios arranged for maximum airflow, where adventurers lounge on cushions scattered across the floor in the shade of palm trees while white-garbed waiters serve coffee, chai and brandy.

These places are the perfect setup for characters to find friends and acquaintances to help with whatever the group may need. An interesting twist on using the explorer's club could come when the game's major villain attacks the place and injures or kills someone near and dear to the party, like an aged and retired adventurer who is loved by all and is known as a fountain of knowledge in a variety of disciplines. Such an event can set the PCs off on a campaign of revenge that can start your campaign with a bang.

While the explorer's club is not an absolutely necessary addition to a campaign, it can present an opportunity for a great base of operations for your PCs. It can add a great deal to your story without the risk for unbalancing your game or handing over too much in the way of resources. After all, there's no guarantee that someone will be

available in the club to provide what the characters need all the time.

## CHURCHES AND HOLY SITES

The church is another iconic image in urban fantasy, from the penny dreadfuls of the Victorian era through the science fiction works of the 1950s. In those days, there was not as much skepticism surrounding religion and the institution of the church, and priests were viewed as good people that could be trusted to give aid and succor to those in need.

The idea of the church, however, need not be relegated to Roman Catholic or even Christian institutions. Synagogues, Mosques, Voodoo Humfords and even Pagan shrines in the jungles of Africa can serve as holy ground and places for the characters to seek refuge and help, be it mundane or mystical.

### The Church in Your Game

The idea of the church or a holy site in urban fantasy fiction serves two purposes. The first is as a refuge from the mundane horrors of the world. There are many stories throughout history of priests, rabbis, and ministers protecting fugitives from despotic regimes. A family on the run from the Nazis in 1939 might find refuge hiding in the basement of a church whose good-hearted priest is willing to sacrifice himself to keep them safe.

The second purpose the church serves in a game is the power of the gods against supernatural evil. The most obvious application of this concept is the aversion vampires and demons have to church relics, symbols and holy ground. Alternately, a rabbi versed in Kabbalistic studies might aid the characters by providing magical knowledge to battle a dark ritual that threatens to upset the Sefirot, or Kabbalistic Tree of Life which represents the various worlds that make up the Universe. A Muslim Sufi might offer a shrine as refuge from minions of Iblis, an Islamic name for the Devil.

In some cases, two opposed factions of a religion could play a role in a game. For example, a Voodoo mambo might ply the magic of her humfor to do battle against the black juju of a necromantic houngan on the back streets of New Orleans. The key concept here is the idea that the church can be sinister as well as benign. One of the more horrific ideas one can face is the idea of an ancient vampire or demon who makes as their base a defaced and corrupted cathedral, having used the tainted energies of the Deeper Dark to turn the once-holy place into a haven for decadence and evil. Such a location could be one of the most horrific things your PCs ever face; after all, they say the worst evil is one that has fallen from a place of goodness and light....

## SANCTUARY

*You feel lost. Hurt.*

*Helpless. Desperate.*

*Alone.*

*Something happened to you or to people you love.*

*And no one understands.*

*No one believes.*

*And no one can help.*

*But we understand.*

*We believe.*

*We can help.*

*We are Sanctuary.*

Sanctuary is less of single place and more of a loose confederacy of like-minded individuals whose goals are to help those that have suffered attacks from people or creatures related to the supernatural.

Sanctuary is a group that helps people deal with the aftermath of a supernatural creature attack. You or your loved ones are attacked by a vampire or werewolf? Well, going to the police or the hospital won't be



much help (even if they do know) and talking to a therapist will either get you a nice quiet rest or hooked up with enough anti-psychotics to dull every pain (and in fact many do just that).

But Sanctuary is different. They staff doctors, social workers, psychologists and even an array of computer experts to help rebuild lives. Like all social services they are understaffed, over worked, underfunded and at least six months behind on their caseloads. Most of the staff are Survivors themselves. Knowing what they know, they could not sit by and let the same thing that happened to them happen to others. So, they set up underground clinics and "supernatural immediate care" facilities. They can be recognized by the symbol they use, a red flag with a white cross.

## History

It is rumored that Sanctuary began as an offshoot of the Knights Hospitaller who themselves date back to the 13th Century AD. Sanctuary began in London in 1838 during a particularly strong rise in supernatural attacks. Believed to have been funded secretly by several anonymous lords, the first "Sanctuary House" treated those afflicted by supernatural attacks and provided relocation services for those who wanted to get away from the sights of their attacks. The first such locations were to New York in America where the second Sanctuary House was built in 1865. New houses were soon added in Paris (1870-71), Prague (1880), Chicago (1893), and Budapest (1896).

World Wars disrupted the flow of money to Sanctuary and many houses closed their doors, some permanently. It was not till 1990s that many started operating again. Their budgets are tighter now than ever before.

Modern Sanctuary Houses today act like makeshift underground clinics, urgent care, social work and counseling centers and even homeless shelters. Most of the people working there are human, but an odd supernatural can also be found working there.



## Sanctuary in Your Game

It can be assumed that whatever city your game is located in there should be (or could be) a Sanctuary House. The PCs can hear rumors of this place or maybe even find it one terrible night. There are a few ways to work it into a game.

First, it the purpose of Sanctuary, to provide medical or social services needs to anyone that have been the victim of a supernatural attack. This can, and maybe even should, include the PCs.

Second, Sanctuary is a great place to connect the characters with important non-player characters or even guest stars. Since they deal with the supernatural community on a fairly intimate basis they will usually know who the major players are and sometimes even have information. Still, Sanctuary keeps their doors open by staying out of the monster hunting business. The less attention they attract to

themselves the longer they are likely to stay open to help the next victim.

A third possibility is that the characters will need to do some sort of job for a Sanctuary House. Since Sanctuary desires to stay out of direct contact, sometimes a special courier or operative is needed. Often times this might be as simple as getting a shipment of antibiotics from a supportive mundane clinic across town. Or it might as dangerous as relocating an entire family after a Loogaroo attacked them and wants to finish them off.

Sanctuary can even serve as a base of operations, just as long as the characters do not threaten the primary operation and mission of the place.

## MAYFAIRS

### Introduction

Mayfair's began on London's East End in the then respectable Spitalfields District sometime in the late 1700s to early 1800s. As the French immigrants began to move out to other upscale areas of the city, or more often the Americas, others moved in. The building, originally designed as a small silk factory, had been turned over by the failure to make payments of the original owners to persons unknown or recorded. The building now was the home to the *Mayfair House*, a brothel that at first catered to the local factory workers who, more often than not, spent their earnings on prostitutes and alcohol. As the factories moved out and slums took over, the Mayfair House's clientele began to change.

Though never described by the pen of Margaret Harkness (writing as John Law), a significant supernatural population began to settle. At first, it was the more local street faeries and the occasional vampire. Later it expanded on to the supernatural orphans of other countries such as an Irish phooka, Russian ruskallas living in the sewers, or even the rare Indian rakshasa. As these new supernaturals came to this

part of London, they needed a place to gather.

Enter the street faerie known in occult circles as "Dirty Nellie."

Nellie, or more often just Dirty Nel or Nel, was a street faerie prostitute. During her years of walking some of the most dangerous streets in London, she picked up knowledge here and there about the London underground and more specifically about the London that normal humans only briefly glimpsed at, the Occult and Supernatural London. Within a few decades she had amassed enough money, knowledge, and prestige that she bought the building the Mayfair House had been in. She renovated it, and sometime in the 1840s she opened the doors to The Mayfair Club.

Designed as a "Gentlemen's Club" in the old sense, men of London's occult underground would meet here to exchange information, make clandestine deals and of course be entertained by supernatural entertainers. The building remained in use and intact until the London Bombing in World War II. After that, the building remained mostly standing but unused since no one was able to tease out the complicated trail of property rights to the place. It would reopen under the name Mayfairs in 1979 with new owners. It, however, continued to serve its original purpose.

### The Mayfair Club, 1840 to 1945

The Mayfair Club is located in the Spitalfields region of East London near Whites Row and Dorsett. Established in the 1840s. The building is a three-story factory building that Nel herself had renovated. While the outside remained industrial looking, inside she had it furnished with the height of Victorian comfort and lavishness. Furniture, carpets and mostly gold were imported from all over the world to give the establishment a timeless quality. As the 19th century wore own more items from the East and in

particular Egypt were added to keep up with the desires of her clientele.

As the Victorian Age began, the Mayfair Club became a central gathering place for members of the occult community. Nel hired several girls, many with faerie or other supernatural blood in them, but most are still just human. She gave the men a place to talk and relax, like any other Victorian club, but she provided other services as well. By 1892 the Mayfair Club was the place to go to get answers or find someone in the occult community. By this time she had not hired any demons, werewolves, or vampires, but she is getting more requests a day for even more forbidden fruit.

At the turn of the century, Nel began to bring more and more what she considered dangerous elements. Unseelie Fae, vampires, and even those with demonic blood in their veins. The world was becoming more and more dangerous in her eyes, and even a streetwise fae such as Nel was beginning to feel the change and sensed it was not for the better.

### Dirty Nel

Since the dawn of the Victorian age, when she gained certain infamy in occult circles, Nel only became more notorious. Sometime in the 1840s, she caught the attention of a few esoteric researchers and occult scholars. Initially, she was the subject of much discussion in the inner circles of occult lodges, discussing her the same way they would the tomes of Agrippa or a new species of vampire. That is until one of them decided to just approach her. When the young researcher returned from his visit, he spoke of her charm, her wit, and of course her skills. Soon Nel was being visited by most of the members of the lodge and of a few others. Each would share some secrets with her, as is common with paramours. She went from back alley toffs to receiving gentlemen in her apartment. Her fees increased, not that the erstwhile men of learning noticed, and she increased

her own knowledge. By the time anyone had figured out what was happening it was too late. Nel knew all their secrets, all their enemies' secrets, and a few more besides. She bartered her knowledge and took over one of the clubs where the men had met, the Mayfair House, and converted it into a club catering to men with a taste for both forbidden knowledge and forbidden carnality. While she is more than willing to accept money as payment, her real currency is information and secrets.

Through guile, deceit, and lots of hard work, Nel worked her way into the prominent occult societies of the time. As her clientele increased in wealth and status, so did her own. She gained not only monetary wealth, but a wealth of information about such organizations as the Rosicrucians, the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn (where she was Crowley's lover for a time), and the Theosophical Society. By World War I, no living being knew as many secrets (and it is amazing how many secrets a man is willing to share under the cloak of night in the lover's bed) of the occult underground as she did.

She had a lavish flat in Highgate, paid for by her many paramours, both with occult and terrestrial power.

During The Great War, Nel provided financial power to protect her own homeland against the threat of the Kaiser, but that was not her primary concern. She was also dealing with worsening relations with the Seelie and Unseelie Courts. Nell, like many Street Fae refused to choose sides, and she was branded a traitor by the Seelie Court Queen. Hoping the further her own ends the Unseelie Court Queen granted Nel Safe Passage for her services to the Unseelie Court (mostly by keeping England's occult community in a sex-crazed haze to keep them out of the Courts' business). This infuriated the Seelie Queen, and she ordered Nel's death.

During the 1920s to 1940s, Nel could still be found at Mayfairs, but her lust for life is mostly gone. She now employed several Unseelie Court

faeries, but she readily admitted they were more likely to be spies for either Court.

Dirty Nellie has not been seen since the Blitz of World War II. If she survived, and many suspect she did not, she must be using a new guise or has moved on to another city.

### **Mayfair's, 1979 to Present Day**

After World War II, the building that had been the home to the Mayfair Club had been abandoned. Sometime in 1975 work began anew on the building. No one knew who had purchased it, but the building was being renovated and modernized. In 1979 Mayfair's (the "Club" had been dropped like the "House" before it) reopened.

Mayfair's had been bought and updated by two vampires, Anna and Daniele.

Mayfair's is now an upper-class "Gentlemen's Club," in the more modern sense, owned by Daniele and run by Anna. It caters to upper-class businessmen and couples. Featuring some of the most beautiful women in the area, Mayfair's also features elegant dining and walk-in humidors and smoking lounge. The only thing that strikes one as odd about Mayfair's is there are no clocks or mirrors to be seen anywhere.

That is on the surface. In the back halls and lower levels, Mayfair's also features specialized services for the supernatural underground. Live S&M shows, demonic prostitution, and even vampiric feeding parlors. If there is a vice that can be bought it can be bought at Mayfair's.

Anna and Daniele control this den of lust by maintaining complete neutrality. They have made many deals and have blackmailed others to gain their position. They have manipulated those in power, terrestrial, spiritual, mundane and magical, into a position of permanent stalemate. They can continue their business, providing what they feel is a necessary service, and feed on all the released essence they care to. Blood is never an issue; they have prospective donors lined up and willing to pay them so they can have their blood sucked. Generally

speaking, everyone is pleased with the situation and they get exactly what they want. Every once in a while, someone comes along and feels they can do a better job and tries to run them out of business, but with a client list as long as theirs, help is usually only a phone call away.

### **Anna and Daniele**

Anna and Daniele are new, relatively speaking, vampires. They had been lovers before they were killed by a vampire and turned. They managed to kill the vampire that had spawned them, and they ran as far as they could manage at the time. Using Daniele's wealth they purchased Mayfair's. They will not divulge how they learned about it, but it has led to more than one speculation that Nel is still alive and running things from behind the scenes.

Daniele appears to be a beautiful young woman in her early 20s with long blonde hair and blue eyes. If asked about her origins, she will claim she is originally from Denmark. In truth her family was from Alnwick, Northumberland and she inherited a lot of money on her parent's death in the early 70s. It was then when she met the older Anna. The two became lovers and were preyed upon by a vampire lord.

Anna is an attractive woman in her early 30s with dark red hair and blue-green eyes. She was running away from her life in London when she ended up in Alnwick. Here she met the young and exciting Daniele. Their whirlwind affair was cut short when they were turned into vampires. Neither will talk about it, but the rumors in Mayfair's is that the vampire was known to Anna prior to meeting Daniele. What is known that the two women somehow broke their bonds of servitude and killed their creator hacking him to tiny pieces and scattering the remains. Anna will not admit it, but she fears they did not do enough to actually stop him.

Both are normal vampires, but their real power comes from the amount of knowledge and occult secrets they have amassed in the last 45 years.

### Using Mayfair's in Your Game

The Heroes can use Mayfair's as a place to gain information. If something is going on in the supernatural underworld, the girls at Mayfair's are usually the first to know. Think of it as an occult and super-natural hybrid of Rick's bar in *Casablanca* and the cantina in *Star Wars*.

Due to the nature of the club, it is also possible that characters could be tasked with procuring something occult and valuable on behalf of Mayfair's or one of their many clients. The power elites will often go to Anna and Daniele with a

request knowing these two will be able to find it, find someone that can get it, or arrange for the item to be delivered.

There is no overt promise of neutrality here, or even of non-violence, the only thing that keeps the clientele in check is the knowledge and occult power possessed by the owners of Mayfair's. This also lends some weight to the argument that Nel is still alive. It also means that occasionally violence will break out, and that usually will find a way to drag the characters into this drama.







## APPENDIX A: THE OLDEST SCHOOL COMBAT AND OTHER SYSTEM CONVERSION NOTES

### THE OLDEST SCHOOL COMBAT

There has been a lot of scholarship done over the years regarding pre-publication versions of the World's Most Famous RPG. About a decade ago, a document surfaced that purported to be, if nothing else, *heavily* derived from the pre-publication work of one of the two fathers of fantasy gaming, who at the time lived in Minnesota. Rumors swirled that the document might have been an intended early publication draft that was ignored by the other partner in this first formal and published RPG's design, and so it languished. Later research turned up the possibility that it may have been something of an alternate house rules document created by playtesters but heavily based on the Minnesota notes.

Regardless, this document, (which has not been publicly released, but which the author has had a chance to study) gives an intriguing insight into a very different approach to old-school combat. This appendix presents an optional system for combat that is intended for

those who want to experience this "Oldest School" style of play.

### A Warning and Conversion Notes

This system is specifically designed to mimic the functionality of the earliest "Arnesonian" versions of the game. It does *not* replicate the statistical probabilities of the core O.G.R.E.S. system, and combat will play very differently (often much more deadly) using this system than when using O.G.R.E.S. Proceed at your own risk.

In addition, Fighting Capability has been simplified in this version to come down to simple numbers. F.C. in the original system was somewhat complex, coming down to a "man" rating (Man+1, 2 men, etc.) and nebulously related to the number of opponents the character was facing. The distinctions were somewhat unclear, including what role F.C. actually played in game.

As such, a cleaned-up, clarified approach has been taken to streamline the way things work.

The author believes that it will closely mimic the feel and function of the original intent, but as with any scholarship and design from that era, room for interpretation certainly exists.

## The Process

The procedure for combat is largely as standard. First, establishes initiative, followed by an exchange of blows, then determination of damage. Let's break it down in more detail.

### Initiative

Unless there are serious mitigating circumstances, players always go first and initiative is not checked. The players can determine the order in which they go, or the GM can use Dexterity to set the order. Once this order is set, it remains for the rest of combat (though players can still wait to see what others do before acting).

### Exchange of Blows

Percentile dice are used instead of a d20. Against AC 2, Chosen Ones and Veterans have a 45% chance to hit, modified upward by 5% per level and 5% per reduction in armor class, until the probability reaches 85%, after which it increases by 1% per level. See the following table:

**TABLE: Percentile Hits by Player**

AC	Fighting Capability								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
9	80	85**	86	87	88	89	90	91	92
8	75	80	85	86	87	88	89	90	91
7	70	75	80	85	86	87	88	89	90
6	65	70	75	80	85	86	87	88	89
5	60	65	70	75	80	85	86	87	88
4	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	86	87
3	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	86
2	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85

\* "To Hit" chance can never exceed 95%, regardless of how high level the character is.

\*\* Progression increases by 1% per level after 85% chance to hit, instead of by 5%

## Calculating Fighting Capability Progression

As shown on the table below, the Fighting Capability of a Chosen One or Veteran is equal to their level. Psychics and Survivors progress at a rate of 2:1; that is, every 2 levels of Veteran or Chosen One on the chart above count as 1 level for a Survivor. Sages, Theosophists, and Witches progress at a rate of 4:1.

**Table: Fighting Capability**

	Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<b>Class</b>		<b>Fighting Capability</b>								
Chosen One		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Inventor		1	2	2	2	3	3	4	4	5
Psychic		1	1	2	2	3	3	4	4	5
Sage		1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	3
Survivor		1	1	2	2	3	3	4	4	5
Theosophist		1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	3
Veteran		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Witch		1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	3

## Monsters and Non-Player Characters

Except in rare and specific circumstances, Monsters and Non-Player Characters should always be considered to have a Fighting Capability equal to their hit dice. In certain situations, such as for a "Big Bad" level monster like a true Master Vampire, Lich, or other creature, the GM may increase their F.C., or in the case of particularly weak monsters (a vampire who hasn't fed in weeks), the F.C. may be reduced, but generally, F.C. is equal to hit dice.

## True Old School Play

The numbers here are designed to represent long-term campaign play with relatively rapid advancement. Remember, however, that the oldest school versions of the game generally assumed players would not advance much past 9th level. If this is your preferred method of play, you can continue the progression by 5% after 85% rather than by 1%, but still assume that 95% is the maximum "to hit" percentage in any circumstance. There is always a 5% chance of missing a target.



## Instant Kill and Damage

Upon a successful hit, characters will need to check to see if they instantly kill their foe. If they do not instantly kill their foe, they roll dice for damage.

### Instant Kill

After determining a successful hit in combat, a check is made for an "instant kill." To determine an instant kill, two dice are thrown on the table below, referencing fighting capability against Armor Class. If the dice indicate a number equal to or higher than the indicated target number, the opponent is killed outright. These numbers reflect creatures with a single hit die. Modify all totals downward by 1 per hit die after the first. That is, checks against a 2-HD creature are made at -1, against a 3 HD creature -2, etc. An indicator of "-" means that there is no chance for an instant kill for this Fighting Capability and level.

	Armor Class							
F.C.	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2
1	9	10	11	12	-	-	-	-
2	8	9	10	11	12	-	-	-
3	7	8	9	10	11	12	-	-
4	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	-
5	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
6	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
7	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
8	3	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
9	3	3	3	4	5	6	7	8

### Other Considerations

Since the old school style of play is one of experimentation and trying new things, there are a number of other considerations that can be taken into account. As with much of the game, these considerations could be broken down into "realistic," "gritty," and "cinematic." They essentially deal with whether or not monsters can deal instant kills, and their F.C. progression.

In a *realistic* game, monsters do not check for instant kills against PCs (but can against other monsters), but merely deal damage dice equal to their hit dice upon a successful hit. The exception is for lieutenant and "Big Bad" level monsters, who have more detail and can deal instant kills.

In a *gritty* game, monsters, too, check for instant kills.

In a *cinematic* game, monsters do not check for instant kills, and have a Fighting Capability of half their hit dice, including for dealing damage. "Big Bad" monsters and Lieutenants are treated as PCs, have a F.C. equal to full hit dice, and can perform instant kills on PCs.

### Why Shouldn't Monsters Check for Instant Kill?

In truth, player characters face far more monsters than monsters do player characters. This means that if monsters are checking for instant kill, there is a disproportionate chance that a player character will randomly die every session. For this reason, it's generally best to stick with a realistic or cinematic style of play when using this combat system. Still, for GMs who truly like to challenge their players, having monsters check for instant kill (especially Big Bads and "lieutenant" level monsters) can truly create a terrifying game, where players think twice before leaping into battle.

## O.R.C.S. CONVERSION NOTES

For those who are fans of Elf Lair Games' original system (O.R.C.S.), we present these quick conversion notes for use with the original *Spellcraft & Swordplay* system. Again, these conversion notes will replicate play from S&S, and will not precisely replicate the statistical probabilities of the core O.G.R.E.S system.

Converting to O.R.C.S. is fairly straightforward, and those who prefer this system will find the process intuitive enough to perform "on the fly."

## Exceptional Strength

In O.R.C.S., *only* Chosen Ones can check for Exceptional Strength if they achieve a score of 18 on their initial generation.

## Combat and Saves

For purposes of Combat, Chosen Ones and Veterans function as Warriors. Inventors and Survivors function as Thieves. Psychics and Theosophists function as Clerics. Witches, Warlocks, and Sages function as Wizards.

These same equivalencies apply to saving throws in the O.R.C.S. system: Veterans save as Warriors, Psychics as Clerics, etc. Classes still gain any bonus to saving throw progressions indicated in their class (Chosen Ones, for example, still gain +1 to all saves at level 1 and every 3 levels thereafter).

This will generally mean characters in an O.R.C.S. game will be measurably "better" at saving than they will in an O.G.R.E.S. game, since the range of probabilities on 2d6 is far less than the range of possibilities on a d20. If the GM (Referee, in S&S) wishes to mitigate this, simply halve the bonus granted to character classes.

Thus, in *Night Shift*, a 10th-level Chosen One has +4 to all saves. Converting to S&S, the same character would have +2 to all saves (essentially, they would begin with +1 and advance every 6 levels thereafter instead of every 3).

## Firearms

Firearms remain unchanged in terms of their effect on play (choose a realistic, cinematic, or gritty approach and go with it). For attack and damage, they use the Ranged Weapons table. For purposes of range increment and attack values, handguns and shotguns are treated as light crossbows, and rifles are treated as heavy crossbows.

## Monster Attacks

For monsters, the Referee (the O.R.C.S. Term for the GM) will need to choose a

weapon equivalency for their attacks, or, where appropriate, use the monster listing in the S&S books. Where there are different "levels" of monster in *Night Shift*, adjust attacks up and down as needed. A vampire in that book, for example, should be treated as a lieutenant (mid-level) vampire. New vampires would see attacks reduced to dagger instead of short sword, and master vampires could see attacks increased to long sword level.

## Class Abilities

In S&S, all checks use 2d6 instead of percentile dice. To convert class abilities' percentile bonuses to the 2d6 check, simply divide the percentile rating by 10, rounded down. The resulting figure is the bonus to the 2d6 check for class abilities, added to the PC's ability bonus. For example, a Survivor with a 30% Move Silently check, and a Dexterity of 15 (+1), rolls 2d6 + 4 to move silently. The target number remains 11, modified by the difficulty of the task at hand, as described in **Book Two of *Spellcraft & Swordplay***.

## Background Skills

Every character in *Night Shift* is assumed, wherever appropriate, to have a Background Skill in their character class—often, this will be represented through their various class abilities (Sages, for example, already have a "lore" ability that replaces the need for a Background Skill). In addition, each PC can choose a second Background Skill reflecting a profession or education they have outside of their demon hunting activities. Such skills should be reasonably broad and general (Mechanical Engineer, Physicist, Doctor, etc.) and represent *knowledge*, not physical training (the latter is represented by the character classes).

Someone wishing to play a Special Forces soldier, for example, would choose Chosen One or Veteran for character class, representing their physical training. Taking "Soldier" or "Military" as a Background Skill gives them knowledge of military bureaucracy, strategy and tactics, and the like. It does not apply to physical or combat rolls.

## Casting Spells

There are two ways to handle spellcasting when playing *Night Shift* with the O.R.C.S. system. First, you can treat spells as a class ability, converting casting percentile to a +x bonus, as above, with the spell's level acting as a penalty to the check. Using the example under "Casting Spells" in **Chapter 3**, A first-level Witch with a base 55% chance to cast a spell would roll 2d6+5. However, casting a first-level spell imposes a -1 penalty, so the character would roll 2d6+4 to cast first-level spells. This is the simplest and most direct conversion.

Another option is to simply use the S&S magic system as it sits. In this case, Witches and Warlocks would then cast spells exactly as Wizards, while Sages would cast as Clerics. Ignore the Spellcasting class abilities of Witches, Warlocks, and Sages in favor of the S&S tables and progression.

## Psychic Powers, Devices and Theosophy

Psychic powers, devices, and theosophy work exactly as any other class ability; simply convert percentiles to bonuses and move to the 2d6 system. Remember, any time you need to convert a percentile, each 10% up or down translates to +/- 1.

### OE, B/X AND BECMI —

## COMPATIBLE GAME CONVERSION

### NOTES

The good news is that **Night Shift: Veterans of the Supernatural Wars** is already largely based on the core concepts behind Basic Edition RPGs, and the vast majority of the game should, theoretically, port over with little to no hard conversion necessary.

### Character Classes

To be very specific, the game uses a B/X approach to systems, and takes inspiration from Original Edition games for the character classes

herein. Several classes have (sometimes rough) analogues in OE. These are as follows:

- **Chosen One:** Monk
- **Survivor:** Thief
- **Veteran:** Fighter
- **Sage:** Bard (as presented in an old OE fanzine)
- **Witch/Warlock:** A combination of the Magic-User and Cleric, with a few added abilities.

The remaining classes, the Inventor, the Theosophist and the Psychic, are entirely new creations, but should work right alongside any BECMI, B/X, or OE characters with little problem. For those classes that do have analogues, the GM should carefully consider whether running them alongside their OE, B/X, or BECMI counterparts will cause a disruption or power imbalance in the game.

The largest difference between classes in general is the existence of Supernatural Attacks in **Night Shift**. Much like the spellcasting rules, this concept is drawn from the original miniatures wargame from which RPGs grew, in particular the concept that only "Hero" level or more powerful characters could actually combat certain supernatural or fantastic creatures. If you're going to import NS characters into a Basic Edition fantasy game, no class should receive Supernatural Attacks, which in turn makes certain monsters much scarier, as characters will need specific forms of attack (wooden stakes, garlic, crosses, silver, cold iron, salt, holly, etc.) to battle many creatures herein.

### Dealing with Magic

When it comes to spells and magic, those games use what is commonly referred to as a "Vancian" system, or "fire and forget" magic. The system in **Night Shift** is inspired and evolved from a pre-OE version of magic that existed in the original miniatures wargame from which the original RPG grew. We have converted it to a percentile system to keep all

class abilities working on the same system—there is a unity and symmetry in the d20/d%/Rule of 2 approach.

That being said, in theory the characters and classes herein could run alongside those in any of your original or classic Basic edition games with no changes necessary. It's even possible to run a Witch/Warlock from **Night Shift** right alongside a Basic Edition Magic User or Cleric. The NS Witch may end up outclassing original or Basic spellcasters, so the GM should be careful about that.

### Combat, and Systems

**Night Shift** takes an OE approach to combat; that is, all attacks deal 1d6 and the choice of weapons is largely a matter of flavor. The B/X rules originally took this approach as well, adding variable weapon damage later. It's left to the GM whether to incorporate variable weapon damage when using this game alongside other classic edition RPGs. If so, you'll need to assign weapon damage to firearms.

Suggested damage codes, based on the general size and class of the firearm, are as follows. It's left to the GM to determine where a given firearm falls into these classes, if you choose to include very specific makes and models, but in general, classifying guns into small or light, medium, and heavy categories should suffice just fine for an abstracted combat system.

#### Pistols

Small: 1d6  
Medium: 1d8  
Heavy: 1d10

#### Rifles

Light: 1d8  
Medium: 1d10  
Heavy: 2d6

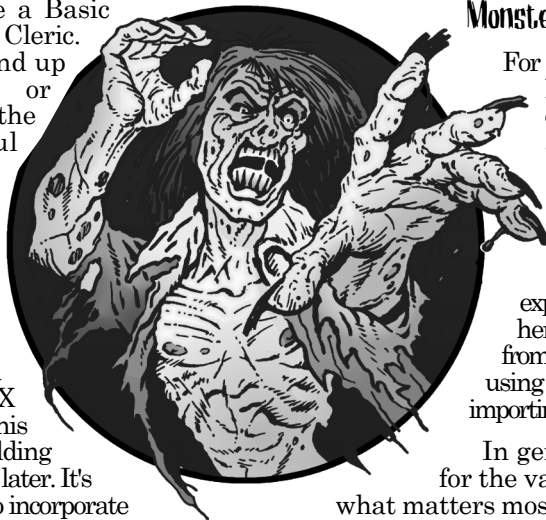
Simply adopt the rules for using firearms in this work and port them into your Basic or Original Edition game. Generally speaking, in a fantasy game if you choose to drop firearms in, go with the Cinematic option wherein firearms are simply another weapon. Also carefully consider whether gunpowder will have a severe effect on your fantasy game.

### Monsters

For the most part the monsters herein were adapted and created using a similar approach. They should easily drop into any Basic edition game you like, and vice-versa with the monsters from those games. You may want to re-calculate experience points using the rules herein if importing creatures from your classic edition games, or using the classic edition rules if importing our monsters there.

In general, keep in mind that for the vast majority of situations, what matters most for a monster are its hit dice. You may have to assign damage to its attacks if using variable damage codes, but a quick look at any monster chapter or tome in your game of choice should give you plenty of reference for that.

In the end, as with any conversion between two similar systems, don't overthink it. Choose a system or subsystem that works best for you, and just go with it. You can easily make adjustments you need to make on the fly, and chances are, your players will never know what goes on behind the screen. The ability to adapt, adjust, and wing it, is the mark of a great GM in any game.





## APPENDIX B: RECOMMENDED READING AND

### VIEWING

We could spend an entire volume just listing all of the inspirational reading and viewing that could contribute to your **Night Shift** game. We have endeavored to stick to just a few of what we consider the "musts" of this list—those things that have most inspired us in our gaming and writing. Sorry if we missed one of your favorites, but we hope you find something new and exciting here to spark your imagination, too!

### BOOKS

Armstrong, Kelley. *The Women of the Otherworld Series*  
Benson, Amber and Golden, Chris. *Ghosts of Albion Series*  
Butcher, Jim. *Harry Dresden Series*  
Cogman, Genevieve. *The Invisible Library Series*  
Gaiman, Neil. *American Gods, The Graveyard Book, Neverwhere*  
Goss, Joanna. *Athena Club Series*

King, Stephen. *Firestarter, Carrie, The Institute*  
Hamilton, Laurell K. *Anita Blake: Vampire Hunter Series*  
Harris, Charlaine. *The Southern Vampire Mysteries*  
Harrison, Kim. *The Hollows Series, Madison Avery trilogy*  
Lee, Tanith. *Red as Blood*  
Newman, Kim. *Anno Dracula Series*  
Rowling, J.K. *Harry Potter Series*  
Shelley, Mary Wollstonecraft. *Frankenstein*  
Stoker, Bram. *Dracula*

### COMICS AND GRAPHIC NOVELS

*Angel*  
*Books of Magic*  
*Buffy the Vampire Slayer*  
Constantine comics (various series: *Hellblazer*, et. al)  
*Justice League Dark*  
*League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*  
*Locke & Key*  
*Tomb of Dracula*  
*Vampire*

## FILMS

*An American Werewolf in London* (1981)  
*Big Trouble in Little China* (1986)  
*Cat People* (1981)  
*Cast a Deadly Spell* (1991)  
*Evil Dead Series*  
*Fright Night* (1985)  
*Harry Potter Series*  
*League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* (2003)  
*Lost Boys* (1987)  
*The Phantom* (1996)  
*The Rocketeer* (1991)  
*The Shadow* (1994)  
*Underworld Series* (2003-2016)

## TELEVISION

*American Gods*  
*Angel*  
*Ash vs. Evil Dead*  
*Buffy the Vampire Slayer*  
*Carmilla (web-series)*  
*Charmed* (original and reboot)  
*Chilling Adventures of Sabrina*  
*Constantine*  
*Dark* (German Series)  
*Dark Shadows*  
*Doctor Who*  
*Forever Knight*  
*Kolchak: the Night Stalker* (original and reboot)  
*Lost Girl*  
*Magicians*  
*Millenium*  
*The October Faction*  
*Outer Limits*  
*Project Blue Book*  
*Stranger Things*  
*Supernatural*  
*Tales from the Crypt*  
*Tales from the Darkside*  
*The Umbrella Academy*  
*True Blood*  
*Twilight Zone*  
*Van Helsing*  
*Wynonna Earp*  
*The X-Files*



## AFTERWORD

Well, there we have it, folks. *Night Shift: Veterans of the Supernatural Wars* is in the bag. This game has been a longer time coming than I think even I realized when Tim browbeat me into starting it.

I've done a lot of writing and game design over the past two decades-plus in the industry, and I've made some wonderful friends and contacts (Tim among them). This hobby has kept me sane more times than I can count, and it's something I look forward to before every session.

It's a strange thing writing this as we all look at an uncertain future, where we've all been asked to stay in our homes and not have direct contact with others. Some of us are coping with digital gaming platforms; others are trusting their friends to stay safe and healthy and giving it a go. Gaming groups, after all, are mostly less than the 10-person maximum gathering recommended!

Whatever way you decide to game, I wish you all the best, all the health, and all the safety in this time of trouble, and I look forward to the day when Elf Lair Games takes the next logical step forward: a presence at conventions where I can meet you all face to face.

To my Kickstarter supporters, I thank you all from the bottom of my heart. You are the ones that actually enabled me to take a step I never thought I'd be able to take: moving Elf Lair Games to the level of a true offset publishing company.

Some of you may be relative strangers to the New Class of Old School. If that's you, welcome, and be sure to check out some of the other great products we have available through Drive Thru RPG in digital and print on demand formats, and please, by all means, keep your eyes open for some great things in the future.

I never dreamed when I submitted my first manuscript for an RPG article back in the late 1990s that one day I would own my

own company. This is more than I ever dreamed might happen.

Now, if only the riches would follow!

I had a fan tell me once at a convention many years ago, when I was just getting started out that he thought I was living the dream. At the time I thanked him and politely laughed it off; after all, at the time I was driving a 1989 Ford Tempo and working as a secretary at a University for less than \$23,000 a year.

Looking back now, however, that moment has always stuck with me and in a way, this is like living the dream. But I'm happy to say, it's a dream anyone can achieve with enough hard work, determination, and dedication.

But that's enough blah-blah-blah-ing. I know I speak for Tim as well when I say I really hope you all love this game as much as we've had a ball creating it.

This system, O.G.R.E.S., or the Oldschool Generic Roleplaying Engine System, will be powering a lot of new product in the future, including a gritty swords-and-sorcery RPG that I intend as our next offering.

If you're a fan of O.R.C.S., have no fear--that system, too, will continue on with a brand new second edition coming soon!

TL;DR version: Thanks for backing me from the bottom of my heart, I dearly hope you enjoy this game, and look for much more from Elf Lair Games in the future!

Carpe Noctem!

-Jason Vey, Pittsburgh, 2020

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# NIGHT SHIFT

Veterans of the Supernatural Wars

PLAYER NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ CREATION DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ XP: \_\_\_\_\_  
 CLASS: \_\_\_\_\_ LEVEL: \_\_\_\_\_  
 SPECIES: \_\_\_\_\_ NEXT LEVEL: \_\_\_\_\_  
 DESCRIPTION: \_\_\_\_\_

ABILITY	SCORE	BONUS	P	S	SPECIAL ABILITIES AND SKILLS	
					ABILITY	BASE %
STRENGTH	_____	_____			_____	_____
DEXTERITY	_____	_____			_____	_____
CONSTITUTION	_____	_____			_____	_____
INTELLIGENCE	_____	_____			_____	_____
WISDOM	_____	_____			_____	_____
CHARISMA	_____	_____			_____	_____
FATE POINTS	_____				_____	_____
ARMOR CLASS	_____	HIT POINTS	_____		_____	_____
CHECK BONUS (P/S/T):	_____				_____	_____
MELEE BONUS:	_____				_____	_____
RANGED BONUS:	_____				_____	_____
SAVES:	_____				_____	_____

## PSYCHIC POWERS/THEOSOPHY/SPELLS/SUPERNATURAL POWERS

POWER	LVL	Pg.	POWER	LVL	Pg.

## GEAR/NOTES

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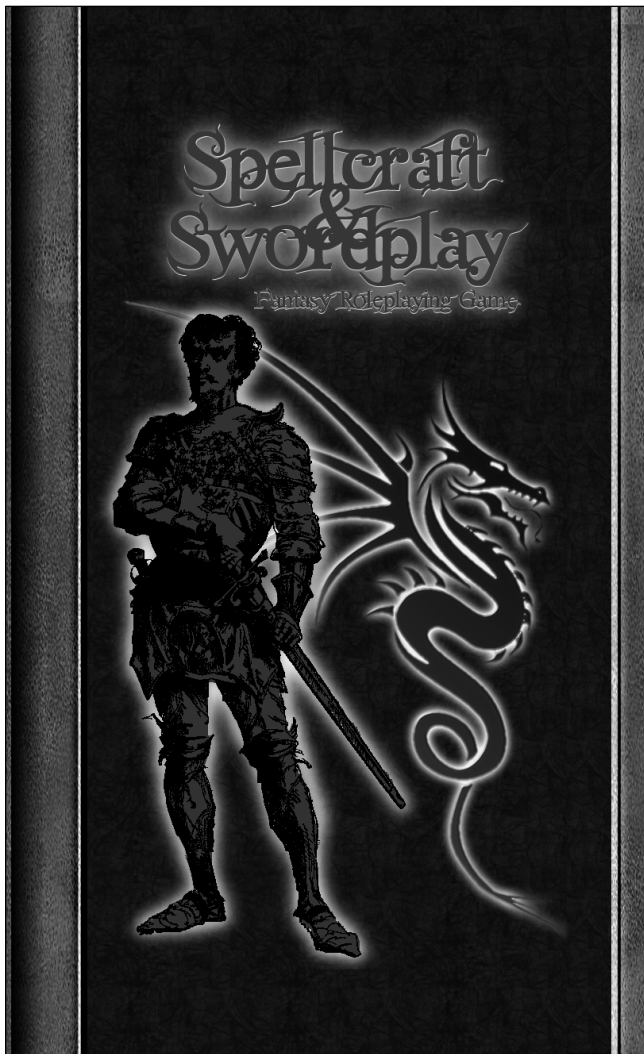
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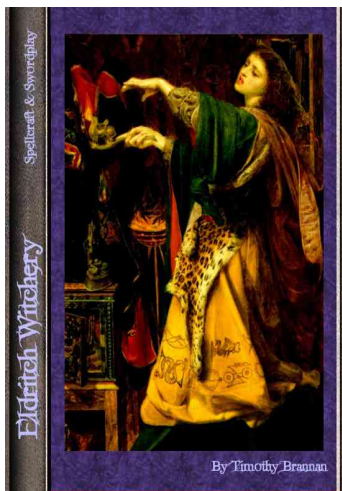
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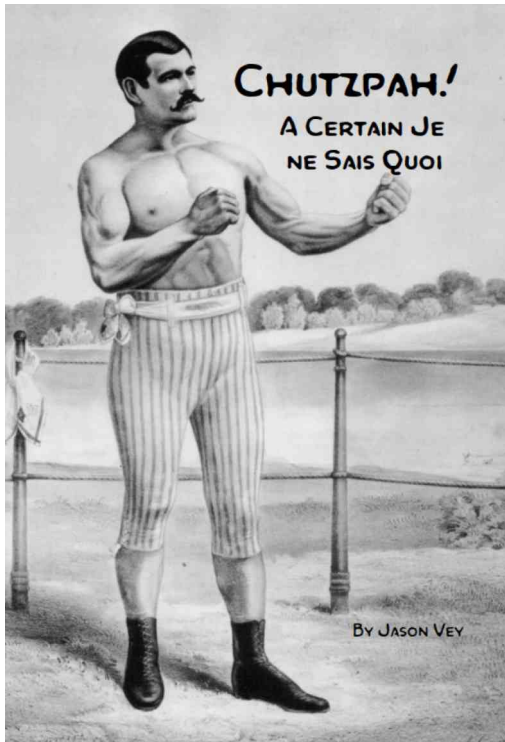
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*Certain Je ne Sais Quoi* today and you'll never look back!

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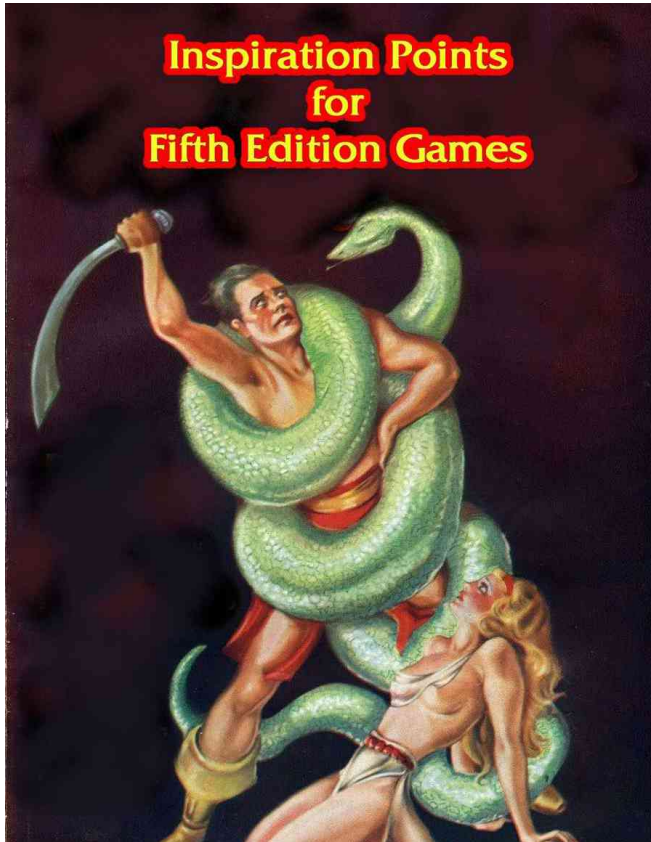
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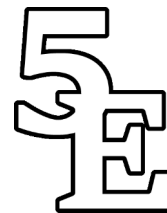
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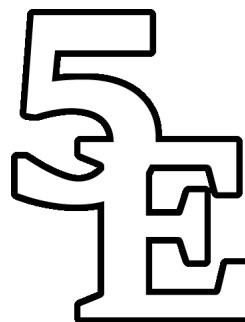
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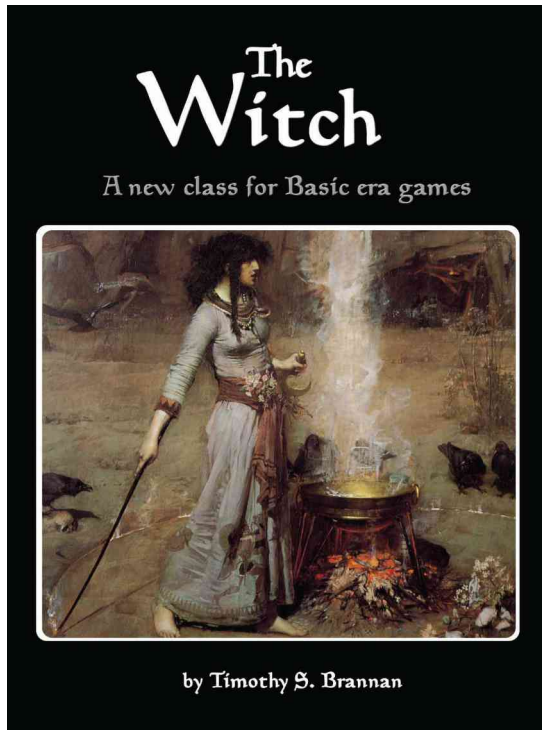
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