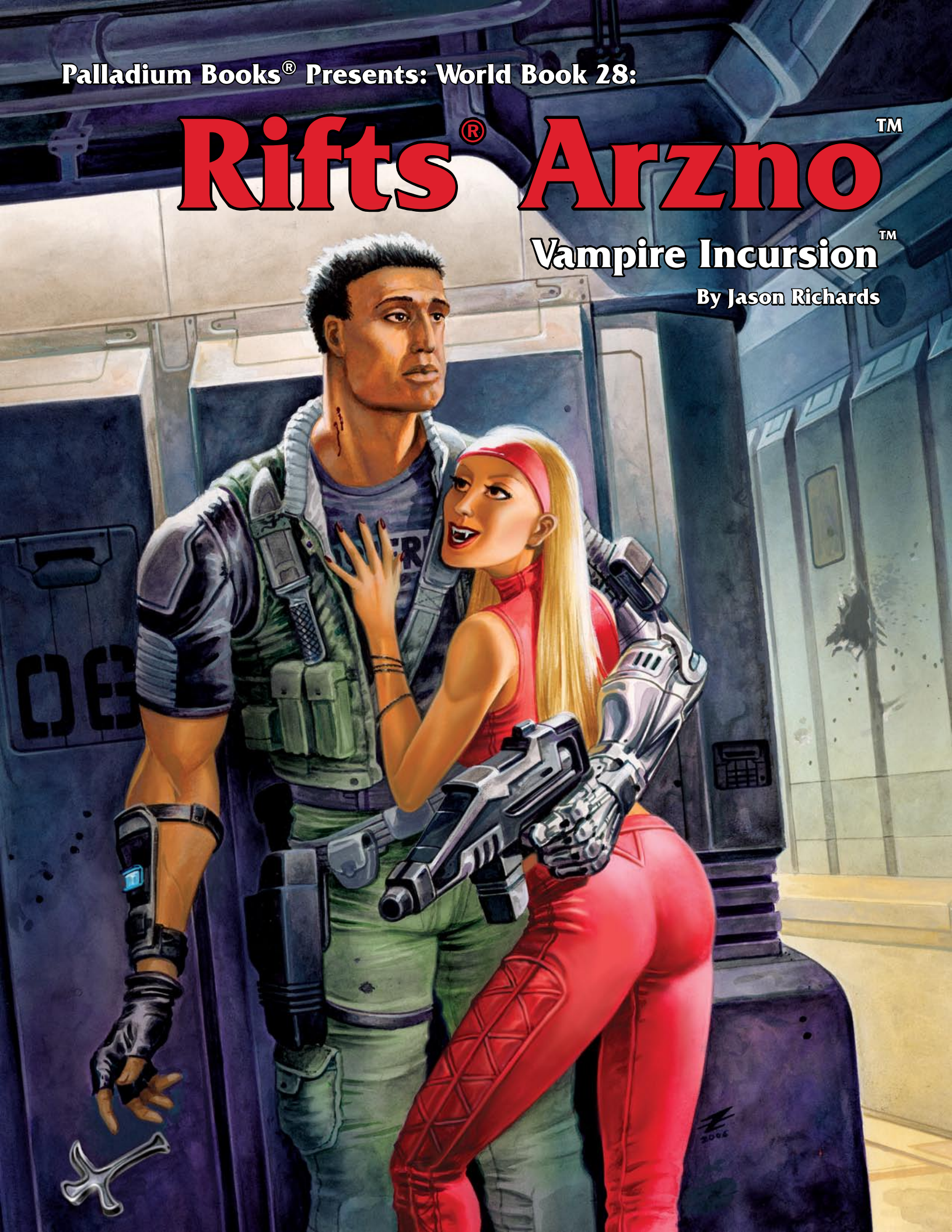


Palladium Books® Presents: World Book 28:

Rifts® Arzno™

Vampire Incursion™

By Jason Richards



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Dedication

Dedicated to my wife and the love of my life, Susan, who has always supported me in every dream that I have ever had.

– Jason Richards, 2006

Special Thanks

Thanks to everyone who has stuck it out with me through this process, and helped this book see print. I particularly want to thank Todd Yoho, Carl Gleba, and John Stevens for their support and encouragement. Thanks to Jason Marker for all of the editing and wonderful insights, and to anyone who has play tested this material over the years. Thanks to my good buddy Ryan Craig for the inspiration and for introducing me to this great pastime. Thanks most of all to Kevin and everyone at Palladium for giving me the shot of a lifetime, and for being so patient with me through the book's development. I hope that it was worth the wait.

– Jason Richards, 2006

The cover, by *John Zeleznik*, depicts an Arzno mercenary who has fallen victim to the mind control of an evil Secondary Vampire vixen.

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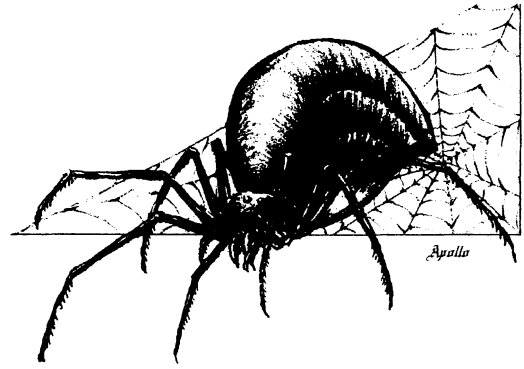
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Arzno – Vampire Incursion™

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Special Thanks to Jason Richards for loving Palladium's games so much and for sharing his ideas with all of us. To new artist Todd Hebenstreit and *all* the artists who breathe visual life into our written words, and to the gunfighters of Wild Palladium, Alex, Wayne, Julius, Jeff, Hank, Kathy, and the rest.

– *Kevin Siembieda, 2006*

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Regional Overview

Greetings from the Author

So, I just finished typing in the last letter of the last red mark of the last edit of the book, and have sat myself here at the keyboard to type out a short greeting and give you a clue as to what lies in the pages beyond.

What to expect from Rifts® Arzno. Arzno represents a lot of things in the role-playing world of Rifts®, and draws information and inspiration from a variety of World Books and other sourcebooks.

Arzno is part New West, a frontier town nestled in a bend of the Grand Canyon: Cowboys, gunslingers, bandits, rodeos, dinosaurs, D-Bees, stony desert and all the rest creating the mood for a great RPG adventure setting. Arzno expands on that, fleshing out a small region of this vast wilderness in splendid detail and full of avenues of adventure.

Arzno is part Vampire Kingdoms. In their first major appearance since World Book One, *vampires* are back with a vengeance. Cold and calculating doesn't begin to describe the vicious new vampire lord detailed in this book. His methods will shock you and threatens all of North America. Vampires remain the great villains of this region, ready to explode onto the national scene in a devastating way unless they are stopped.

Arzno is part Rifts® Mercenaries because it also deals with soldiers of fortune and the inner quests that drive them. For some it's fame, for others it's money or glory, but each seeks to fulfill some deep-seeded desire. In Arzno, most of these men and women hunt creatures of the night and battle to protect those who can't fight for themselves. Merc elements permeate the society, economy, and lifestyles of most every citizen of Arzno and the region, in general. Game Masters want to explore a new world for their players, while all of you gamers out there are looking forward to new O.C.C.'s to play, and new weapons and gadgets to play with. From fresh and exciting Techno-Wizard gadgets and weapons to new character classes for players and great new villains to overcome, I think that Arzno won't be found lacking.

All in all, I hope that everyone out there can find something to enjoy about **Rifts®: Arzno**. This being my first shot at the big time, I just want to put it all out there for you, the fans.

— Jason Richards, 2006

The Grand Canyon State is breathtaking and amazing in our world today, and rightfully ten times that in the time of Rifts®. It is covered in hills and valleys, prairies and desert. The city of Arzno is only a dot in the vast landscape of cliffs and canyons, as well as vast forests and snow-capped mountains of Arizona. Brief descriptions and references to the major points of interest and population centers throughout Arizona are in the pages that follow. Also be sure to see the great wealth of information on the western parts of North America found in **World Book 13: Lone Star**, **World Book 14: New West**, and **World Book 15: Spirit West**.

For the purposes of this sourcebook, talk of the "region" includes all of what was once *Arizona*, and spills over into western *New Mexico* and southern *Utah*. The wilds, both natural and supernatural, offer a great deal of gaming possibilities.

Before the Great Cataclysm, Arizona was moderately populated and housed the greatest number of its residents in and around the capital of Phoenix, very near the geometric center of the state. In Rifts®, the population is much less concentrated, with small ranches, homesteads, towns and nomadic tribes scattered throughout the region. Arizona is very expansive and foreboding to would-be settlers. Dinosaurs, monsters, vampires and creatures from the Rifts roam the land, as do bandits, thieves, outcasts, Simvan, and adventurers.

Climate

Arizona is generally thought of as a harsh, stony desert, unattractive to human life. While this is certainly true in some areas of pre-Rifts Arizona, particularly the south, the territory as a whole sees a wide variety of plant and animal life and a range of different climates.

In the southern-most portion of Arizona, preconceived notions hold true. The only obvious plant life is the flat, broad cacti hugging the ground and the spindly skeletons of mesquite trees. Obvious animal life is limited mostly to snakes, reptiles, rodents, birds, and insects. However, nighttime sees a wide variety of mammals and other critters that can't take the heat of the day venturing out to feed on the plant life or each other. The heat doesn't faze many of the monsters and dinosaurs in the region, and *Sandaconda*, *Canyon Worms*, *Pit Lions*, and certain *dinosaurs* can be seen roaming the hot plains.

The northern eighth of the state, that land north of the Grand Canyon, is extremely temperate and can get downright cold. It even gets substantial snow in the winter. Pine forests cover much of the land, encouraged in their growth by centuries without man's touch and plenty of rich soil. The first days of the apocalypse saw forests burned down by lightning strikes and volcanic activity, and then covered by a thick sheet of ash that spewed from the volcanoes of the American West. All of the carnage left the land full of nutrients and with open skies that soon prompted new growth. Spring melt-offs recharge the natu-

ral aquifers and springs that run into seasonal rivers to pour into the canyon and add their waters to the flow of the mighty Colorado River. Overall, the northern part of the state is isolated, but the perfect place to settle in a land otherwise short on trees and good living conditions.

The land in between shifts and changes from flat to rolling, and from dry to luscious. Most of it is covered in prairie with tall grass, scrub, and the occasional clump of green vegetation clinging to a river or spring. All across this terrain are the toppled ruins of towns and cities.

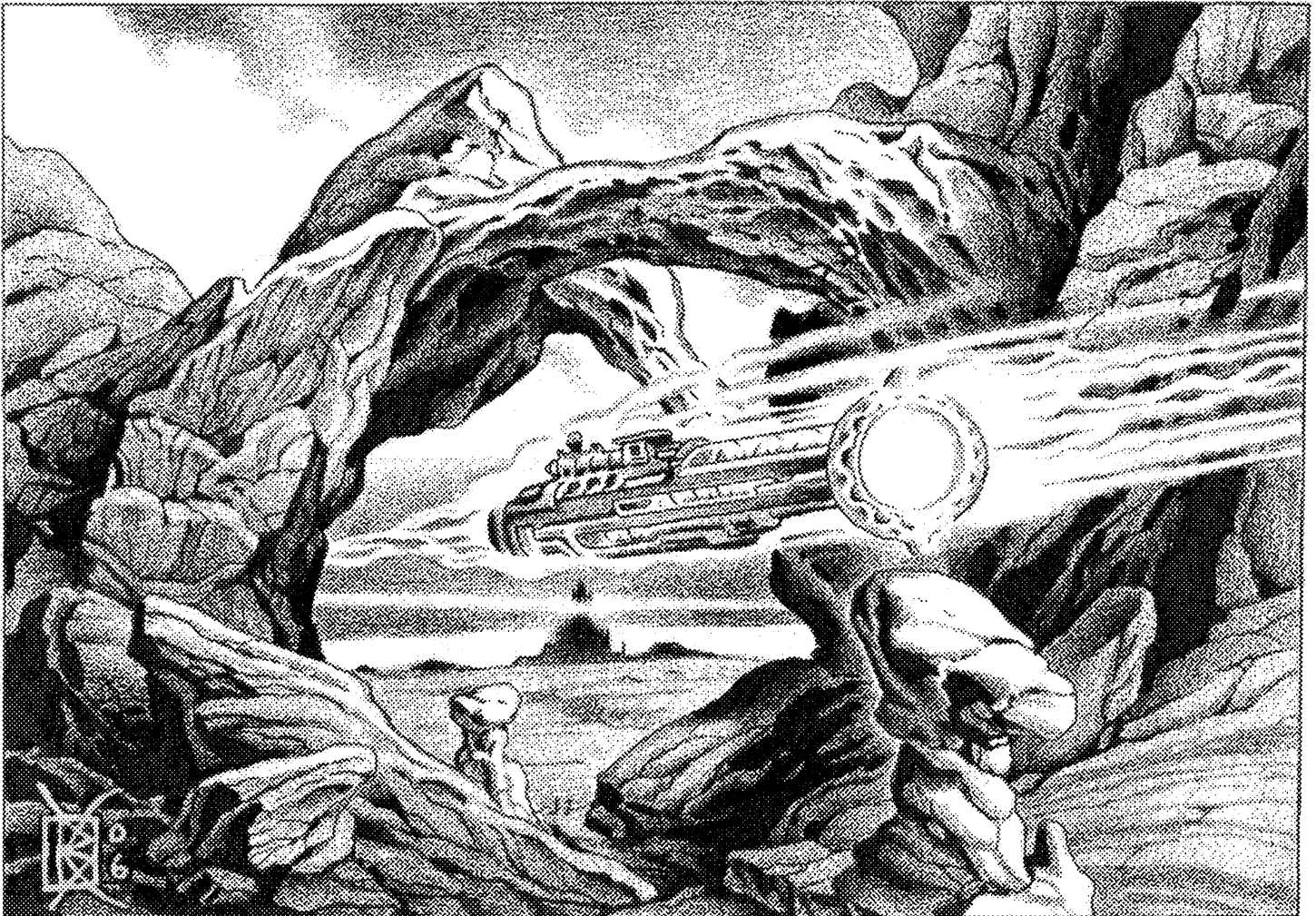
Travel Across Arizona

Travel across the New West can be treacherous to say the least. Bandits and monsters are around every bend, ready to take advantage of unprepared adventurers journeying between isolated specks of civilization in the untamed wilderness. While the deserts and prairies are passable, it is not wise to enter into such a trip unprepared. Most transportation across the Western Wilderness can be divided into two broad categories: primitive and modern.

Primitive travel through Arizona, as well as New Mexico, Utah, Nevada, and most areas in the New West, includes horses, exotic riding animals, beasts of burden, drawn coaches, and one's own foot power, with horseback and travel on foot being the two most common and affordable means of travel. Simple farmers and ranchers to Simvan, wandering D-Bees, raiding par-

ties, Native American nomads and even visiting adventurers travel on foot or by horseback. Even most villages and towns only have a few vehicles in the community. Electric power is hard to come by for most, as is gasoline or vehicles that run on the power of magic alone. Further, most of Arizona is devoid of significant magical energy, making ley line transportation (a cheap and viable option in many parts of the country, even for common folk) impossible.

Those utilizing primitive modes of transportation put themselves at the mercy of the elements, bandits, and monsters of all kinds. There are few reliable routes through Arizona that provide natural resources such as fresh water or grazing land suitable for horses or other riding animals, particularly in the southern part of the region. Even in some of the northern prairies one can travel for dozens of miles without coming across a stream or pond in the summer, as the arid heat burns away collected water until they are refreshed by spring rains. Those traveling by foot or horse are best served by hiring a local guide or having a skilled outdoorsman in their company. Local Wilderness Scouts, Rangers and tribal people familiar with the region can easily live off the land, but outsiders from the East may find the West to be desolate, harsh and beyond their capability to survive. The lawless New West is also populated by bandits and raiders who survive by plundering settlements and robbing travelers, adding to the dangers of the environment. Magic or psionic powers can, of course, make travel even under the harshest of conditions much more manageable, but even mages



and psychics must be careful in this hostile environment and not overestimate their abilities or underestimate the potential danger.

If there is one advantage to “hoofing it” on foot through the southwestern wilderness, it is that bandits are likely to ignore such travelers. The brigands assume anyone on foot is poor and has nothing or little of value worth stealing. The assumption is if the travelers had money, they’d be traveling by horseback or, better yet, in vehicles. Travelers on foot are likely to be allowed to pass unmolested, but those with vehicles or using riding and pack animals are prime targets. In fact, most bandits will steal the vehicle and all. However, those who are not completely evil (Diabolic or Miscreant), will usually leave travelers one vehicle that all can travel in (or on top of), or take all pack animals and extra horses, but leave enough riding animals for two riders per animal. It is sort of an unspoken code, and why horse thieves who will take a body’s riding animal in the middle of nowhere are despised, hated and hung – because losing one’s riding animal can be a death sentence in this part of the world. The only exception is if *civilization* (a town, ranch, homestead) is within walking distance (under 20 miles/32 km away), then the bandit will point his victim(s) in the right direction. (“There’s a town about 15 miles/24 km due west. I’d be walkin’ if I was you.”) Thieves are also likely to leave their victims sufficient water. Only the most vile and murderous bandits leave a man in the middle of nothing without a horse, water and a basic weapon.

Predatory monsters are not so merciful, however, and may be attracted by easy prey like pack animals, herds of cattle, or people on foot, especially if there is injury and the scent of blood or illness among the travelers. Large groups are usually safe, with the predator steering clear of the main group, but may attack stragglers and those who wander off on their own.

Modern travel involves the use of robot horses, dune buggies, trucks, hover vehicles, power armor, or any high-tech vehicles, including Techno-Wizard vehicles. Travel inside a vehicle is usually fast, reliable, and may even offer protection from the elements via an enclosed space shielded from the sun and cooled by air-conditioning. Hovercycles and off-road vehicles are extremely popular, especially among explorers, mercs, bandits and adventurers, and trucks and other larger, versatile vehicles are usually found in and around communities. Small, fast vehicles get from one place to another as quickly as possible without worrying about carrying a great deal of supplies or survival gear; most are one- and two-man vehicles. Trucks and other large, utility or combat vehicles are used by wealthy communities, ranchers, merchant trade caravans, kingdoms in the East, mercs and adventurers, making them targets for thieves, bandits and raiders.

Modern, especially M.D.C., vehicles greatly reduce the dangers of the environment, from the elements to predators. They are also usually fast and comfortable, and owners of vehicles capable of hauling cargo can often find work at various communities transporting goods from one place to another, pulling tree stumps, towing wagons, etc. Animal predators are much less likely to attack a truck, a rocket bike or armored caravan, sticking to easier meals unless nearly starved to death. Even when creatures do attack, it is usually easy to simply outrun or outgun them, leaving them in the dust one way or another.

Bandits do tend to prey on more modern travelers, particularly those who don’t seem to be sporting a lot of firepower or are experiencing some sort of breakdown. If an easy target can be identified and easily overcome, bandits get a maximum return for their efforts. Those who travel along the same routes on a predictable path are more likely to be struck than others, as it becomes easy for highwaymen to set traps and take the appropriate measures to help ensure their fast and easy victory.

Notable Places Around Arizona

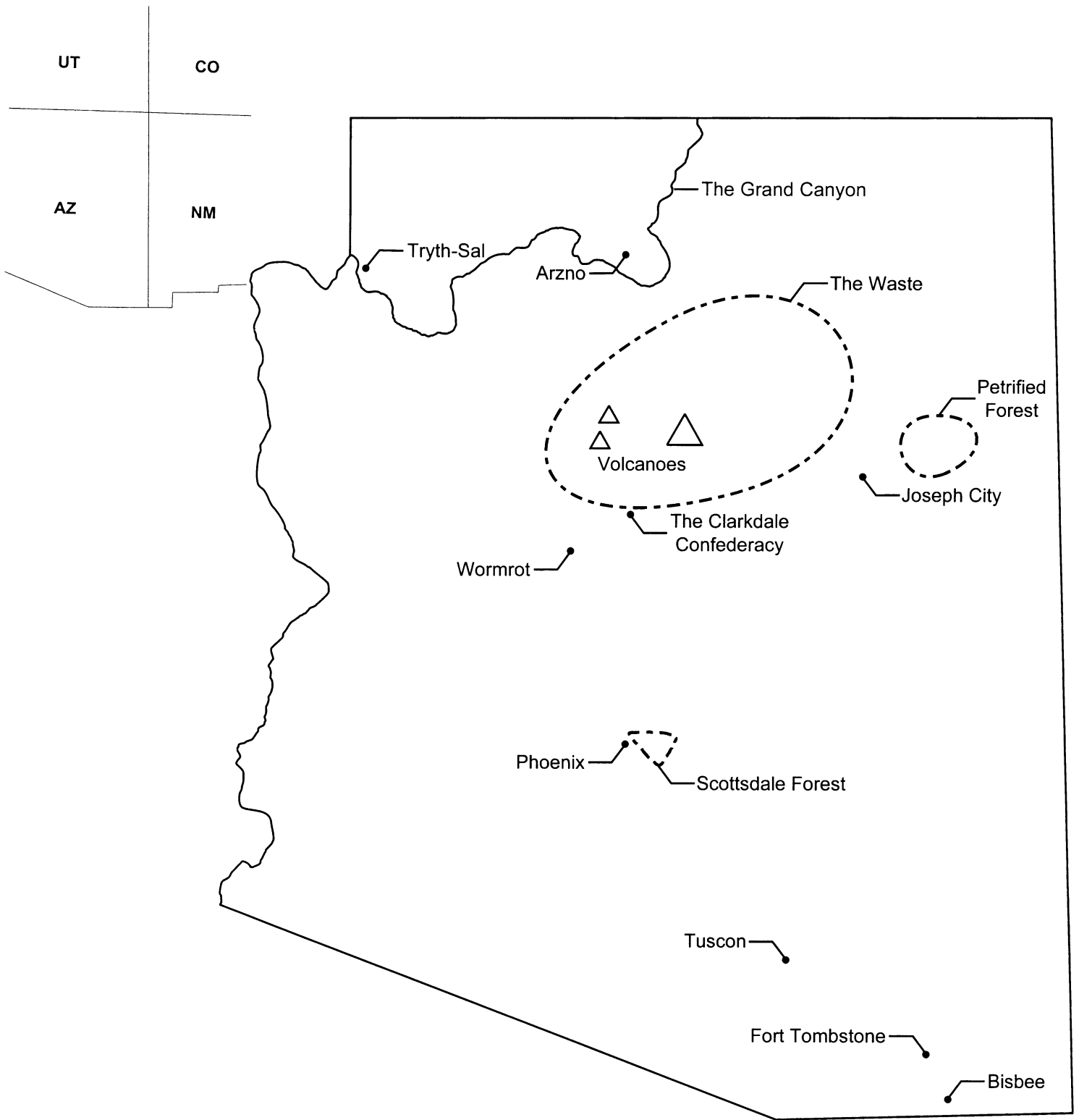
Area 51, Nevada

The Black Market stronghold in the region is located at the former secret U.S. military base located at *Groom Lake* in Nevada, but few people actually know anything about it or the Black Market operation. Exactly how Area 51 fell into the possession of the Black Market is uncertain. In fact, the Black Market works hard to chase people away from Area 51 and contain their greatest secret: This is the HQ of the Black Market weapons dealer known as *Bandito Arms*, and the manufacturing facility for all of its high-tech power armor and weaponry. Technology shockingly similar to the Coalition States, including the SAMAS. Secrets layered upon secrets, but what nobody outside the Black Market knows is that the Bandito Arms manufacturing compound is the old, US Air Force secret base that used to design, build and test experimental and cutting edge military weapons and vehicles. That’s why Bandito Arms can offer a few SAMAS-like suits of power armor, and other gear. Much of this technology is on par with the CS and there’s no telling what they may be sitting on or developing in the sprawling compound underneath the sands of Groom Lake. While the location is a closely guarded secret, it is a common rumor that the Black Market operates its weapons branch, Bandito Arms, from somewhere in the New West. However, few are adventurous or foolish enough to go looking for it at Area 51 or anywhere else. Those who might one day discover the truth will either be forced to serve the Black Market at Area 51 or be executed. The Coalition Military would pay or do anything to get the location of the Bandito Arms manufacturing H.Q. and seize it for themselves, or failing that, destroy it. Thus, the need for extreme secrecy and security. The Black Market will take no chances of being discovered.

Utah

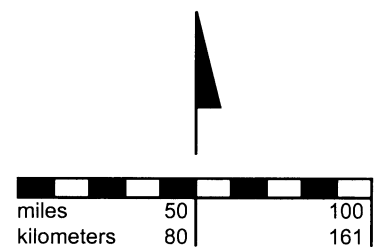
The land immediately north of Arizona, in the pre-Rifts State of Utah, is more of the same: desert, scrub, canyons, bluffs, dinosaurs and emptiness. Southern Utah is covered with canyons and natural marvels of nature’s splendor. Mountains are covered with pine trees and capped with snow for much of the year. There is wildlife to hunt as well as many creatures from the Rifts only too willing to hunt back.

North of the more mountainous regions can be found the mysterious *Shifting Sands*. Beyond that lies the *Salt Lake Desert* and its mysterious inhabitants, the *Keepers of the Desert*. For in-



Arizona

Regional Overview



formation on all of Utah and its many surprises, see **Rifts® World Book 14: New West**.

Colorado

Colorado is home to many mining communities, and to the Colorado Baronies. Southwestern Colorado marks the northern termination of the trade route that has become known as the Great Trade Road. There the town of New Durango contributes a great deal to its prosperity, providing precious metals and gemstones to help drive the Western economy (whose most common currency is such valuables) and consuming produce and beef brought in from the south. See **Rifts® World Book 14: New West** for more info on Colorado and the Techno-Wizards of the Colorado Baronies.

Old Mexico

To the south of Arizona lies a desolate waste that was once northern Mexico. What places survived the Great Cataclysm were destroyed or enslaved by vampires centuries ago. The entire southern half of the once thriving nation is known as the **Vampire Kingdoms** (see **Rifts® World Book One: The Vampire Kingdoms**), where humans are enslaved and used as cattle by their undead masters. Northern Mexico is believed to be mostly desolate wastes pockmarked by small villages and towns usually under the thrall of a vampire master. The northern prairies are also home to roving bands of Wild Vampires – feral undead who hunt in packs like wild dogs. While some, like the legendary *Reid's Rangers*, fight the vampire threat in northern Mexico the country is dominated by the undead. As a result, there is the constant threat of vampires expanding into the old American Empire.

Indeed, the people of the Southwest (Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas) are always in danger from vampires coming up from Mexico. Most of the time, trouble from vampires comes in the form of a lone, cunning Master or Secondary Vampire, a small clan of 2-8 vampires, or a pack of Wild Vampires. Wild packs can range from as few as four or five members to as many as 40-60, seldom more than that. However, when a Master or Secondary Vampire roots himself to one location, he or she may establish a *vampire colony* that can quickly grow into hundreds of undead. When the vampires numbers exceed one thousand, a full-blown incursion, or invasion, can sweep across an area as the undead work to bring their vile master, a Vampire Intelligence, into our world to establish a vampire kingdom. Bisbee and Fort Tombstone are two examples of undead colonies that, as they grow unchecked, threaten to become full blown kingdoms. For that reason, even a lone vampire is hunted down and destroyed whenever one is discovered, and upstart colonies, when identified, are usually raided and attacked until all its members are annihilated or flushed back to Mexico.

For the full lowdown on vampires, Reid's Rangers, Mexico, and beyond, see **Rifts® World Book One: Vampire Kingdoms**.

Coalition States Operations in the New West

Far to the east is the nation known as the Coalition States, the last bastion of unspoiled human civilization in North America (at least from their perspective). The CS state of Lone Star wages a constant war with the bandits of the *Pecos Empire* in an attempt to reclaim all of what was once Texas, and therefore has occasional tactical interest in the rest of the New West as well, including the movements of Pecos Raiders and the activities of the Black Market.

Officially, the CS has no ongoing military campaigns or presence in the New West outside of the Coalition State of Lone Star. In reality, there are a number of long-range reconnaissance operations in place. As many as 20 long-range teams are in the field at any given time, on missions that can last a few weeks or several months. In most cases, the Coalition soldiers are under deep cover, disguised as ordinary adventurers, mercenaries, Saddle Tramps, wanderers and Tolkeen refugees.

One operation seeks the heads of state and war criminals from the fallen Kingdom of Tolkeen.

Another involves collecting dangerous magic items stolen away before and after Tolkeen fell. Items the CS regards as a threat to its security and survival.

Another is designed to undermine the bandits of the Pecos Empire by gathering intelligence on the various bands, and through assassination of key leaders and rabble-rousers within the gangs.

Another is locating the headquarters and manufacturing plant of Bandito Arms (the Black Market kingpin of the New West).

Another is gathering intelligence on mercenary strongholds like MercTown (Kentucky) and Arzno (Arizona).

Yet another, is simple reconnaissance and intelligence gathering on any number of subjects.

And finally, vampires. After waging so many campaigns in the Pecos, and getting so many field reports about vampire activity from across the Southwest, Lone Star has launched a new operation to evaluate the dangers posed by the undead. This is being spearheaded from the Lone Star Complex under the designation *Operation Holy House*. The primary purpose is to gain intelligence and assess the level of danger to CS interests in the West and Southwest, particularly to the States of Lone Star and El Dorado (Arkansas). Information on the Coalition States can be found in numerous Rifts® titles, with the most notable being **Rifts® Ultimate Edition, World Book 11: Coalition War Campaign, World Book 13: Lone Star**, and **Rifts® Sourcebook Four: Coalition Navy**.

Notable Places in Arizona

The mountains, canyons, deserts, and prairies of what was once Arizona are vast spaces of unclaimed wilderness. Many areas are uninhabited by humans or anybody. This makes the population centers that do exist extremely important to the survival of all who brave this harsh land in the New West. Some of the



most notable places in the region are briefly mentioned below, with references to the world information in other sourcebooks, where appropriate.

The Grand Canyon

This marvelous feat of nature still goes by its ancient, pre-Rifts name. This isn't surprising, since no other words can really describe it; "grand" hardly does it justice as it is. This mighty gorge, carved over the millennia by the Colorado River, is 277 miles (443 km) long, often over a mile (1.6 km) deep, and as much as 18 miles (29 km) wide. It supports a wide range of Earth and alien plants, animals, and people, including *humans*, the gentle *Fennodi Cactus People* and the strange but majestic *Lyn-Srial* (also known as Sky Knights). The pterodactyl-like Leatherwings and small tribes of Gargoyles and other monsters also make their home in the very cliff walls of the canyon, while others stalk the canyon floor or the lands around the massive chasm.

The entire length of the Grand Canyon is interwoven with ley lines, making the Grand Canyon the only known area of significant magical power in all of Arizona. Any practitioner of magic within two miles (3.2 km) of the Grand Canyon sees his spell range and duration increased by 50%. Being inside or directly above the Grand Canyon itself, doubles the range, duration, and damage of magic spells. Mages may also draw an additional 10 P.P.E. per level of experience every twelve hours, and enjoy greatly enhanced P.P.E. recovery, regaining 10 P.P.E. every half

hour, even without meditation. The magical nature of the Grand Canyon also attracts its fair share of Entities, demons, creatures of magic and practitioners of magic.

Full details on the Grand Canyon, its climate, and its inhabitants can be found in **Rifts® World Book 14: New West**.

Arzno

Arzno is a city-state founded by mercenaries and adventurers. It is a thriving community nestled between the north rim of the Grand Canyon and the grand plateau beyond. It is a place where the magical art known as Techno-Wizardry is common, and where daily life revolves around the activities of the thousands of mercenaries who live and work within the city. See the section on Arzno, elsewhere in this book, for all of the details on it and its people.

For the citizens of Arzno, the Grand Canyon provides a number of natural resources. There is the fresh water of the Colorado River, down below on the canyon floor, and the relative safety and seclusion of being located on the very lip of the canyon (on the north side). This means the yawning space of the Grand Canyon serves as a natural barrier against the dangers to the south, be they bandits, vampires or monsters. However, the greatest resource available to Arzno is easy access to the power of the ley lines that crisscross the entire length of the Grand Canyon. In addition, a few short ley lines run through the city itself. This has encouraged a growing community of Techno-

Wizards to make their home in the heavily armed and fortified city-state.

Unlike most communities in Arizona, Arzno is of considerable size – a real burgeoning city – and the founding mercenaries and their families have always welcomed practitioners of magic. Thus, Techno-Wizards are a respected and productive part of Arzno society. It doesn't hurt that the Techno-Wizards also contribute magical creations to the defense of the city as well as do thriving business creating TW weapons, armor, vehicles and devices for sale to the mercenaries and visitors. **Note:** The city of Arzno, its inhabitants and notable TW items unique to Arzno are described elsewhere in this book.

Tryth-Sal

Tryth-Sal, the home of the enlightened Sky Knights, is found hidden within the Grand Canyon itself. These noble, bird-like D-Bees act as champions of the weak and protectors along much of the length of the Grand Canyon and for miles around the canyon. They welcome anybody, humans and D-Bees, who manage to find their way to their beautiful city. The city is located more than 100 miles (160 km) west of Arzno, near the Arizona-Nevada border. **Note:** The full details on the Lyn-Srial/Sky Knights and their hidden city can be found in **Rifts® World Book 14: New West**.

Phoenix

The once sprawling city of Phoenix is reduced to ruins and inhabited by bands of humans and D-Bees struggling to survive. Hermits, small family clans, adventurers down on their luck, and small bands of 100-400 people may be found scattered throughout the area. Half of the inhabitants in the area make their living by scavenging, ranching, and farming, the other half by hunting in the neighboring, but dangerous and alien **Scottsdale Forest** and living off the land. Before the Coming of the Rifts, the Scottsdale area, located in a more temperate and hospitable region than Phoenix, was an upper-middle class city in its own right. Today it is a forest unsuitable for human (or D-Bee) habitation due to the great number of dinosaurs and monsters that roam the forest and prey upon humanoids. Still, for those willing to take the chance, hunting can be good.

Phoenix is also the last stop at the southern end of the *Great Trade Road* that runs through much of Arizona and southwestern Colorado. A small outpost and business office of the *Arzno Mercenary Corps* that provides security on the Great Trade Road is also located in the ruins of Phoenix.

On the outskirts of Phoenix, where the city of **Chandler** once stood, lives a tribe of 350 Papago Indians. They are friendly neighbors who regularly visit and trade with the Lynn-Srial/Sky-Knights, Reid's Rangers, visiting Cyber-Knights, Arzno and other good folk in the region. Sadly, the Chandler tribe are believed to be the last of their race.

Tucson

The city of Tucson is gone, reduced to a series of radioactive craters during the Great Cataclysm. Today, the area is known as Craterville or the No-Man's Zone. Nothing lives or grows here.

A number of crude warning signs with a skull and crossbones or a radiation symbol are posted all around the area. Whatever happened here during the Great Cataclysm or the early years of the Dark Age, its effects still linger as low levels of radiation, and people are smart to avoid the place. Weeks of exposure will cause radiation sickness and death.

Bisbee

A group of 670 Secondary Vampires and 120 Wild Vampires serve their master, *Carlos Vanderberg*, in the ruins of Bisbee. These dangerous "living dead" have made enemies with virtually everyone who matters, including the Lyn-Srial, Arzno, the Papago Indians of Chandler, and Reid's Rangers. Yet it seems that their greatest threat may come from a rival clan of vampires living at Fort Tombstone.

Fort Tombstone

To most outsiders, Fort Tombstone seems to be an ordinary frontier town of isolationists who don't cotton to strangers. Humans and some D-Bees walk the streets and there is a strong presence of local law enforcement and militant defenders who greet visitors, especially mercs and adventurers, to tell them there's nothing for them in Fort Tombstone and to keep moving to the next town. The people are wary of outsiders, which is normal in the New West, and they don't like strangers who could be advance scouts for a merc army, raiders or bandits hanging around their community.

In reality, Tombstone is the base of operations for Xavier Stuart, a Master Vampire with dreams of conquering all of North America, starting with Arizona.

Xavier Stuart sees the Bisbee vampires as his first obstacle in turning Arizona into a new Vampire Kingdom. The vampires of Bisbee are wild, unimaginative louts who need to be assimilated into his army or destroyed, and soon. These brash and arrogant undead regularly draw the attention of Reid's Rangers, mercs, lawmen and others who are the sworn enemies of vampires. With vampire hunters sniffing around the area and waging raids against Bisbee, it seems only a matter of time before Xavier's own covert operations and vampire population are discovered in Tombstone. Nobody knows there are vampires at Fort Tombstone (let alone how large and organized the group is), and he'd like to keep it that way until he is ready to strike. On the other hand, he has been able to frame the Bisbee vampires for the handiwork of his own undead, and Xavier is working on provoking the humans to the point that they completely destroy those in Bisbee.

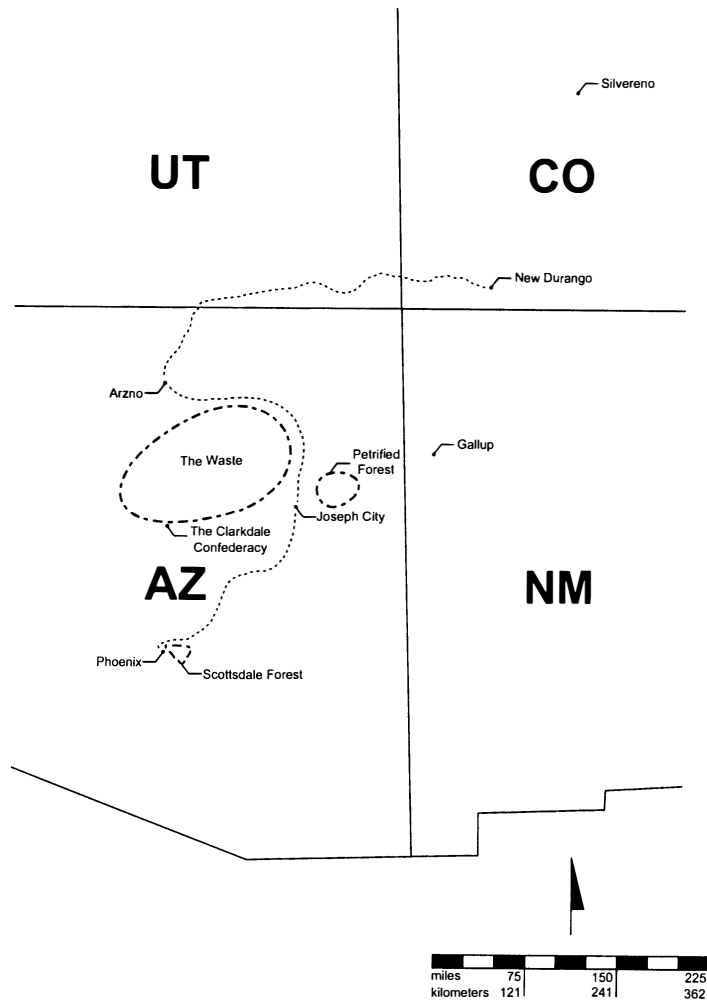
See the section on **Fort Tombstone**, elsewhere in this book, for more information on the town, Xavier Stuart and his army of vampires.

Fort Apache

This Native American stronghold stands between the White Man and his second invasion of the West. Hidden in the *Black Range Mountains* near the Arizona-New Mexico border, these isolationists hold one of the most sophisticated strong points in the

Americas. Like Area 51, Fort Apache was once a military storehouse for high-tech weaponry and power armor with limited in-house production capabilities. The exact location is unknown to virtually all of those who live beyond its walls. This tribe is, by far, the most well-armed and hostile of the Modern Native American Preserves. **Note:** See page 205 of **Rifts® World Book 15: Spirit West**.

In addition to the Apache of New Mexico, various Indian tribes have returned with the gods and great spirits to reclaim their ancestral lands after a thousand years in waiting. **Rifts® Spirit West** is dedicated entirely to the society, magic, and all other aspects of the Native Americans of Rifts Earth.



The Great Trade Road

For the most part, the New West is a spacious wilderness of prairies and open land. The few communities that exist are scattered hundreds of, sometimes a thousand, miles apart. Most hurt economically and defensively, and barely survive. Technology is often low, and even the most successful will have a mix of technology that ranges from frontier days to advanced science and/or magic. Even the biggest and best communities are isolated from true civilization and function as an oasis of people and technology in the middle of nowhere. Without communication and regular contact with others who live in neighboring territories, it is difficult to maintain an economy and nearly

impossible to grow the community. Small villages, homesteads, ranches, farms and towns are also at a loss to defend themselves from significant or gathering threats without help from others. Consequently, it was only natural that common routes of travel and trade have been established throughout the New West.

One incredible marvel of travel in the New West is the *Techno-Wizard Ironhorse*, a magically-powered train that travels along ley lines to haul passengers and freight from place to place. While this is very useful for the Colorado Baronies and other territories to the north, it does most of the residents of Arizona little good since ley lines are very sparse away from the Grand Canyon. Arizona has no major lines of magic to connect the territory with others throughout the Western Wilderness. Travel by horse, coach, or speedy modern transport does well for short distances, but becomes vulnerable traveling great distances in the wild. Riding animals need water, food and regular stops to rest. Modern vehicles may need to stop to refuel, break down, or get lost, as well as become vulnerable to attack far away from any place that might be able to offer help. It is easy to get lost in the vast plains and deserts of Arizona, and straying from the path can easily spell doom for travelers. The baking heat of the sun, dehydration, and starvation are all invisible enemies who have claimed more lives than bandits and inhuman monsters.

Over time, trade routes have been established that provide intermittent stops for refueling, rest, repairs and resupply, at established communities. Such routes are comparatively safe and have helped the communities along them prosper and grow. The most famous and traveled of trade routes in Arizona is the **Great Trade Road**.

The Great Trade Road isn't a road in the sense that it is paved with concrete or cobblestones, but is a known and well traveled general route from New Durango, Colorado, to Arzno (at the Grand Canyon) and Phoenix, Arizona in the south. The road was gradually established by traders and merchants. Starting in the north, silver, gold, and gems from *New Durango* are shipped to the major market of Arzno, where prospectors can sell their wares without competition from Silvereno and the Colorado Baronies. Techno-Wizard items, lumber, and other goods are then taken over the canyon and into *Joseph City*, where locals come to purchase, trade, and sell goods of their own. From there, the merchant caravan travels to the small population hub of *Phoenix* where the rest of the goods are sold off and the caravan is restocked with produce, grain, lumber, meat and furs from the surrounding communities of Phoenix, where farmers and independent hunters, trappers and trade companies are able to sell and trade their humble goods. The merchant caravan then turns around and takes the goods collected in Phoenix, back up the Great Trade Road, making stops along the way to pick up more trade goods, and heads back north until they reach Arzno, where they load up again on luxury TW items, weapons and technological goods, and head back to New Durango to start all over again.

Bandits. One disadvantage to the Great Trade Road is that it provides easy targets for Highwaymen, bandits and marauders. Gangs of brigands may lie in wait for small caravans, lone vehicles and travelers on foot or horseback. Large gangs may even attack large and well defended merchant convoys. For this reason, professional merchants and traders travel heavily armed

and often hire security escorts from Arzno and mercenary companies to provide extra protection, especially during times of trouble and when the cargo is especially precious. Smaller outfits may hire adventurers as escorts because they are usually much less expensive than professional soldiers of fortune.

Couriers. The Great Trade Road is also used by couriers who carry small deliveries, mail and messages from one town to another. Instead of traveling by horses or truck, couriers typically use high-speed hovercycles, rocket bikes or robot horses to make quick trips and outrun bandits and bushwhackers. These speed demons live to ride and usually travel in pairs or in threes for defense, and to have somebody to race against on the way (after all, what's the fun of speeding along all by yourself?).

Passengers. Anyone is allowed to travel the Great Trade Road and it has become a major trail for the region. However, some merchant caravans and delivery services will also take passengers. Depending on the delivery service, travel may be luxurious comfort in an air-conditioned cab, or the back of a truck or wagon with the cargo.

Key Stops along the Great Trade Road

There are dozens of small ranches, farms and villages to stop at along the way to take a break, resupply or make a sale along the Great Trade Road, but the following are the biggest and most notable communities that make such dangerous journeys worth the trip.

Depending on the cargo and the pay, those running the various trade and shipping companies may take days or weeks to reach the final stop or a primary destination. The shortest trips are those designed to go from point A to point B without any stops in between. However, the vast majority (80%) will make at least a brief stop at every community to at least acquire the latest news and gossip or to eat at a favorite diner or rest stop. Many of the drivers and caravan leaders also have their own side deals going with the various small communities and stops along the way, to whom they sell furs, moonshine, spices, cheap perfume, trinkets and common necessities, as well as make unauthorized deliveries, all under the table on their own. These side operations do not steal from the merchant employing the delivery people, and the goods offered seldom intrude on the merchant's area of business. However, the practice is frowned upon because it slows down travel, unauthorized stops put the caravan at an increased risk of attack, and the merchant isn't getting a cut on under the table deals.

Arizona and southern Utah and Colorado all offer beautiful sights for travelers. Between stretches of stone and dust, one can see true wonders like the Sunset Crater Volcano, or the beauty of the upper Colorado River. Aside from established, semi-permanent campsites, there are ruins of cities virtually untouched since the Great Cataclysm where possibly no man has tread in hundreds of years. The major stops along the Great Trade Road are given below, followed by some notable side trips taken by many of its delivery men and travelers.

New Durango

Location: Southwestern Colorado, just west of the Rocky Mountains. Northern-most end of the Great Trade Road.

Major trade and services: Exports precious metals and gems, a commodity needed by the Techno-Wizards of the region, as well as stone, and building materials. Imports lumber, beef, electronics, and luxuries from all across the region. A principal provider of shipping and delivery services all along the Great Trade Road.

Description: The business-savvy mining baron of New Durango, Marshall McMillan, is one of the wealthiest Carpetbaggers in the New West. The town of 1,400 human and D-Bee residents is a major trading hub for small communities in Colorado west of the Rocky Mountains, and produces significant amounts of silver, as well as some gold, with a smattering of precious and semi-precious gemstones. McMillan owns all of the mines, the stores and markets, the banks, and the barbershops. He owns virtually every square inch of the town and is the de facto mayor, sheriff, and judge all rolled into one.

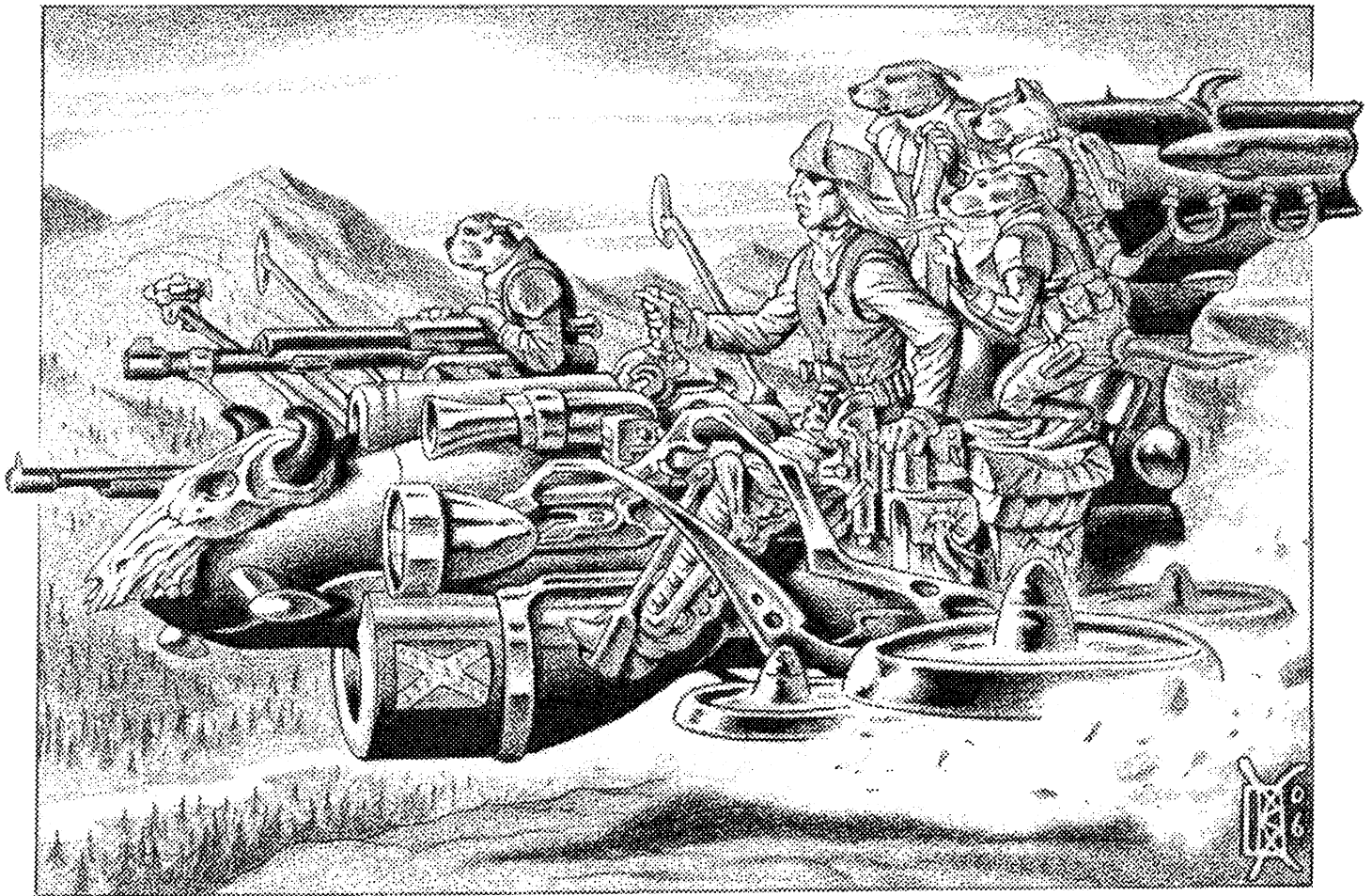
Luckily for the residents of New Durango, McMillan is a gentle taskmaster and sensitive tyrant. He gives the residents only as much trouble as they give him, and that usually stops at the general roughhousing and mayhem of any New West town. Every so often, McMillan's men crack down to keep the order, but as long as things don't get violent, everyone is treated with a fair hand. A measure of law and order keeps the traders and merchants from around the territory coming back to do business and spend their money in town, all of which means big profits for McMillan.

Not so coincidentally, McMillan also owns the local shipping company and courier service. *New Durango Freight and Mercantile* is the largest, most successful trade caravan on the Great Trade Road, and the Lightning Courier Service is among the top high-speed delivery services. In addition, McMillan owns a sizable chunk (or the whole thing outright) of a half dozen other couriers across the Great Trade Road and in the Colorado Baronies. This all makes New Durango the place where the road starts, but the buck stops.

Arzno

Location: Northern Arizona on the northern rim of the Grand Canyon; 230 miles (368 km) west and 60 miles (96 km) south of New Durango.

Major trade and services: Exports lumber, beef, cattle, and other agricultural products, textiles (fabric), electronics, tools, farm equipment, generators, weapons, body armor, and Techno-Wizard items across the region. Imports precious metals and gems from New Durango, additional textiles (for its own use and for resale), electronics and various tech goods, as well as miscellaneous craft work, household items, jewelry, and luxury items from the south and back east. The self-sufficient and modern city-state offers visitors all the convenience of a modern city, from hotels, saloons and entertainment, to merchant shops, hospital, garages and repair shops. It is, however, most known for 1) its mercenaries and security services for travelers and merchants, 2) its Techno-Wizard devices, and 3) its ferry services across the Grand Canyon. As a home to Techno-Wizards, Arzno actually provides several "ferry crossings" in which TW vehicles ride across the open air of the Grand Canyon to get from one side to the other. A TW train takes visitors on a spectacular tour of the Grand Canyon, first flying along the canyon's lip,



then down and along the walls of the Grand Canyon, then along the floor, and then up above the canyon, high in the sky, that is a thrilling and memorable ride that no pre-Rifts helicopter experience could match (and only for 3 credits a person)! Likewise, Wing Boards and other TW Flyers are everywhere in and around Arzno.

Description: Arzno is covered in detail elsewhere in this book, so suffice it to say that it is a strange combination of military compound, trading post, industrial town with factories, garages and granaries, and part wonderment with TW Flyers and devices zipping around in the sky and along the ground, as well as cowboys and Indians, Juicers and practitioners of magic walking along the same street as cyborgs, power armor and giant robot vehicles.

Arzno is a main stop and trade center that helps to keep the Great Trade Road in business, but benefits from the trade route from the many visitors, clients and merchants who come their way. The Great Trade Road is also what enables Arzno's Techno-Wizards and other skilled engineers and mercs to gain easy access to other communities and spread their goods and services throughout the New West. The fact that the xenophobic people in *Gallup* want nothing to do with magic or non-humans helps keep the traffic coming through Arzno and relations with New Durango solid and prosperous.

Joseph City

Location: Central Arizona on old Interstate 40; 130 miles (208 km) southeast of Arzno.

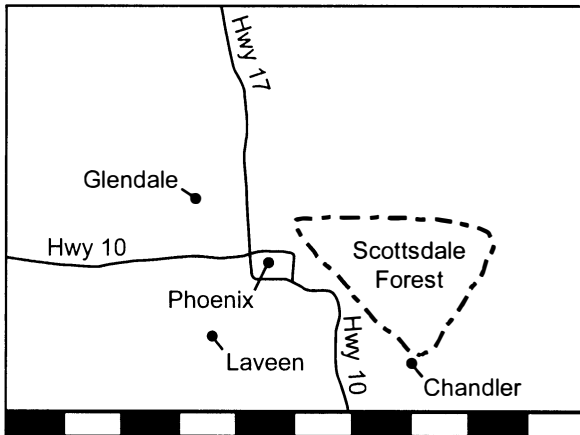
Major trade and services: Exports farm produce, mostly to Phoenix and other communities in the south, cattle, horses and leather goods. Imports lumber, farming equipment, textiles and fabric, and luxuries from the larger population centers to the north and south. Serves as a rest stop and watering hole along the trail for travelers and traders.

Description: Joseph City is one of many small communities that serve as a hub for travelers in the region. Residents of the sizable Fennodi town of *Winslow* and the Apache of *Rivercreek* make their way down the ruins of I-40 to trade, sell, and purchase goods at the day-long stopover point in Joseph City. Most come to buy practical items for the house and the fields as well as some luxuries like exotic hides from Phoenix. The merchants and farmers of Joseph City sell eggs, produce, salted meats, dried provisions, baked goods, leather goods (bags, purses, hats, capes, coats, boots, moccasins, straps, rawhide, etc.), basic supplies, canteens, drinking water, and moonshine to the traders and visitors who stop at their community. They also sell and trade similar items to homesteads, ranches and communities further down the line.

Residents of the towns and villages around Joseph City (mostly farmers and hunters) use the Great Trade Road to make money in other ways. With everyone in one place at one time to do business, craftsmen set up their tents and hawk their wares not only to the traders, but to each other. One can find all kinds

of services, from cowboys for hire to hunters to laborers willing to clear lands, work farms, or exterminate bothersome predators. Old women sell tamales and fried cakes from baskets and carts. Farmers can get their plow blades and hoes sharpened or buy newly-broken horses from ranchers. The arrival of a merchant caravan stimulates the local economy every time it arrives.

Phoenix Area



Phoenix

Location: The ruins of Phoenix at the junction of old Interstates 17 and 10; 140 miles (224 km) southwest of Joseph City.

Major trade and services: Exports exotic fruits, vegetables and other farm crops, meat (chickens to cattle), furs, hides and animal bone, as well as lumber and handcrafts. Imports necessities and luxury items from anywhere and everywhere, particularly weapons and armor, processed food, fabric, tools, farm equipment, generators, and everything from basics to the exotic. As an outpost and stop along the Great Trade Road, people of Phoenix sell at low prices all the items previously noted (including drinking water, fresh eggs, chickens, milk, bread, baked goods, handcrafts, etc.) as well as provide services such as healing, refitting and repair work on vehicles, manual labor, and security. Remember, the Arzno Mercenary Corps has a business outpost in the ruins of Phoenix that offers professional security and guard services (mostly mercs of second to fifth level experience).

Description: The ruins of Phoenix host a small group of human and D-Bee settlers who survive as hunters and gatherers in the dangerous Scottsdale Forest. The alien vegetation offers a variety of game to hunt, from normal Earth creatures like deer and wild cattle to alien dinosaurs and predators. The skins of many of these creatures are especially valuable to be used in armor and other applications, and a variety of otherworldly fruits and herbs grow there as well.

The A.M.C. keeps a contingent of roughly two dozen soldiers, Operators, and Techno-Wizards in Phoenix to help service the great numbers of TW weapons and equipment used by the hunters, much of it originating from Arzno Weapons Manufacturing. This outpost also serves as a "refit and refuel" point for A.M.C. security details who are contracted by many trade caravans.

The Homely House, Arizona

This rest stop and watering hole is simply a homestead halfway between Joseph City and Phoenix, run by a kindly, old Hopi woman who everyone calls *Miss Sunshine* (her real name is Shining Stone, but few know her by it). Miss Sunshine is a thin, frail, life-worn woman of at least 85 years. She cooks for the regular traders and travelers who stop by her home and has turned her barn into a makeshift hotel, as she hasn't raised any livestock since her husband passed away 20 years ago. (Although there is a chicken coop and pen away from the barn.)

Travelers who book rooms with Miss Sunshine sleep warm and dry in stalls and hay lofts full of dry straw. A pair of medium-sized fire pits dug out on the ground floor keep the whole barn toasty warm even on the coldest desert nights. Far from luxury, it's better than sleeping under the open stars on the hard ground. Besides, Miss Sunshine only charges five credits (or equivalent in trade) per person and offers a heaping breakfast plate of fried eggs for only two credits a plate. If there is a negative side to this unusual but pleasant boardinghouse, it's that Miss Sunshine and her helpers do not sell or accept alcohol in trade, and do not allow or abide drunkenness.

The aging Miss Sunshine is looked after by her neighbors (although the nearest one is four miles/6.4 km away), whom never ask what she needs, but show up to perform basic maintenance on the house and barn like patching roofs, painting, repairing rotten boards, and cutting firewood. She'll also accept such services from visitors as trade for a night's sleep in the barn, breakfast and other basic services of a boardinghouse (fresh bath, additional food, special information, etc.). Locals also make sure that she has plenty of eggs, flour, and other basics, and always let her pay, but many slip the money back into her purse or pocket when she's not looking or pay her extra for the goods she trades them.

Miss Sunshine is helped by her grandson, Swift Wind, and his wife, Blue Jay, and their 13 year old daughter, Sun Dancer, all of whom live and work at the Homely House.

The Killer Cliffs, Utah

Known to residents of pre-Rifts Earth as the "Straight Cliffs" in the *Grand Staircase National Monument* in southern Utah, the Killer Cliffs are a favorite detour for couriers looking for an intense ride. Living up to its ancient name, the cliffs stair-step down at a mind-bogglingly steep angle, covered in eroded boulders and what little scrub can hold on to the rocky soil. Beyond it lies what was once known as *Little Egypt*, a stretch of miles of active sand dunes. This all adds up to the ultimate in thrill rides for hovercycle enthusiasts.

The standard game is a race, beginning at the top of the Killer Cliffs. The riders drop down the face of the cliff (initially some 60 degrees down from horizontal) and guns it, trying to avoid the boulders and occasional tree jumping into the way. If one can successfully navigate down the 300 foot (91.4 m) drop and through the initial boulder field, it's a straight shot over the dunes to the other side. The first one across without breaking their neck is the winner. More than a few packages have failed to be delivered thanks to a rowdy, young hot shot busting his ride during a racing side-trip.

Notable Locations *Not* on the Great Trade Road

One might notice a few distinct locations that are *not* on the Great Trade Road, most notably, the town of Gallup, the Colorado Baronies, and the Clarkdale Confederacy. Why these significant population centers are passed by is rooted in economics and hard-learned lessons.

Gallup, New Mexico

As noted earlier, Gallup is a community of frightened and hostile xenophobes who want nothing to do with D-Bees, practitioners of magic or strangers. The sizable community on the Arizona-New Mexico border would make an excellent stopover for the Great Trade Road, but its 2,300 inhabitants, all human, are intensely xenophobic and don't trust outsiders, magic, or D-Bees, even though they have a few mutants counted among their own number. What contact they do get from the outside world comes via trade with Joseph City, only a little over 100 miles (160 km) away. Residents sometimes go to Joseph City to trade when absolutely necessary, but most disdain the sight of humans, mutants, and D-Bees all together in one place. Travelers are wise to give this town a pass or find themselves getting run out of town . . . or worse. **Game Master Note:** Unknown to anyone, the vampires from Fort Tombstone have begun to bring prominent citizens of Gallup under their sway. These mind-controlled vampire henchmen would lobby against increased traffic by outsiders to preserve the secret plan and operations of their vampire masters at Fort Tombstone.

The Colorado Baronies

The northernmost end of the Great Trade Road is *New Durango*, but the most populated area of Colorado lies northeast of this mining town at the **Colorado Baronies**. The road could extend its reach to the Colorado Baronies, but the major players in the trade operation along the Great Trade Road (particularly New Durango's tycoon, Marshall McMillan and various Arzno Techno-Wizards) fear that including the Baronies would sap valuable trade from their own communities and business interests.

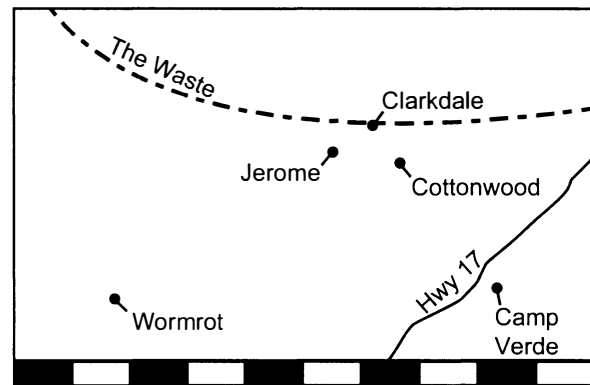
The Colorado Baronies are in direct competition with Arzno for dominance of the New West Techno-Wizard industry, and it is a contest the Baronies are winning. Although Arzno is "the" place to get TW goods in Arizona and New Mexico, few people outside these regions have even heard of Arzno. Meanwhile, the Colorado Baronies are known as far east as the Mississippi River communities and even at Chi-Town and here and there in the Magic Zone. With the fall of Tolkeen, who was once the leading TW manufacturer in the West, the Colorado Baronies seem destined to fill their shoes. The Baronies are currently inundated with orders for Techno-Wizard weapons and devices. *Arzno*, on the other hand, has seen only a small bump in sales, but hopes to leverage the opening left by Tolkeen to make their move into the larger market. They offer a nice range of TW armor and TW vehicles that nobody else does, but so far, Arzno remains relatively unknown, except among a growing number of mercs and adventurers in the Southwest and distant MercTown.

Truth be told, the Colorado Baronies have little interest in the Great Trade Road. They are prosperous enough and have their hands full as it is without spreading out into the desolate regions of the Southwest (a low profit opportunity).

Silvereno

Closer than the Colorado Baronies, the mining town of Silvereno is excluded from the Great Trade Road solely because of the wishes of Marshall McMillan in New Durango. He simply does not want his competition taking advantage of his shipping lines, and has no issues with leaving them to fend for themselves. Couriers make regular trips to Silvereno much like they do to the Colorado Baronies, utilizing the Great Trade Road as far as it will take them, and setting out from New Durango by less-traveled trails.

Clarkdale Area



Clarkdale Confederacy

Perhaps the most surprising community left off of the Great Trade Road is the Clarkdale Confederacy. With its prosperous ranches and relatively large population in such close proximity to the road, it seems ridiculous for them not to be included.

The truth is, everyone involved would love to do business with the Confederacy, but trade with the town is just very, very dangerous. Its territory encroaches on the infamous region known as **the Waste**, making it only possible to approach from the south. This, unfortunately, brings any travelers very, very close to **Wormrot**, the apparent home of the deadly *Worm Wraiths* (described in *Rifts® New West*). Worm Wraiths are supernatural bandits and killers who patrol the region and attack any merchant convoy or group of mortal travelers they encounter.

Other raiders also stalk the area around the Clarkdale Confederacy, some from the *Camp Verde* ruins, others seemingly popping out of nowhere. *Vampires* and their humanoid minions attack and harass travelers night and day, and generally make life unbearable for anyone trying to trade with the citizens of Clarkdale (see the *Fort Tombstone* section for details). The combined threat of the supernatural menaces and monsters is enough to keep most traders away, but to compound matters, the people of the Confederacy are isolationists and understandably paranoid about strangers. Consequently, they don't want merchant caravans coming through their territory. Any business done with members of the Clarkdale Confederacy is done at an

other stop, where representatives of the three cities purchase high-tech gear and other essentials on behalf of their citizens.

Background on the Clarkdale Confederacy. Not all communities totally fell victim to the volcanic activity of the Great Cataclysm.

Some cities, through luck and hard work, were able to survive into the Post-Apocalyptic age. One such story of survival is that of the Clarkdale Confederacy. When the natural disasters that changed the face of the world began to shake the planet, most people panicked while the citizens of the cities of *Clarkdale*, *Cottonwood*, and *Jerome*, in central Arizona, quickly banded together for mutual support and protection. When the dust cleared, much of the neighboring territory was gone. Flagstaff and every person within 50 miles (80 km) of it were destroyed by the fire, ash, and quakes of the giant volcano that developed there. Even half of Clarkdale was burned to the ground. Prescott was soon overrun with demonic invaders that seemed invincible and eager to cause suffering. All communication was lost with Phoenix and the rest of the world. Isolated, the survivors banded together, relied on each other, and the Clarkdale Confederacy was born.

Now, hundreds of years later, very few know the full history of the Confederacy, but many prosper thanks to their ancestors' hard work and perseverance. The three cities have become havens for peace-loving humans, D-Bess, mages, psychics, and anyone who could contribute to the overall good of the community. They have survived as isolationists, valuing their independence and shunning virtually all outside influence. The three communities are each sovereign members of an economic and military/defense triad. As equal partners with equal stake, each community pitches in as best it can for the benefit of the greater body. Each town supports the other two in any way it can, and there is virtually no trade with other territories other than the occasional acquisition of weapons, armor, and vital high-tech equipment and raw materials, which is always purchased away from the territory and brought in.

Visitors to the Confederacy are not welcomed. An encounter at one of the ranches and farms surrounding the towns proper is likely to be short and curt, full of warnings that "strangers ain't welcome 'round these parts." Violence rarely occurs to travelers who seem courteous and friendly, and those who seem safe enough may be allowed to make purchases, water their horses, and grab a bite to eat before being encouraged to leave. Those obviously looking for trouble or particularly monstrous in appearance are met by armed citizens on horseback and on foot with one final warning before they are set upon by a militia force armed with high-tech weapons and a great deal of magic.

In 109 P.A., the entire Confederacy has a population of around 15,000 (up from the listing in *Rifts® New West*) including about 1000 human refugees from Tolkeen. Each of the three cities contributes in its own way:

Clarkdale is by far the central and most important member of the Confederacy. It is the Mystics and ranchers of this city who have learned to tame the dangers of the Waste; to turn the fertile no-man's land into free range for their cattle. Despite its unequalled success, the people of Clarkdale gladly share their abundance with their two neighbors.

Ranching in the Waste is a dangerous occupation and even powerful Indian Shamans and Mystics can't keep the vicious



Screamers at bay for long periods. That makes long journeys into the Waste extremely dangerous, however, the ranchers manage by having their practitioners of magic clear the way, lead the cattle into the Waste and drop them off at a source of food and water, and leave them to graze. For the most part, the supernatural predators leave the cattle alone, so when cattle are needed for beef or resale, or it is time for the cows to begin calving, the ranchers send a team of cowboys and mages back into the Waste to bring whatever number of heads are needed. This has worked surprisingly well. Of course, most ranchers also send in a team on a regular basis to check on the herd and to round up stragglers.

The need for mystic protection makes Native American Shamans highly valued in Clarkdale, so it's no surprise that it has a large population of Indians and practitioners of magic; more so than the other two members of the Confederacy. Cowboys and similar occupations (Wilderness Scouts, Saddle Tramps, Vagabonds with cowboy, ranching and animal skills, etc.) are also a large part of the population. Psi-Stalkers, however, are completely absent from Clarkdale. Similarly, mutant dogs and other beings sensitive to psionic and magical activity avoid Clarkdale because they cannot abide to be so near *the Waste* and the psychic horrors it holds.

Cottonwood is another ranching town, but one that does *not* utilize the Waste. This community contributes to the Confederacy by providing dairy products such as milk, cheese, butter and ice cream. These cattle require constant attention and cannot be left in the Waste or wilds to roam free. The farmers of Cottonwood also raise pigs, chickens, and some horses and sheep in

addition to growing crops that include maize, wheat and cotton for the Clarkdale Confederacy.

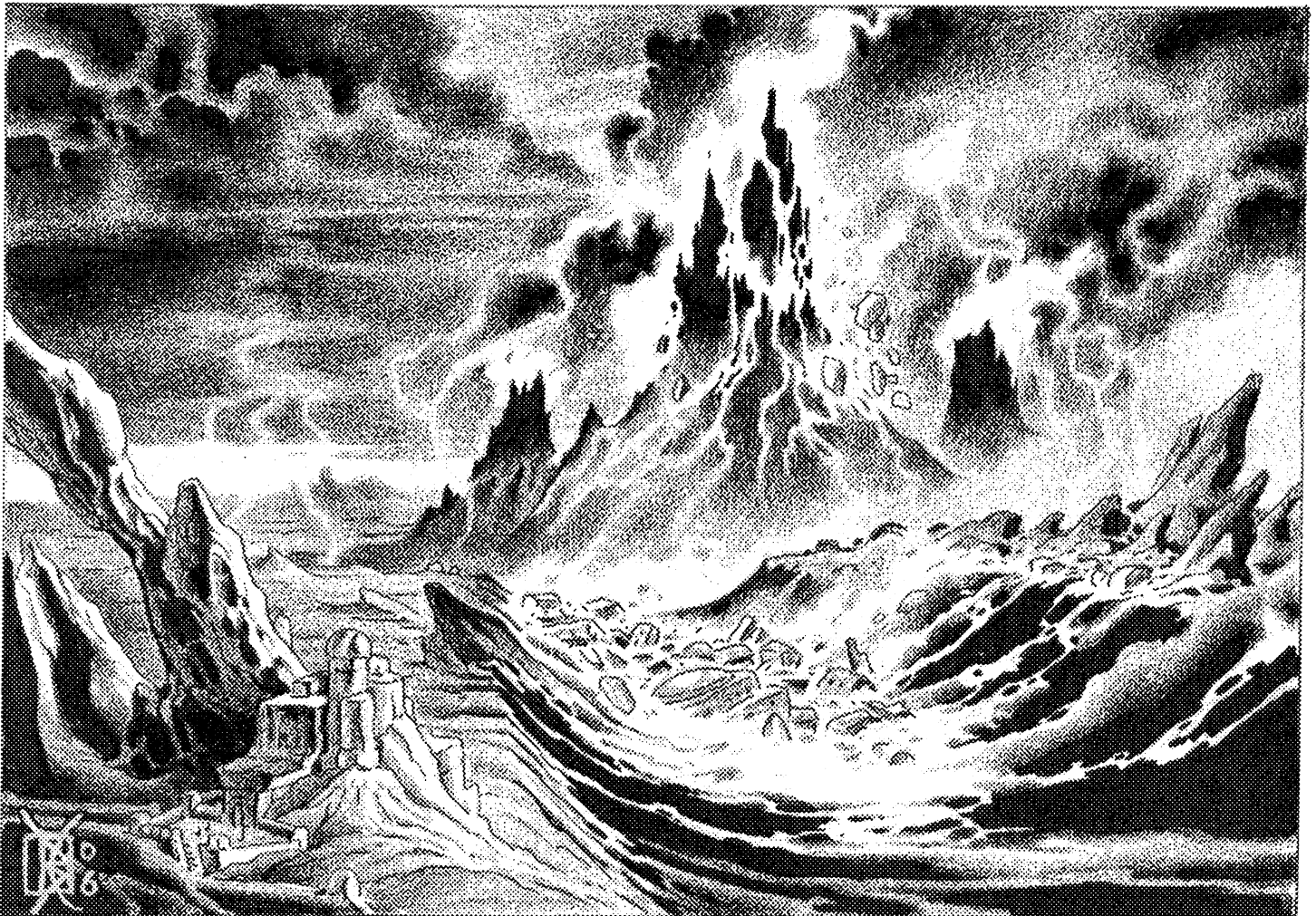
Jerome. As with all partnerships, some partners are more equal than others. In this case, it is Jerome that is really not pulling its own weight. Not blessed with the resources of its two sister cities, Jerome makes due with what it has, which isn't much. The people of Jerome raise cattle, horses, and farm as best they can, but have a hard time even supporting their own, much less contributing to the other member cities. Their land isn't nearly as rich as that in the Waste, and Cottonwood has the most success at farming and providing other agricultural products. This is a great embarrassment to the citizens of Jerome, despite the fact that Cottonwood and Clarkdale don't have a problem with it and their leaders never voice any concern or resentment. "There is enough to be had by all!" is the cry by the town leaders in both of the larger towns. However, Jerome feels the sting of pity in its neighbors' good intentions. Jerome could leave the partnership, but would not be able to survive on its own. The city is stuck in a poor position and left with few options other than to just stick it out and try to do what it can. Jerome does, however, have access to a network of old mines that it and the other members of the Clarkdale confederacy have used to hide people and resources from invaders, especially during the Dark Ages.

The Waste

When the Great Cataclysm hit on December 22, 2098 A.D., it shook the planet to its core. Destruction on a biblical level was followed by immense, global change. By Christmas Day of that year, a large volcano had formed at Flagstaff, with two smaller ones only 30 miles (48 km) away near Williams. That night the three of them rained fire, ash and death over a 50 mile (80 km) radius around Flagstaff, destroying everything. The cities and land burned, cities crumbled, and then it was all covered with 20 feet (6.1 m) of ash.

Over time, the pre-Rifts cities were forgotten, and the land transformed. Those who dared to enter the territory during the 200 Years Dark Age returned with tales of ghosts, bloodthirsty spirits, demons and monsters. According to legend, the spirits of those who lost their lives in the sudden onslaught of the Great Cataclysm roam the lands to this day. It is said these restless spirits hate the living and destroy all who enter.

Today, 109 P.A., the boundary of *the Waste* is marked with Indian landmarks and signs posted by travelers warning all against entry. The most distinctive sign that you are at the foot of the Waste, however, is the lush and beautiful prairie land that covers the hills and valleys. The land is green as if it were eternally springtime. The grass covered landscape is dotted with clusters of trees and broken by scattered woodlands surrounding a spring or pond. The entire area is like a giant oasis of green vegetation teeming with wildlife. It is ideal for hunting and the rich, fertile land is perfect for growing crops. The area is so beautiful, some travelers are said to have wept upon finding it,



believing it to be a paradise sent by God. Certainly, the vista of green and loveliness is *not* what anyone pictures as a wasteland. So it is, that many, tricked by the beauty and promise of **the Waste**, meet with a terrible end. For it is among the splendor of the greenery that ghosts and beings most terrible wait for humans (and D-Bees) to be tormented and killed. In fact, many locals believe the Waste is not paradise, but a piece of Hell brought to Earth, disguised to lure the innocent to their doom. Some also believe that the soul of whoever dies in the Waste is forever trapped within it. Still others say that it is the blood of the innocent that waters the meadows and keeps the land so deceptively beautiful.

The History of the Waste

Geographic Area: A forsaken land surrounding the large Flagstaff volcano; 100 miles (160 km) in diameter. The volcano is still active and the land tremors periodically, but no one can remember the last time it erupted. (It has been at least 100 years.)

The region originally earned the name, **the Waste**, because it was reduced to an expanse of lifeless dust. According to legend, every pre-Rifts building and landmark was reduced to rubble and covered in a thick blanket of ash. Later, when the Waste turned into what appears to be a lush paradise, it kept the name, *the Waste*, because it is a haunted Hell-hole inhabited by ghosts and monsters who torment and prey upon humanoids. Today, most everyone living in Arizona and the surrounding four States all know about the Waste and it is almost universally avoided by all. Only outsiders who don't know better are fooled and fall victim to the evil forces at work within its borders.

It seems that destruction came so fast to the pre-Rifts residents in and around Flagstaff, that most everyone was killed before they even knew what hit them. Hundreds of thousands perished in a matter of an hour. The psychic impressions scarred the land and are still palpable to psychic sensitives in the time of Rifts, but one doesn't need psionic powers to realize this land is tormented and haunted. The Waste is covered with thousands of unique Haunting Entities known as **Ghosts of the Waste**, each replaying a fragment of a person's life from the past. Dozens sit in invisible chairs being instructed by the ghosts of school teachers. Some walk hurriedly to and from meetings or greet loved ones at the doors of homes that no longer exist. Christmas carolers sing noiseless hymns into the darkness, and so on.

Like silent holograms, scenes are played out again and again and again, some only seconds long and others seemingly without end. The comings and goings of the living do nothing to stop the routine. It's as if entire towns and cities are reliving an average pre-Rifts day in an endless loop – macabre theater for those who happen upon it. People who have witnessed this bizarre spectacle often report a sense of amazement and even comfort in seeing such a thriving populace . . . a shadow of the Golden Age of man. If only this were a quiet glimpse into the past, but what happens next is terrible.

Evil and demonic Entities and monsters also inhabit the Waste. Creatures that prey upon the living, be they human or D-Bee. One of the most aggressive and vicious is the **Screamer**, also known as a *Waste Banshee*. When living, breathing human-

oids stray into the Waste and come near a cluster of ghosts, one or more Screamers begin their cry. Invisible to most (only psychic sensitives and those who can See the Invisible can see the amorphous spheres of red, glowing psychic energy that is a Screamer), the Screamers unleash their psychic screech, inflicting agony and sorrow upon all who hear their cries. Even more unusual, the *Waste Ghosts* also react to the screams and shift their repetition of daily activities to scenes of panic and fear. Specters of children cry and scream while families huddle together in tears. Other ghosts seem to be shielding themselves from imaginary falling debris and eventually fall to the ground as if crushed or buried alive. A disturbing percentage of the ghosts reenact scenes of suicide or violence against others.

The horrific howling of the Screamers is both deafening to the ear and a stabbing *psionic assault* on the psyche, racking the living victims with pain and sorrow or fear so horrific that it can send them into a coma. Combined with witnessing the apparent last moments of the lives of the ghosts who walk the Waste, more than one brave adventurer has been driven to madness. The shrieks of a Screamer also alert other predators to the presence of the living. The Waste is filled with dark spirits and malevolent beings. Other Entities such as Poltergeist, the Syphon, Tectonic and Possessing Entities are all found here, as well as a variety of *true demons*, *Ghouls*, *Imps*, the occasional visiting *Worm Wraith*, and mortal monsters such as the *Panthera-Tereon*, *Tiger Claw Raptors*, *Tri-Tops*, *Waste Monkey*, and others.

Those who have seen the *Ghosts of the Waste* believe that they are, in fact, the restless spirits of those killed in the early eruptions of the volcanoes; ghosts, in the true sense of the word. Few realize they are *Entities*, simply creatures using the emotions imprinted on the land to feed on ambient P.P.E. In any case, it is a chilling experience.

As noted under the Clarkdale Confederacy, there are some who brave the Waste to take advantage of the prime grazing land for the raising of cattle, but most avoid the place like the plague. The cowboys of Clarkdale take with them Mystics and Medicine Men, along with other practitioners of magic, to help keep the Screamers at bay, but even they make quick work and leave as quickly as possible. The only sentient beings known to live in the Waste are those who are physically and psionically blind and deaf, including D-Bees known as *Thumpers*. Only such people are immune to the devastating effects of the Waste Banshees' screams, and therefore live without fear of the Screamers (and probably not aware that they even exist).

Encountering Ghosts of the Waste

Waste Ghosts are least common near the edges of the Waste, but much more numerous the deeper one goes into the interior of the area. They are encountered in greatest numbers the closer one gets to where Flagstaff once stood, now marked by the rumbling volcano. Near the center of the Waste, travel by mortals seems impossible due to the thousands of Screamers present. The following details the lay of the Waste and the likelihood of running into its ghostly inhabitants. There is some uncertainty in chance encounters, as the Ghosts seem to move from place to place, and the Screamers are only encountered wherever the restless spirits cross paths with mortals. **Note:** The larger the population of Waste Ghosts, the greater the number of Screamers and frequency of encounters.

01-15% chance of a ghostly encounter along the rim, up to 5 miles (8 km) into the Waste. There is a chance of encountering 1D6 Waste Ghosts every *30 minutes* along this outer edge of the Waste. Human presence within 10 yards/meters of a Waste Ghost will bring 1D4 howling Screammers within 3D6 minutes.

The grass and vegetation is greener and fuller than the surrounding terrain, and many herds of cattle can be seen grazing along the border. Warning signs, Indian totem poles, grave markers, and even 100 yards/meters of fencing or wood or brick wall mark the outer edge of the Waste in some places. However, this is a wide area, and such markers are intermittent or in bad repair. If a traveler isn't paying attention, it is easy to miss them and ride into the forsaken land, particularly at night, without ever realizing it until one's first encounter with Ghosts or monsters. A lone or pair of predatory animals, dinosaurs, Ghouls or Poltergeist Entities *may* (01-10% chance) also be encountered in this area, as well as 1D6 Waste Monkeys or 1D4+1 Thumpers (01-33% chance).

01-30% chance of ghostly encounters for the next 10 miles (16 km). The deeper one travels into the Waste, the more likely he is of coming across a group of 5D6 Waste Ghosts every *15 minutes*. Human presence within 20 yards/meters of a Waste Ghost will bring 2D4 howling Screammers within 2D6 minutes.

One or two Black Faeries or Witchlings, 2D4 Thumpers or Waste Monkeys, an Imp, a Lesser Demon, group of 2D4 Ghouls, 1D6 Poltergeists, and the occasional Syphon Entity, Tectonic Entity, Panthera-Tereon, Devil Unicorn, Worm Wraith, or animal predators, *may* (01-30% chance) also be encountered in this part of the Waste.

01-60% chance of ghostly encounters for the next 30 miles (48 km). Ghosts are common in this area of the Waste, and travelers are likely to encounter a group of 3D6x10 Waste Ghosts every *1D6+4 minutes*, with 4D6 similar-sized groups of ghosts visible in the distance. Human presence within 60 yards/meters of a Waste Ghost will bring 3D6 howling Screammers within 1D6 minutes. Screammers react quickly in these ghost-populated regions.

Black Faeries and Witchlings tend to avoid the interior of the Wastes, but 4D6 Thumpers, 2D6 Waste Monkeys, one or two Imps or Lesser Demons, a group of 2D4 Raptors, 2D6 Ghouls, 3D6 Poltergeists, or 1D4 Syphon Entities, Tectonic Entities, Panthera-Tereon, or a lone Oborus-Slitherer, Devil Unicorn, or Worm Wraith *may* (01-25% chance) also be encountered in this part of the Waste. One *may* (01-10% chance) also encounter a single Great Dream Snake, a Greater Demon, a Phantasm, a Possessing Entity or other dark force in these parts, especially those beings associated with death, the dead, spirits, and suffering.

01-98% certainty of a ghostly encounter at the Flagstaff volcano and for a 5 mile (8 km) radius around it. This area is swarming with tens of thousands of Waste Ghosts and Screammers. Here the pain and suffering of those destroyed by the Great Cataclysm is pervasive. One cannot help but to come within the sensing range of the Waste Ghosts and attract Screammers every 1D4 minutes. Human presence within 350 yards/meters of a Waste Ghost will bring 1D6x10 howling Screammers within 1D6 melee rounds.

All manner of other Entities are also present (hundreds of Poltergeists, dozens of all other types of Entities), but Lesser and Greater Demons, and other dark forces tend to avoid this epicenter around the Flagstaff volcano. (01-06% chance of encountering 1D6 Ghouls or other Lesser Demons, 01-02% chance of encountering a Greater Demon or other dark force). Likewise, other monsters tend to avoid the heart of the Waste, the only exception being Thumpers and Waste Monkeys, at least 4000 of both can be found in the area.

Note: Vampires are seldom encountered anywhere in the Waste. Psi-Ponies and other psionic beings of good alignment are never found in the Waste unless they are prisoners of an evil being.

Ghost of the Waste

Also known as Waste Ghost, Waste Spirit, or simply as "Ghost."

When the Great Cataclysm fell upon man it caused a chain reaction that nearly drove him to extinction. Even without the demons and monsters pouring through the Rifts, the absolute bedlam caused by Mother Nature, alone, killed billions. The Yellowstone super-volcano erupted on the second day of the Great Cataclysm and volcanic activity exploded to life, worldwide. Flagstaff, Arizona, once a city housing more than two hundred thousand, in 2098, plus an equal number in the neighboring towns, was suddenly engulfed in roaring flame, flowing lava, flying debris and pyroclastic clouds of molten earth, ash and steam. The ground heaved upward under the pressure and buildings crumbled. With few exceptions, everyone in the Flagstaff area perished within one hour, forever leaving two powerful psychic impressions burned into the very land itself.

The first of these is what visitors to the Waste witness upon their entry: the last memories of home, family and the everyday life reenacted by the Ghosts of the Waste. All the joy and mundane minutia of daily life. These things were all imprinted on the land by the wishes and thoughts of those awaiting an uncertain end in the early days of the Great Cataclysm and who wished and prayed that the world they once knew could still be theirs. That sense of impending loss etched their past lives into the psychic fabric of the region.

The second psychic imprint is the terrifying last moments and final thoughts, fears and actions of those killed by volcanic eruptions in Arizona. Families praying together, people running for their lives, and those giving in to desperation can all be seen when the shrieks of the Screammers begin. When the screaming subsides, the horror ends, replaced by a daily routine beginning, again, from the beginning.

The link between the Waste Ghosts and the Screammers is unclear, but seems to stem from the typical Entity feeding methods, taking in P.P.E. from the environment and from the living, often through pain, suffering, and negative emotions. The Haunting Entities that are the Waste Ghosts preserve themselves and, inadvertently, the images and thoughts of a generation of humans long dead. The Entities feed via the reliving of the experiences, both good and bad, of those they copy.

It is unknown why the phenomenon seen in the Waste is not repeated at countless places on Rifts Earth where hundreds of

thousands to millions of people died. While not uncommon to Rifts Earth, nowhere else is there known to be such a concentration of Ghostly Entities or the Entities known as Screamer or Waste Banshees.

Communication and Interaction: It is possible to interact on a limited scale with the Waste Ghosts, but only in their adopted forms. Using such spells or abilities as Astral Projection, Commune with Spirits, Telepathy, and Summon and Control Entity can have some impact on the Haunting Entities trapped in the Waste.

Characters utilizing *Astral Projection* or *Commune with Spirits* are seen as fellow *spirits* by the Entities, and as such, they can talk and hear each other, although the Waste Ghosts treat them as if they were fellow people living in 2098. The spirits will walk by, say “hello,” ask the time, or yell at the character for walking through the middle of a soccer game, or a busy intersection. Both the Ghost and the living character, though visible to one another, remain intangible and neither can make physical contact with the other. Depending on how the living character in Astral Form (or using magical communion) conducts himself, he may be able to strike up a brief conversation with a Waste Ghost. However, the Ghost’s reality is 2098, not post-Cataclysm and it will speak and act as if it were living in pre-Rifts America. (“How about those Arizona Cardinals?” “Sorry, gotta run, the wife will have my head if I’m late for dinner.” “I’m sorry, but I’m late to class” or “Hey, what are you doing in my house?!” and so on.) Those who stop to chat or answer a question, never veer too far from their routine. That is, in

fact, all they know. They have no knowledge of what happened during the Great Cataclysm, the Dark Ages or present day, and look puzzled if asked. Remember, the Entities are reenacting scenes (and lives) that actually happened to living people in the past, so they are usually happy or busy. It’s only when the Screamer appear and being to howl and shriek that memories of their final moment of life take over.

Characters attempting *Telepathy* with the ghostly Entities will see them react as if someone called their name. The spirit won’t be able to see the psychic nor will it communicate back. The Waste Ghost may turn around and look for the voice, or ignore it and keep on going. Surface thoughts from the ghosts are those of the dead person at that moment in his *life*; ordinary things that the average person thinks while walking down the street or on the way home for dinner with the family. Empathy will read the same sort of casual emotions.

The most direct way to have meaningful contact with a Waste Ghost is to perform the spell *Summon and Control Entity*. This forces a specific Entity, or a random one if desired, to communicate and interact with the spell caster. However, again, these ghosts live in the past and it will be clearly distracted and eager to get on with its routine, just like someone who is trying to get off the phone with their mother, or waiting on a late bus. The spirit still doesn’t know anything about the Great Cataclysm or current day Rifts Earth, but may have very limited knowledge about the Golden Age of Man in relation to that person’s life. However, information will be limited and come in an anecdotal story sort of way as the person (well, ghost) relates his own per-



sonal experience. Once the duration of the spell ends, the Entity bolts, eager to make up lost time.

Using any psychic or magical abilities to interact with a Waste Ghost at the time that they come into contact with a Screamer has severe negative effects for the player character. The psychic or mystical bond acts as a direct channel to the pain and suffering caused by these emotional vampires and the mage or psychic takes the full effects of the scream attack without a bonus to save against the scream.

Note: The following stats are basically those of a Haunting Entity as found in **Rifts® Dark Conversions**. See that book for great insight into these classic “ghosts” and many other Entities (demons and weird undead too). Some stats or abilities are slightly modified for the Ghost of the Waste to reflect their special circumstances and the effects of the Screamers.

Waste Ghost Stats

Alignment: None, really. It can be considered Anarchist, but the ghost just imitates behavior it has absorbed from the past.

Attributes: Not applicable. Low intelligence and little personal identity, equal to an I.Q. of 5 and M.E. of 2. Doesn't recognize or react to biological life forms or any influence from the physical realm. Waste Ghosts move at an average speed of around 10.

Mega-Damage: 1D6x10+30 (Has 6D6+10 Hit Points, no S.D.C. and no A.R. in S.D.C. settings.)

Horror Factor: 10 when encountered moving about the Waste. 13 when watching them panic at the screams of a Screamer.

Size: Possesses the shape and appearance of a specific human adult or child it is imitating.

Weight: Not applicable.

Average Life Span: Presumably immortal.

P.P.E.: 8

Skills of Note: None, other than what they mimic in their endless routine (they can be seen driving invisible cars, playing sports, working at a job, and any number of mundane tasks).

Natural Abilities: Ethereal and intangible, meaning the ghost can walk through solid matter. Impervious to all physical and energy attacks. Can *always* be seen by the naked eye and detected through psionics or magical means. The Entity seemingly has no concept that the physical world exists, unless communicating via select psionics and spells as detailed in the description above. While normal Haunting Entities can become physical beings through the use of Ectoplasm, the Ghosts of the Waste do not seem to ever use this ability.

Connection to Screamers (Special): When a living being makes deliberate contact with a Waste Ghost or comes within a particular range of them, a silent alarm goes off and signals *Screamers* in the area that mortals are present. This is an automatic reaction/response by the Waste Ghosts, not a deliberate attack. In fact, the ghosts suffer nearly as much as the humans from the Screamers' screeching attack. The range for contact varies with the ghostly population; the greater the number of ghosts, the greater their sensitivity or awareness of the living, and the farther away they can sense people and signal Screamers. Thus, on the outer rim, a person can get within 31 feet (9.4 m) without being noticed by the ghost, but at the epicenter, living people are sensed even when they are 1050 feet (320 m) away!

Notable Shamantic defenses against detection by Waste Ghosts. Native American *Spirit Warriors* and *Mask Shamans* (the latter must be wearing an Animal, Spirit or Trickster Mask) are *invisible* to Waste Ghosts and Screamers everywhere in the Waste except at the epicenter around the volcano. Their invisibility is broken only if they make direct contact with a Waste Ghost or Screamer.

Other types of Native American Shamans, and as many as eight mortal (S.D.C.) traveling companions who stay within 100 feet (30.5 m) of the Shaman, are also invisible, but *ONLY* so long as the Shaman keeps rubbing his medicine bag and he continuously chants/prays in a soft voice. As soon as he stops chanting and rubbing his charm, he and his companions are visible and vulnerable to being noticed and attracting Screamers. This protection is broken for *all* if anyone in the party makes direct contact with a spirit. This concealment does not work at the epicenter around the Flagstaff volcano, nor does it work against other types of Entities or supernatural beings. **Note:** All *Shamans*, the *Spirit Warrior* and *Mystic Warrior* save against the Screamer's attack at half the usual penalty, but only the *Paradox Shaman* is completely impervious to the screaming attack. A variety of *Spirit Magic* is also effective in communicating with and dealing with Waste Ghosts, Screamers, and other Entities.

Attacks per Melee: 3, but generally not applicable. Only used when interacting with someone who is communicating with them through psionic or magical means, and even then only to flee.

Damage: None.

Bonuses: +3 to save vs magic, and +3 to save vs psionic attack. The Entity always attempts a save, even against something as simple as Empathy or Telepathy. Immune to magical and psionic attacks that affect the physical body (doesn't have a body).

Penalties: Cannot interact with the physical world, and seemingly can not escape its adopted routine.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Allies: None, other than the other Ghosts of the Waste caught up in the endless replaying of pre-Cataclysm events. Many Indian Shamans and compassionate mortals do their best to see that these “restless spirits” are left alone.

Enemies: The *Screamers* evoke a terrible reaction from the Ghosts of the Waste, but they aren't actually “enemies,” more like parasites locked in a symbiotic relationship with the ghosts. The only possible enemy might be people who would attempt to destroy the Entities to make the land usable for the living again.

Habitat: Only known to inhabit the Waste, but may exist in other places where extreme tragedy and loss of life occurred.





Screamer

Also known as the *Waste Banshee*

Screamers are energy beings who feed on the fear and pain of the living. They have been drawn to the Waste by the powerful emotions imprinted on that part of Arizona. Screamers get a “rush” or “high” from the fear and pain caused by their psychic screams.

Though not known to be common anywhere else on Rifts Earth, Screamers exist in great numbers in the Waste. With a constant supply of powerful emotions from the Waste Ghosts they live among, Screamers roam the Waste like sinister voyeurs, soaking in the psychic negativity that permeates the area, particularly the psychic leftovers from the massive death and destruction that occurred there. The feeding on live humanoids is a great treat, and the foul Entities eagerly attack whenever a mortal ventures into their domain. Screamers become aware of the living by sensing contact or uneasiness on the part of the Waste Ghosts. Although the ghosts may not seem to react to living visitors, they do notice them and a sort of psychic adrenaline surge occurs. It is a psychic surge the Screamers detect, and which sends them rushing over to exploit the situation to the fullest.

The natural form of a Screamer is that of red, amorphous spheres of psychic energy. To feed upon humans and D-Bees they unleash a terrible screeching – a psychic scream that not only causes fear and pain among the living but frightens the Waste Ghosts too. Thus, when the screaming begins, the Waste Ghosts reenact the last moments of the persons’ lives during the Great Cataclysm. This enables the Screamer to feed on the juicy emotions and pain of both the living and the Haunting Entities.

The sound hurts both the ears and the psyche, causing temporary deafness, excruciating physical pain, and mental anguish. It is said that there is no sound like it in the Megaverse. Those who have experienced it say it is like living the moment of your own death in a nightmare, and hope never to have to experience it again.

Screamer Stats

Alignment: Miscreant, though driven by instinct and hunger.

Attributes: Not applicable. The creature seems to have no individual intelligence other than to react to the presence of mortal beings entering its territory. Can move at a speed of 30 (roughly 20 mph/32 km).

Mega-Damage: 2D4x10+50 (Has 6D6+50 Hit Points, no S.D.C., and no A.R. in S.D.C. settings.)

Horror Factor: 13 when seen, 16 when screaming.

Size: About 2 feet (0.6 m) in diameter; roughly the size of a beach ball.

Weight: Not applicable.

Average Life Span: Unknown. Probably immortal.

P.P.E.: 12

Natural Abilities: Ethereal and intangible, meaning it can move through solid matter. Impervious to all physical and energy attacks. Invisible to normal senses, but can be seen or detected by a number of psionic or magical means such as See the Invisible, Astral Projection, and Commune with Spirits. Can also be seen by thermal imaging devices as a cold spot moving through the air, or felt as a pocket of cold as it moves near or through a physical being. Its scream can always be heard, both by physical ears and as a psychic attack. Detects mortal beings within 1,000 feet (305 m).

Attacks per Melee: 4; used primarily for dodging, as it is unable to engage in physical combat.

Damage: None in any form of physical combat. The creature’s only offensive weapon is its terrible Scream.

Scream of the Waste Banshee: This terrible and blood-curdling wail is the Screamer’s way of extracting sustenance and euphoric pleasure from the fear, pain and suffering of others, living and Haunting Entities alike. When alerted to the presence of any mortal by the subtle emotions and energies of the Waste Ghosts, the Screamers race to the scene and begin emitting their howl. The scream can be sustained indefinitely and does not use any of the Entity’s attacks. The scream has two components: one physical and one psychic. Saving throws versus both must be made to avoid damage and suffering.

Part One: The Physical Scream, is a piercing, resonating sound like fingernails on a chalkboard projected through a megaphone. The pain that it causes is very real and can debilitate any mortal being with ears. A successful save of 16 or higher is required (P.E. bonuses may be applied) to avoid being severely incapacitated by the sound. A successful save means the character suffers only half the penalties listed and there is no chance of falling.

A failed save means the victim of this component of the scream is deafened by the sound of the scream, he cannot hear those around him (only the scream), the ears throb and hurt with pain stabbing into the skull, eyes, jaw and down the

sides of the neck. Penalties: Attacks per melee are reduced to *two*, all combat bonuses (initiative, strike, parry, dodge, disarm, entangle, etc.) are -8, a Called or Aimed Shot is impossible (burst and wild only), Spd is reduced by half, skills are performed at -60% (cannot focus or concentrate to think) and spell casters can only cast half their normal number of spells per melee round. There is also a 01-75% chance of falling for every 10 feet (3 m) the character tries to move.

Wearing a basic helmet, stuffing the ears with wax, or other simple protective measure will give the character a +2 to save versus the physical scream. Characters in environmental body armor or with advanced sound filtration systems are +5 to save. Those with the ability to completely “turn off” sound receptors (including radio reception, because the scream can be heard on radio frequencies) are completely *immune* to this physical portion of the attack (no penalties), but function as *deaf* – cannot hear the words and pleas of their comrades, gunfire, an approaching vehicle, etc., cannot use radio communications, and must still roll to save versus the *mental attack* described below.

Part Two: The Psychic Attack. The second part of the attack is a psychic one, requiring a save vs psionics at a penalty of -4. Those failing to save find their psyche pierced by the scream, and are slowly drained, mentally and emotionally. Victims lose one M.E. point for every melee round that the character fails to save. Roll to save at the beginning of each melee, adjusting bonuses to save vs psionics appropriately as M.E. is reduced. If the M.E. is reduced to one, the character collapses into a coma for 3D6 minutes and the Screamer leaves the area. M.E. points return at a rate of one per minute (four melee rounds), but the character will have suffered one of the following powerful, further debilitating emotions while under the psionic attack. Presumably this is some sort of Empathic transference that inflicts the emotions of the Waste Ghosts upon the living. The Screamers drink in the emotions and feed on them and the mental energy (measured by M.E. points).

Roll on the following table to determine the emotions and additional, accumulative penalties caused by the psychic attack of the scream. All penalties last until the screaming stops or the characters leave the Waste.

01-10% Lucked out, only feels a bit confused and frightened, but nothing extreme. No other penalties or lasting effects.

11-30% Fear and Helplessness. The victim feels completely helpless and terrified. Reduce attacks per melee round by half (yes, if already reduced to two, the victim now has one), cannot move, must be dragged or carried away. Penalties: -1 on all combat rolls and -20% on all skills for the duration. Lingering effect: A headache for 2D4 hours.

31-40% Panic Attack! Adrenaline surges, but the victim doesn't know what to do! Penalties: Current penalties from the physical part of the scream remain in place, but the character has no initiative, he is completely *reactive*. A stabbing pain courses through the shoulders and chest. The character might think he's having a heart attack; suffers 1D4 points of S.D.C. damage per minute (every 4 melee rounds) even if locked inside an M.D.C. vehicle or power armor. When S.D.C. is gone, subtract damage from Hit Points, but stop

when H.P. dip down to 18 points. Lingering effect: Heartburn and upper body muscle aches for 2D6 hours, -1 on all physical attacks, -5% on all Physical skills until the pain subsides.

41-50% Terror and Flight Reaction. All the character knows is he has to get out of here and flees. Penalties: Panic stricken, the character loses all sense of orientation and may actually run deeper into the Waste unless he is subdued and taken the right way. Roll percentile again to determine which direction he runs, but wherever it is, Screamers follow. 01-25% runs in circles never leaving the general area. 26-50% runs right or left, diagonal to the way he came in. 51-75% runs deeper into the Waste, toward the volcano! 76-00% runs toward the quickest way out. Additional Penalties: Reduce the current skill levels by half, -2 to strike on all long-range attacks, and fights only to escape. Lingering effects: Reduce P.E. attribute by half due to all the running, panic and physical and emotional exhaustion, and leg muscles ache for 2D4 hours. 01-33% chance of developing a phobia of ghosts.

51-60% Screams in Determination. The character is wracked with fear and starts screaming too. He probably doesn't even realize he's screaming and will not stop until he escapes the ghosts and Screamers and is safe outside the Waste, or rendered unconscious. Penalties: No additional penalties. In fact, reduce skill penalties by half and give him back one of his attacks per melee as the character, though scared out of his wits, is focused on getting himself and comrades out of the Waste. He is determined and driven to get them all out of harm's way. Lingering effects: A migraine headache with mild nausea for 2D6 hours; the character can not tolerate noises louder than normal conversation for the duration. 01-33% chance of developing a phobia or obsession (hatred) of Screaming and noise that sounds like screaming.

61-70% Fear and Sorrow. The character is overcome with a debilitating sense of loss, as if he just lost everyone he has ever loved. May sob and moan. Penalties: -3 on all combat rolls, -20% on all skills, and Spd is reduced by another 10%. Lingering effects: Throbbing headache and lingering sense of sadness or dread for 2D6 hours, -2 on initiative, -1 to all combat rolls for the duration. 01-33% chance of developing a phobia of graveyards or ancient ruins.

71-80% Anguish and Frustration. The character is overcome with a sense of futility and anger. Madly lashes out at the Screamers, ghosts or any other monster or stranger who catches his attention. He may shout and curse at them as well, and continues his attacks even if they are not inflicting damage (wasting ammo and energy). However, he can be reasoned with and made to grab gear and/or others more debilitated and drag them out of the Waste. However, if the group is attacked, he is the first to respond in anger. Lingering effects: Throbbing headache for 2D4 hours, -1 to dodge or pull punch for the duration of that time period. 01-33% chance of developing an obsession (hates them) for ghosts/Haunting Entities specifically or all Entities.

81-90% Fear and Psychosomatic Deafness. In an effort to cope, the character's mind shuts down his auditory senses and he goes *deaf*. Penalties: The deafness lasts until the character gets out of the Waste. The deafness is a mixed blessing as he retains his wits and sees the penalties inflicted by the

mains, or in increments of 2D6+6 minutes at a time. If hearing returns while the threat remains, deafness reoccurs one melee round later and lasts for twice as long.

91-00% Fear and Psychosomatic Blindness. In an effort to cope, the character's mind shuts down his optical senses and he goes *blind*. **Penalties:** The blindness lasts until the character gets out of the Waste. The affliction is a mixed blessing as he is -10 on all combat rolls and cannot see. However, he retains his wits and suffers no skill penalties for those that don't require sight (skills that involve vision are -60%), making him capable of making strategic decisions, casting spells (though blindly) and using psionics (if available). However, he cannot see his comrades or incoming attacks. **Lingering effects:** Vision is blurry for 2D6 hours (-1 to strike, -20% on skills requiring reading or sharp vision). 01-33% chance of developing Hysterical Blindness: Loses his sight every time he is extremely afraid or under great stress (afraid for his life, the lives of others, and even failure). When Hysterical Blindness occurs, the character is -10 on all combat rolls and is likely to fall and bang into objects, walk into walls, etc., unless moving no faster than a Spd of 6 and feeling his way around. Hysterical Blindness lasts as long as the source of the danger/fear remains, or in increments of 2D6+6 minutes at a time. If sight returns while the threat remains, the blindness reoccurs one melee round later and lasts for twice as long.

Screamer Bonuses: +3 to dodge and impervious to Horror Factor.

Penalties: Cannot interact with the physical realm or with corporeal beings except via the scream. Screammers apparently cannot leave the Waste and must stop at its border. **Note:** All *Shamans*, the *Spirit Warrior* and *Mystic Warrior* save against the Screamer's attack at half the usual penalty, and the *Paradox Shaman* is completely impervious to the scream attack. A variety of *Spirit Magic* spells are also effective in communicating with and dealing with Waste Ghosts, Screammers, and other entities.

Magic: None.

Psionics: Only the scream, a psychic-like ability without I.S.P. cost.

Allies: None, although somehow attuned to Waste Ghosts.

Enemies: Its behavior has a greatly negative effect on the Ghosts of the Waste, but they are not enemies so much as food. Attacks all mortal beings at every opportunity to feed upon and torment them. Screammers draw pleasure and sustenance from the fear, sorrow, anguish and physical pain of the living and the Waste Ghosts.

Habitat: Screammers can be encountered anywhere in the Waste as long as Waste Ghosts are also present. They may exist elsewhere on Rifts Earth and in the Megaverse, but where is unknown. It seems that the Screammers' link with the Waste Ghosts (or perhaps to the cursed land itself) prevents them from pursuing and attacking people beyond the diameter of the Waste.



Thumper – Optional R.C.C.

Thumpers are strange humanoid D-Bees who live in the Waste. The instant impression one gets from seeing a Thumper is a weird, odd moving alien or even a monster. They have human-shaped bodies with bright yellow skin covered with dozens of small, moving and twitching antennae (all antennae can bend and move in every direction). The head is small with no eyes or ears, only a small mouth and a crown of antennae. The head has the most antennae, 2D6+12, with another dozen running down the spine, and 1D6+6 on the chest and each arm and leg; all antennae are 6-12 inches long (15 to 30 cm). Their feet are padded and flat, making them quiet, but slow runners, and their lanky arms end in hands with three long, thin fingers each. These bizarre beings coexist with the eerie Ghosts of the Waste and the horrifying Screammers, but don't seem to notice either one. That's because Thumpers are psionically and physically blind, deaf, and mute. They survive using other senses. **Note:** See antennae under the Natural Abilities for the full range of the Thumper's abilities.

Thumpers get their name because their entire sensory system seems to be a form of psychic echolocation using a strange sort of Telekinesis. The Thumper emits a telekinetic pulse every few seconds, which creates a dull and clearly audible "thump" like a single heartbeat transmitted through the air. A heightened sense of touch, and the dozens of delicate antennae all over the Thumper's body feel the reverberation of the pulse from objects around it. This gives it a nearly perfect, if somewhat short-

range, picture and understanding of its surroundings. This *TK sonar* and the Thumper's sensitive antennae enables the D-Bee to recognize and locate everything they need in the wild. In fact, the Thumper's TK Sonar/Imaging is so sharp that it can tell the difference between a grape and a pebble, not just by shape, but by smell and density as well.

Aside from some limited physical psionic abilities, Thumpers have no other psychic aptitude. Furthermore, something about their physiology makes them black holes for Psychic Sensitives, impervious to Telepathy, Empathy, and even Presence Sense. Deafness and this immunity to psionics makes them impervious to the onslaughts from Screamers.

While they are gentle, peaceful beings who live off the land, Thumpers are not totally defenseless. Their telekinetic "thump" can also be used to knock opponents off their feet and give the D-Bees a chance to escape. This is highly effective against most animal and humanoid predators. Ironically, the Thumpers' biggest defense against humans and other D-Bees is the presence of the Screamers and Waste Ghosts who keep people away. That's why more Thumpers are found in and around the Waste than anywhere else on the continent. That having been said, most scholars believe there are fewer than 20,000 Thumpers living in all of North America, and half live in the Waste.

Thumper R.C.C. Stats

Using Thumpers as Player Characters: Most players will find the gentle and strange Thumper a difficult character to play. Those who take up the challenge will have their hands full.

Small modifications need to be made for Thumper player characters. First, the skills listed with the special abilities below are taken as R.C.C. Skills. Instead of using the listed percentages, calculate the skills as normal with the following bonuses: Communicate in Native Language (98%, see special abilities for details), Wilderness Survival (+15%), Holistic Medicine (+5%), Prowl (+10%), Identify Plants & Fruits (+15%), and Land Navigation (+14%).

A Thumper who finds himself swept into the world may find that he can learn other skills, provided they are doable given the being's unique perspective of the world and bizarre senses. A Thumper can not, for example, learn Language skills, but may be able to learn skills such as Climbing or Palming.

New Skills: Thumper player characters can learn one new skill without the benefit of bonuses at levels 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12 & 14. All new skills start at level one experience (no bonus) and can only be selected from the *Domestic*, *Physical*, *Rogue*, and *Wilderness* skill categories. They improve with experience. Use the Dog Boy experience table. Game Masters should be consulted when picking new skills to make sure they are suitable for the character (e.g., no Computer Hacking or Tailing).

Alignment: Principled (15%), Scrupulous (70%), Unprincipled (5%), Anarchist (5%), Aberrant (2%), Miscreant (2%), Diabolic (1%).

Attributes: I.Q. 2D6+3, M.E. 2D6+5, M.A. 2D6+5, P.S. 2D6+1, P.P. 2D6+3, P.E. 2D6+5, P.B. 1D6+5, Spd 3D6+2.

Minor Mega-Damage Being: Starts with P.E. attribute number +10, and gets an additional 1D6 M.D.C. per level of experience starting with level one.

Horror Factor: 10; mostly due to the multitude of antennae covering their bodies and the heartbeat-like thump sound they emit on an almost constant basis (4-6 per melee round unless resting or sleeping, three times that number in combat).

Size: 5 feet, to 5 feet, 6 inches (1.5 m to 1.7).

Weight: 100 to 120 pounds (45 kg to 54 kg).

Average Life Span: 60 years, but usually much shorter due to the harsh habitat in which they live.

P.P.E.: 4D6

Natural Abilities:

1. Emit Telekinetic Pulse.

TK-Imaging/Vision. We already know that the TK Sonar creates a detailed, 3D image of the world around the Thumper. This enables the D-Bee to move and navigate on par with sighted people, although they also move slowly and supplement their TK-Sonar vision with their acute sense of touch and the impressive sensory capabilities of their antennae.

Communication with other Thumpers. The TK pulses are also used to communicate with one another. The sounding is very soft, like the purr of a cat, or a small motor, or the reverberation of a low guitar string, deep and resonating. However, the Thumpers don't hear the sounds, they *feel* the TK vibrations – communication by touch. Only one Thumper can "talk" at a time, or messages will become garbled and unclear. The range of the communication pulses is 500 feet (152 m), but can be obstructed by dense obstacles. In thick forest or indoors the range is reduced to 50 feet (15.2 m), and it can be completely blocked by a large, solid object (can't communicate through a wall).

Communicating with humans and other races is difficult and usually involves hand gestures, pantomime, body language (of the Thumper) and the D-Bee simply taking action (i.e., finding or building a shelter for the rain that's coming in a few minutes, hiding/taking cover, running away, taking a defensive stance, etc.). **Note:** This is a good example of what makes using a Thumper a challenge for players, and why this D-Bee should be allowed sparingly as a player character.

The TK pulse is also used for defense. A loud, massive thumping sound projects an intensified wave of telekinetic force similar to the psionic power of *Telekinetic Push*. Maximum Range: 100 feet (30 m). Damage: 1D6 S.D.C. damage, but knocks anything weighing less than 300 lbs (135 kg) 1D6+6 yards/meters away/back, and has a 01-70% chance of knocking two-legged beings off their feet. Reduce that percentage to 55% for creatures with four or more legs, and to a 35% chance to knock down those weighing 301-500 lbs (135.5 to 225 kg). Penalties: Victims knocked off their feet lose initiative and two attacks for the melee round, and there is a 01-20% chance they dropped whatever they were holding in their hands when "thumped." Bonus to Strike: Thumpers are +1 to strike at levels 2, 5, 8, and 11. **Note:** Thumpers generally use a *TK Pulse Attack* in self-defense and usually try to escape, not press their attack. Each TK Pulse counts as one of the Thumper's attacks per melee round.

2. Antennae Power. The Thumper's antennae are highly evolved sensory conduits providing superhuman sensitivity and sensory information. They are so acutely sensitive that the Thumper can discern the following:

Accurately measure air temperature and identify the source of heat and its direction/location; i.e., the direction and position of the sun, and therefore the time of day; the location and approximate distance of a heat source (campfire, heater, generator, etc.) or cold source (an open window, refrigerator unit, ice, wind, etc.), and even if a vehicle was recently (within the last 20 minutes) driven/used by the heat radiating from its engine. Level of accuracy: 86% +1% per level of experience.

Wind direction and speed, within the smallest of increments. Can also tell if a storm is coming, from which direction, and approximately, within 1D6 minutes, when it will arrive with 82% accuracy, +1% per level of experience.

Motion detection from the extraordinary sensors of the antennae warns the Thumper of people and fast moving objects larger than a bullet coming toward it from any direction, including from behind, the sides, or above! This gives the weird D-Bee an amazing ability to parry, dodge and roll with impact (see bonuses).

Similarly, the sensitive antennae will pick up and identify vibrations in the earth and/or air caused by explosions or movement of heavy vehicles, giant robots, aircraft, power armor, or a convoy of trucks or large number of troops (foot movement).

Olfactory Senses are also located in the antennae, making the Thumper's sense of smell so acute that the D-Bee can identify most *species* of animals, plants, fruit, people and even devices by their unique signature smell at a base skill of 98%! Furthermore, the Thumper can recognize specific animals and people by their scent at a skill level of 70% +1% per level of experience.

This also means the Thumper can detect a burning fire as small as a campfire up to two miles (3.2 km) away plus a half mile (0.8 km) per level of experience, as well as detect trace odors from cleansers, poisons, drugs/chemicals/body fluids, food, waste, decay, and even sweat within 20 feet (6.1 m) of the source. Strong, fresh smells and odors can be identified up to 300 feet (91.5 m) away (again, able to pinpoint the exact source) at a base skill of 66% +1% per level of experience (+20% if touching the source/item/surface with hands or one or more antennae, but -20% if there are two or more layers of scent, such as cleansers used to wash away blood or clean dishes, etc.).

Sense of Touch is one of the most obvious, yet most often forgotten abilities of the antennae. Each antenna can move independent of the others to touch or smell, etc. and can be used to identify objects, people, and such by physical touch.

Impervious to Darkness & Blinding Attacks. Thumpers move and function so well that characters who associate with them may forget that they are *blind* and *deaf* to begin with. Thus, any attack that blinds or deafens an opponent has no effect on a Thumper.

R.C.C. Skills: All Thumpers have the following skills: Communicate in Native Language (96%; TK Pulse), Climbing 40%/35%, Dowsing 50%, Holistic Medicine 40%, Identify Plants & Fruits 50%, Land Navigation 50%, Prowl 30%, Wilderness Survival 50%; all increase at a rate of +5% per level of experience.

Average Level of Experience: 1D6+4

Attacks per Melee Round: Four, +1 at levels 5 and 11, but seldom use a weapon or even their fist, instinctively rely on TK pulse attack.

Damage: 1D4 S.D.C. from a punch, 2D4 S.D.C. damage from a kick, 1D6 from a TK Pulse plus knockdown.

Bonuses: Thumper's TK Pulse imaging gives them 360 degree "vision," and their other senses make them able to respond to and avoid many types of incoming attacks. +4 on initiative, +3 to parry, +5 to automatic dodge (the character must roll on a D20 to dodge, but the act of dodging does not use up a melee action), +1 to roll with impact at levels 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, and 15, +1 to save vs poison, +4 to save vs possession, and *impervious* to all forms of psychic sensitive communication and attacks (including Empathy, Telepathy, Presence Sense, See Aura, Empathic Transmission, and similar). Remember, Thumpers suffer no movement or combat penalties from darkness, blindness, deafness, smoke or fog. HOWEVER, heavy rain and overwhelming odors reduce the range and skill level of sensory abilities and TK communication by *half*.

Magic: None.

Psionics: Considered a Minor Physical psychic. In addition to the TK Pulse (Special) without I.S.P. cost, all Thumpers have TK Lift (6), and Levitation (varies) or TK Leap (8), and Resist Fatigue (4) or Impervious to Cold (2). **I.S.P.:** M.E. attribute number +1D6+1 I.S.P. per level of experience.

Allies: None per se. Although gentle, kind and friendly, most Thumpers tend to keep to themselves, and confine themselves to the wilderness of the Waste where they live off the land and wander as nomads. However, they are known to intercede and help travelers under attack by Screamers, leading them to the edge of the Waste, and to safety.

Enemies: Mainly large, carnivorous predators and humans and D-Bees who mistake them for monsters and attack in fear. **Note:** Thumpers do NOT alarm or bother Waste Ghosts nor do they attract Screamers, both completely ignore them.

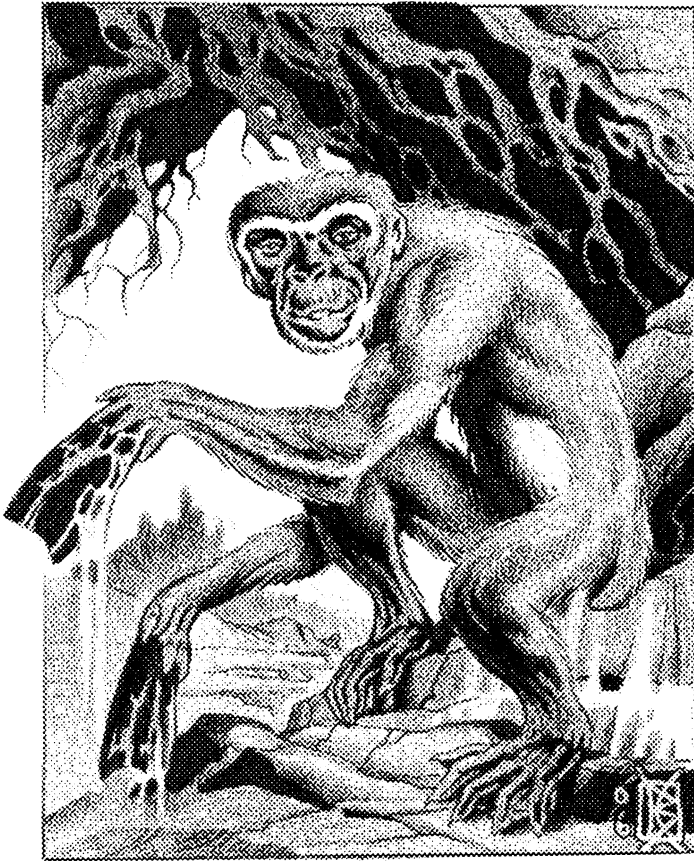
Value: None.

Habitat: Most common to the Waste of Arizona, but a lone individual or small group (seldom more than eight) may be encountered wandering anywhere in Arizona, New Mexico, northern Mexico and along the lowlands of the southern Rocky Mountains.

Waste Monkey

Optional R.C.C. – Also known as the Shovel-Paw Monkey

Waste Monkeys are strange, ground-dwelling creatures who may be the mutated descendants of escaped zoo animals, the products of genetic manipulation, or primate-like creatures from another dimension. These furry little guys look nearly identical to Spider Monkeys indigenous to southern Mexico, except they are fifty percent larger, and lack a prehensile tail, sporting instead, only a short nub extending from the bottom of the spine. In place of hands, the creatures have large, spade-like "hooves" used for digging to excavate their homes or find grubs, worms, and roots to eat. The legs end in perfectly articulated prehensile



feet, every bit as sensitive and delicate as human hands. This gives the Waste Monkey an upside-down appearance, because they move on their “knuckles,” swinging their feet below them like a gorilla, and they are remarkably nimble and speedy.

The little primates live in lodges of 3-10 mated pairs and care for all of their young together in small caves or dug-out burrows under boulders and below the root systems of ancient trees. Not tunnelers, the Waste Monkeys simply excavate areas with some sort of natural ceiling of stone, timber, or even an abandoned vehicle left by adventurers who perished in the Waste. Incredibly intelligent and social creatures, they work in a genuine community, with the females nurturing the young and tending to the burrow, and males gathering food and fighting off predators.

All Waste Monkeys are extraordinarily curious, clever and playful. They are excellent problem solvers and are nearly impossible to keep confined in a cage or enclosed in a room, almost always finding a way out if there is one. In the wild, they are seen at the edge of the Waste peering out into the surrounding land, and even make bold excursions in pairs into the Clarkdale Confederacy to steal food or go exploring. If caught and taken away from the Waste, they make great pets, seeming to accept their separation from home and family to adapt and go with the flow of their new surroundings. If they ever get back within sight of the Waste, however, the monkey is likely to make a run for it out of instinct.

Although they have no communication skills other than monkey-like hoots and hollers, the Waste Monkey can understand spoken languages with a greater range of understanding than a dog or chimp. Simple commands are learned quickly, and even complex vocabulary is picked up the more the monkey is spoken too. This makes them a favorite pet of miners, adventurers, vagabonds, swindlers and thieves in the New West, as the little

guys can be told to “get his wallet” or “distract those guards” and seem to understand and perfectly carry out the orders. Fortunately, the Waste Monkeys (who don’t really know right from wrong) are rare outside of the Waste and don’t do well in colder climates.

All in all, these cute little bundles can be a handful. They seem to like humanoids, particularly humans, human-like D-Bees and mutants, and mutant animals, and can grow quite attached to them. If a friend or a member of its lodge is put into danger, the Waste Monkey becomes as mean as can be, biting with its dull teeth or jabbing with its pointed shovel-hands. It will fiercely attack foes much larger than itself, but as an S.D.C. creature its options are limited. It usually uses its superior smarts to lure away danger and predators, or leads them into the path of another, larger animal. In fact, some Waste Monkeys make their burrows within the hunting ground or even the lair of large predators (like a T-Rex or a group of Pit Lions) that have little interest in such small, elusive morsels and focus on bigger prey.

Waste Monkey Stats

Waste Monkeys as a Player Character. Waste Monkeys make excellent Non-Player Characters run by the G.M., but *may* be offered as a player character. However, the player has the task of playing an animal-like creature with the intelligence of a human 4-5 year old child and the cunning of a 14-15 year old teenager. While such a character can offer a great role-playing experience in the right game, it is not suited for every campaign or player.

If the Waste Monkey is allowed as a player character, start with the R.C.C. Skills listed below (no additional advancement in those skills), plus select *three* Secondary Skills from the following at level one: Basic Mechanics (-10%), Dance, Concealment, Gymnastics (+5%), Palming (+2%), Play Musical Instrument (-10%), Pick Locks, Pick Pockets, Sign Language (-10%), Swimming (-15%), Tailing, and Language (to understand only, not speak). Pick one additional Secondary Skill from those listed here at levels 2, 4, 7, 10, and 13. Skills advance with experience. Use the Vagabond experience table.

Alignment: Considered selfish (Unprincipled); doesn’t really know right from wrong.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D6+9 (highly intelligent animal; equal to a child or teen in some areas), M.E. 1D4+8, M.A. 1D6+12, P.S. 1D6+7, P.E. 1D6+6, P.P. 2D4+8, P.B. 1D6+9, Spd 1D6+10.

Hit Points: P.E. attribute number +1D4 per level of experience.

S.D.C.: 2D6+10

Horror Factor: Not applicable.

Size: 2 to 3 feet (0.6 to 0.9 m) tall, standing fully erect.

Weight: 13 to 18 pounds (5.9 to 8 kg).

Average Life Span: 25 to 30 years.

P.P.E.: 3D6

Natural Abilities: Cute and friendly, good agility, human-like mental attributes, excavate/dig at one-third running speed, nightvision 500 feet (152 m), plus automatically has the skills noted below.

R.C.C. Skills: Camouflage 55%, Climbing 70/60%, Escape Artist 65%, Identify Plants & Fruits 86%, Land Navigation 79%, Prowl 60%, and Wilderness Survival 85%.

Attacks per Melee: Four.

Damage: 1D6 S.D.C. with a bite, 1D4 S.D.C. from a clawing foot attack, or 1D6+1 S.D.C. from a shovel hand.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +1 on initiative, +1 to strike and parry, +3 to dodge, +1 to pull punch (or bite), +3 to roll with impact, and +2 to save vs Horror Factor.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Allies: None per se, although they like Thumpers (only Thumpers don't keep pets) and quickly accept and befriend (like a dog or friendly squirrel) humans and D-Bees who feed them and treat them nice. Playful, they like to tease and chase cattle and horses. Outside of the Waste the critters make friends quickly and easily with humanoids.

Enemies: Predators, particularly canines, felines, and Tiger Claw Raptors. Waste Monkeys are sometimes captured and turned into pets by local cowboys and Native Americans, even adventurers, as well as captured and caged for resale by merchants traveling up and down the Great Trade Road. **Note:** Waste Monkeys do not upset Waste Ghosts nor do they attract Screamers. However, they hate the noise made by Screamers and usually run away as soon as one or more begin to scream.

Value: Up to 100 credits as a pet, possibly more as a novelty outside of the Arizona and New Mexico region.

Habitat: Eighty-seven percent live only in the Waste, another 10% live in the area around the Waste, especially Phoenix and the Clarkdale Confederacy, and 3% live in the mountain forests of Arizona and parts of New Mexico. The total population is estimated at 50,000-70,000. Prefer warm climates and don't fare well in cold climates or places with extreme seasonal changes (i.e., winter).

Arzno

The Western Wilderness of Rifts Earth is a desolate, barren landscape generally inhospitable to humanoid life. Seasons are harsh, with hot summers and freezing winters. There are droughts in the summer, flash floods in the spring, and terrible ice storms from late autumn through the winter. While often terrible and even deadly before the Great Cataclysm, the coming of the Rifts added its own dangers such as alien plagues, diseases, radiation fallout, and other environmental hazards. This is in addition to the alien plant and animal life, monsters, and supernatural creatures that now call Earth home. Thus, the New West is an unforgiving land of natural, magical, and other-worldly terrors, and human civilization is sparse.

Still, the denizens of post-apocalyptic North America turn their eyes to the western horizon, just as the pioneers of the 19th Century did. They see an opportunity for a new, better life, especially now, with the fall of Tolkeen at the hands of the Coalition Army. Nobody knows what the Coalition States have in mind for future military campaigns, but one thing is certain, it's open season on practitioners of magic and D-Bees in the Domain of Man. Many pioneers moving into the West are D-Bees, rebels, refugees and free thinkers looking to escape the vengeance of the CS. They have left the relative comfort and safety of the domain of mankind to seek their fortune in the uncharted wilderness. Some see the New West as a place they can live in peace, or start anew. Others seek a place to hide and plot their own revenge. Still others hope to escape persecution for being different.

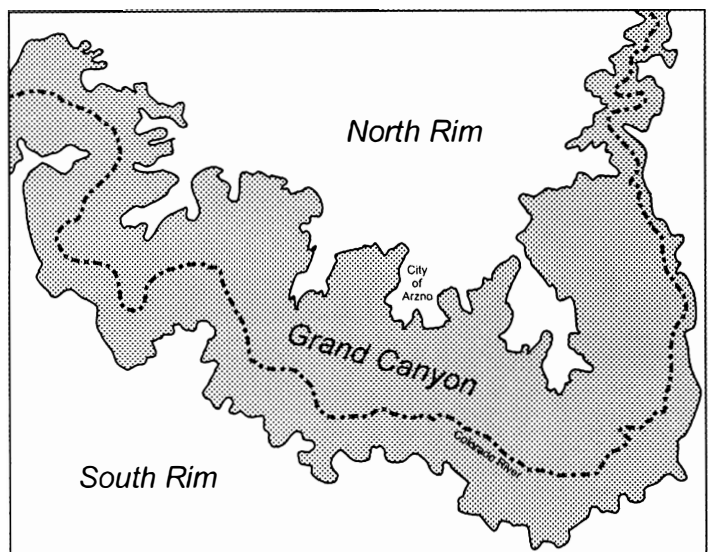
The Arzno Territory

The Arzno Territory or "City-State" includes a 30 mile (48 km) radius around the city itself. Encompassed in that radius, some areas immediately beyond the Grand Canyon's southern

rim as well as northward into the wooded plateau beyond the city's gates. Within the City-State are a number of small towns and villages of humans and D-Bees, as well as trading posts, trappers' lodges, homesteads, farms and ranches of various sizes, including a few very large ranching operations. Most folks living within the borders of the Arzno City-State consider themselves residents of the Arzno Territory and even the city itself.

Regional Population: An accurate census is difficult due to the many nomads, mercenaries, adventurers, cowboys, trappers, and small communities that come and go. Best estimates place the population around 23,000 to 27,000, give or take 1D4x1,000. Some 5,000 of these people are refugees from Tolkeen.

The Arzno Territory is well-protected from the many threats in the wilderness, especially the vampires south of the Grand Canyon. In fact, many people and communities in the surround-



ing 100 miles (160 km) beyond Arzno, such as the gentle Fennodi, Cactus People, and others who just want to live their lives in peace, also turn to the warriors of Arzno (as well as wandering Cyber-Knights and Justice Rangers) for help and protection. Since the City-State of Arzno was founded by mercenaries of many diverse races and backgrounds, all people are welcomed in Arzno. This has led to a highly diverse population where most D-Bees can build a life, if not always obtaining complete acceptance. The most common D-Bees and mutants such as *Fennodi*, *Cactus People*, *Psi-Stalkers*, and near-human D-Bees and mutants in general, are the most likely to find genuine acceptance and equality. The most exotic and inhuman looking beings still encounter prejudice, distrust and inequity, but the people of Arzno are much more tolerant than most communities.

Racial Breakdown:

49% Human

10% Fennodi

8% Cactus People

5% Psi-Stalkers

3% Mutant Animals (mostly from Lone Star)

25% Other D-Bees and Mutants

O.C.C.s Common to the Territory: Regardless of O.C.C., virtually all of those who live outside of the city are simple ranchers, farmers, peasants and refugees. Many are Headhunters, Merc Soldiers, Cowboys, Gunfighters, Saddle Tramps,

and other men at arms. Others are psychics, Rogue Scholars, Vagabonds, Wilderness Scouts, adventurers, Techno-Wizards and other practitioners of magic. Half have come searching for adventure, fame, and fortune, the other half claim to seek peace, personal freedom and a new start.

Transients: 4D6x100 transients can be found throughout the Arzno Territory at any given time, with most of them in the City of Arzno, proper. Meanwhile, an equal or greater number are usually on the outskirts of the city-state, having recently left the city en route to other places and the promise of adventure or fortune elsewhere in the New West. These numbers fluctuate with the seasons, especially for the nomadic tribes of D-Bees and Indians in the area, as well as the Lyn-Srial who pass through during the Festival of Light and lend a hand whenever they are needed.

Surrounding Communities: Northern Arizona is largely uninhabited. The Lyn-Srial live in the Grand Canyon 100 miles (160 km) to the west of Arzno. They are friends, allies and trade partners who have significant relations with the city-state, enjoying mutual trade and a long-standing peace with Arzno. The Navajo and Hopi people have tribes to the east, but have only casual contact with Arzno; mainly occasional commercial transactions. These Native Americans tend to keep to themselves, avoid the City of Arzno, and trade with the Hopi at the ruins of Joseph City or the Apache at Rivercreek.

The farms, ranches, and villages that populate the City-State of Arzno account for a large portion of the community's food



and commerce. A handful of small towns and small villages on the outskirts of the city are effectively the suburbs to Arzno, providing places to reside for those who don't want to, or can't afford to, live in the city proper. These communities consider themselves citizens of Arzno and support the city every way they can.

Level of Education in Arzno: Fair to good. Most speak American (50% of the population), Spanish (20%), or both (20%). The remaining 10% speak a variety of different D-Bee and foreign languages. About a quarter of the overall population is literate in at least one language. As far as non-traditional education goes, 90% of the population over the age of 12 has one Ancient W.P. (Archery, Blunt, and Knife being most common), one modern W.P. (usually W.P. Handguns or W.P. Rifle, or W.P. Energy Pistol or W.P. Energy Rifle), Horsemanship: General, and two Wilderness or Cowboy skills.

Places of Note

Magebrush (pop. 777) is the largest settlement outside the City of Arzno and is heavily populated with Techno-Wizards, Ley Line Walkers, Ley Line Rifiers, Mystics, Wilderness Scouts, Rogue Scholars and Scientists, Psi-Druids, and other psychics and nature-lovers. The settlement is virtually a serene garden where the inhabitants live in simple cottages. Men of magic can be seen everywhere, walking around in their heavy robes and casual garments. While quiet and peaceful, there is no larger or more potent concentration of powerful and dedicated psychics, practitioners of magic and thinkers in the New West. Few of the residents are below level 8 in experience, and there are many at levels much higher. An adult Royal Frilled Dragon and an ancient Forest Runner Dragon also live in the community.

Stony Ridge (pop. 191). Located west of the City of Arzno, along the northern rim of the Grand Canyon, is Stony Ridge. The citizens of this village are stone miners, pulling rock for use as building material, concrete aggregate, and paving gravel from the stony ground at the Grand Canyon. They are finding their work hard even with help from a small clan of five Earth Warlocks (levels 3-6) and not very profitable. The town's population has dropped by a third over the last six years as people move on to find less backbreaking work. Stony Ridge has established a friendship and trade relations with a handful trappers and Elemental Fusionists (Earth/Air) from the mountains and canyons to the west.

Terrell (pop. 163). This is more a large plantation than it is a true town. With the exception of a few independent farms and homesteads, nearly the entire population works on the farm of the famous *Terrell family*, or provides some service in support of their operation. The farm is owned and run by the Terrell family clan which is famous for its masters of magic. Among the family are Psi-Druids, Earth and Air Warlocks, Ley Line Walkers and Techno-Wizards, all of whom work together to grow all types of exotic fruits, vegetables, and crops. Nowhere else in North America can anyone find pineapples and coconuts growing next to corn and wheat fields, alongside orange groves and apple trees, tomato patches and rice fields, watermelon and banana trees, tobacco and cotton, and many others. The farm relies on a series of sophisticated TW greenhouses that manipulate

atmospheric and soil conditions and make growing such a wide variety of indigenous and non-native plants possible. Outside, in the fields, the Psi-Druids and Warlocks work their magic to similar effect, while the Ley Line Walkers help protect the farm and its residents, as well as transport the crops. The original founder's two sons, Ray and Cyrus Terrell, run the farm and the grocery in the City of Arzno that sells their wares (see #46 on the map), but the entire family clan of 63 people live and work on the plantation. According to local legend, the founding Terrell family came to Arizona to flee persecution from the Federation of Magic when they clashed with the original Lord Dunscon.

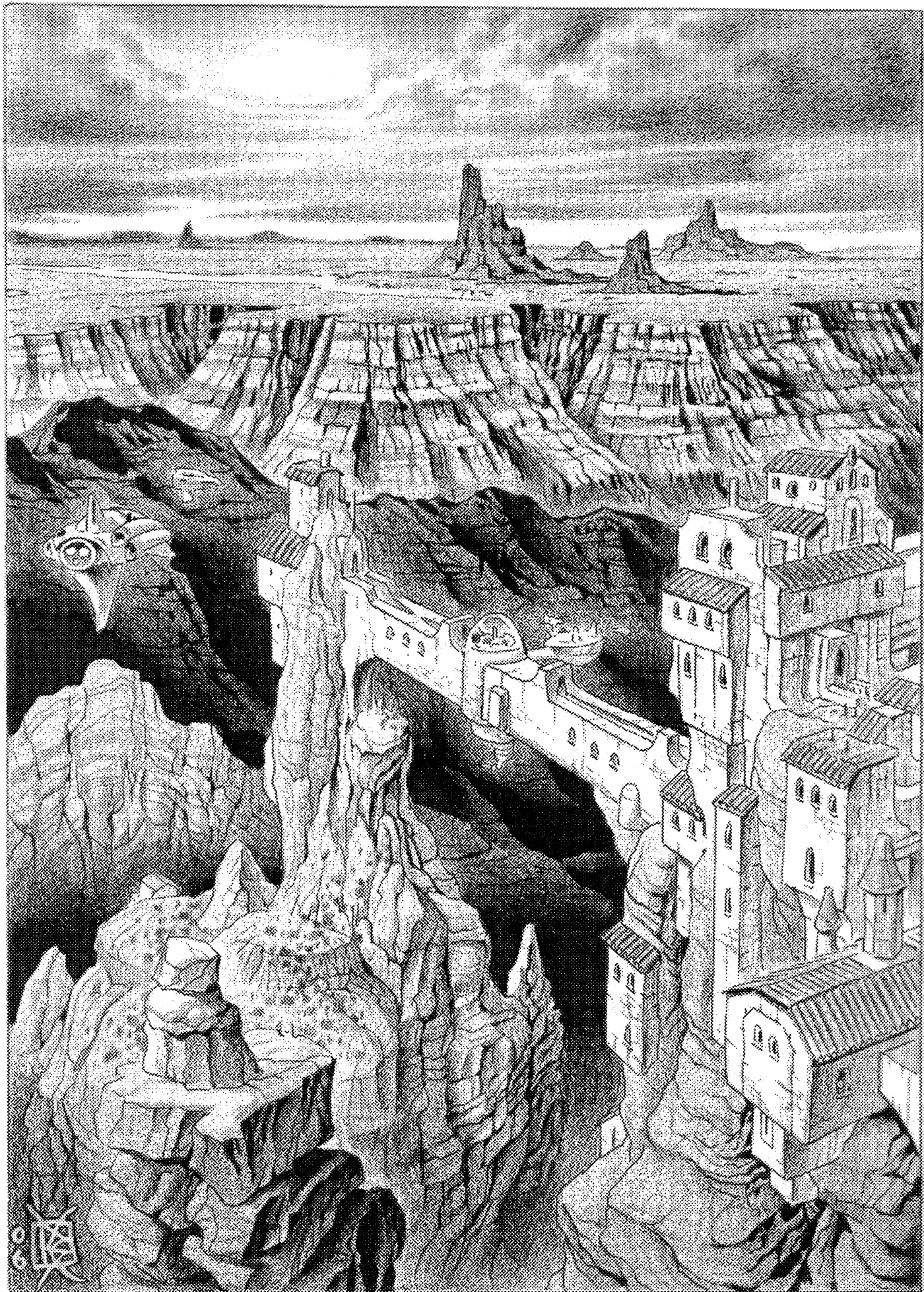
Ramirez Ranch (pop. 97). The ranch of the cattle baron *K.D. Ramirez* is located on the wide, green plateau that extends north of the city. Ramirez has a reputation of being very protective of his position as the number one supplier of beef and other red meat to the city of Arzno, as well as his contracts with the Arzno Mercenary Corps (A.M.C.). Ramirez even does well enough to ship beef and prime-quality dinosaur meat, as well as leather and dinosaur hides, up and down the Great Trade Road. He is a friendly and exuberant man who deals with those who try to stand against him with a heavy hand. His heavily-armed security staff (mostly Gunslingers and Headhunters) reveal his true nature as a man not to be trifled with. In many ways, Ramirez and his family are a power in and of themselves and they exert a strong influence in the community.

Although Ramirez can be hard-nosed and violent, he cares about the men and families who live and work on his ranch. He gives families free room and board in simple, small, but clean homes, a fair wage, and his protection. Mess with one of "his people" and you'll find yourself dealing with K.D. Ramirez personally, or worse, one of his hired guns.

Arzno Power and Water Works (workforce: 70). Along with its contract to provide weapons and equipment to the Arzno Mercenary Corps (A.M.C.), *Arzno Weapons Manufacturing* also owns the exclusive rights to provide power and water to the city. As with most aspects of Arzno, both Techno-Wizardry and conventional means are used to operate the facility. Power is provided to the city by a conventional power plant built on a river that flows into the Grand Canyon to the northeast of the city, fueled by magical fire and water continually reclaimed from the steam the plant produces. In addition, on the hills and in windy valleys around the plant are high-tech *windmills*, in clusters of a few to a dozen, that harness the power of the wind to generate additional electricity. The power generated from all sources is channeled through buried cables to a TW containment and distribution facility at the power plant, which then routes it to the homes and businesses of the city some seven miles (11 km) away.

The whole system is maintained by Arzno Weapons Manufacturing (A.W.M.) for the city, which in turn provides free land to A.W.M. along with the rights to maintain and control the available levels of P.P.E. through the use of its pyramid complexes. It's a win-win for the citizens of Arzno in every way.

A.M.C. Proving Grounds. Over 100 square miles (259 square km) of land in the foothills far to the north of the city is marked off and reserved for the use of the Arzno Mercenary Corps (A.M.C.) for drills and live-fire exercises. The A.M.C. has massive maneuvers in the hills year-round, at least once a



06

month. Such activities are the favorite of most mercenaries, especially wilderness survival, cross-country orienteering, and capture-and-evade games. The A.M.C. has a similar plot of land staked out on the southern side of the Grand Canyon for drilling in dry, hot conditions.

Wilderness Logging, Arzno Office (workforce: 128). One of the primary industries outside of the city is logging and clear-cutting land for use by farmers and ranchers. One major outfit is Wilderness Logging, Inc., a company with operations not only in Arzno, but in New Durango, Silvereno, the Colorado Baronies, New Mexico, and Lone Star. A CS citizen and Carpetbagger named Herman Howell from Amarillo, Texas, owns the company lock, stock, and barrel. Unable to make a living at ranching, the entrepreneur headed into the wilderness to try his hand in the lumber business, and the rest is history. He stays out of politics, knowing that it would only hurt his business, and is one of the top suppliers of lumber to Arzno and many other communities in the New West. His mobile factories can be broken down and moved as needed, and are capable of planing boards and making laminated beams, press-board, and other engineered materials.

The downside to Howell's business is that it threatens the livelihoods of many simple workers. While farmers and ranchers get a boost from his activities and support him, many lumberjacks and woodworkers are quickly being thrown aside. Like most Carpetbaggers, such things don't worry Herman Howell, only progress and profit.

The City of Arzno

Population: Generally accepted as around 23,000 (including 5,000 refugees from Tolkeen/Minnesota).

Racial Breakdown:

- 53% Human
- 10% Fennodi
- 8% Psi-Stalkers
- 3.5% Cactus People
- 3% Grackle Tooth
- 2.5% Larmac
- 2% Mutant Animals
- 2% D'norr Devilman
- 1% Lyn-Srial
- 15% Other D-Bees, Mutants and a few dozen True Atlanteans.

Transients: 4D6x100 transients can be found in the city at any given time. Among these are several Justice Rangers, Cyber-Knights, Pecos Bandits (and other criminal types) and many types of adventurers, mercenaries, bounty hunters, gunmen, and practitioners of magic, whether passing through for their first time or regular visitors. Outsiders come to Arzno to trade, resupply, upgrade weapons and vehicles, get repairs, to see (and buy) the latest TW item, visit with old friends, find work, enjoy a little recreation, spend money, get caught up on the latest news and rumors, or enjoy a nice, warm bath and get a peaceful night's rest in a bed.

O.C.C.s Common to the City: Mercs and men at arms of all kinds, adventurers of all kinds, and Ley Line Walkers and Techno-Wizards are extremely common; more than half are employed with either the Arzno Mercenary Corps (8-10%) or Arzno Weapons Manufacturing (52-59%). The rest are either independent soldiers of fortune, drifters, or work as Civilian Patrollers, private shop owners, mechanics, or in any number of other occupations where they can put their skills and abilities to use. Many Techno-Wizards in Arzno ply a trade that is in some way in support of the larger operations, such as drawing up plans or salvaging components from damaged equipment, building and selling TW items, civil defense, and so on. (See the section on the Techno-Wizard economy for more details on how Arzno Techno-Wizards run their businesses.)

Headhunters, Combat Cyborgs, Merc Soldiers, Juicers, Special Forces, Bounty Hunters, Cowboys, Gunfighters, Gunslingers, Psi-Slingers, Tribal Warriors, Robot Pilots, Glitter Boys, Cyber-Knights and all other types of men at arms, as well as *Shamans, Ley Line Walkers, Bursters, and Lynn-Srial Sky Knights* are all common sights at Arzno. The mercenary trade in Arzno is one of the principal driving forces of day-to-day life in the city-state. Any character class that can wield an energy rifle, particularly those who can fight demons and vampires, can be found leaning against a bar in an Arzno pub, window shopping at the many shops and arms dealerships, or looking for their next job opportunity.

Naturally, being a New West town, the usual array of Gunslingers, Native Americans, Cowboys, Saddle Tramps, Preachers, and adventurers make their homes in and around Arzno.

Practitioners of Magic, other than Techno-Wizards, ply their skills to the merc trade as healers, fortune tellers, advisors, military support, special operatives, spies, assassins, heavy (magical) artillery, and as vampire hunters and demon slayers.

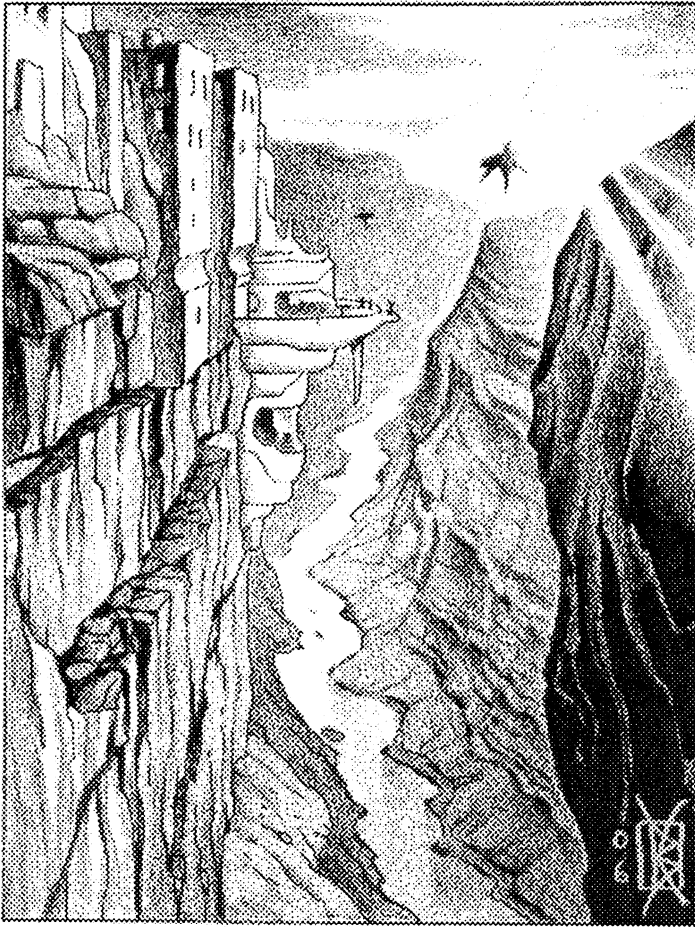
Psychics find work in much the same way as a practitioner of magic, but lean heavily into the mercenary realm. Master psychics and Mind Melters, in particular, are highly valued for their skills as soldiers and in hunting vampires and other demons.

Level of Education: Good. 95% of the population speaks either English or Spanish, with many (40%) fluent in both. Literacy rate is an impressive 40%, with 25% of the population literate in one or more additional languages. Every citizen over the age of 12 has one modern W.P., Land Navigation, a Pilot skill and a Horsemanship skill (usually Horsemanship: General). Classes in various practical skills such as marksmanship, Wilderness Survival, Lore: Demons & Monsters, and others are available throughout the year for a low price (often free) at *Civilian Patroller* precincts, A.W.M., and the A.M.C. compound.

Arzno History

Arzno is located on the north rim of the Grand Canyon, on a smooth stretch of arable land beyond the gaping maw of the chasm. To look northward is to see thick pine forests on a vast plateau, with hills rising far in the distance. To the west, south, and east lies the canyon. Everything about the city's location capitalizes on the beauty, safety, and comfort provided by the chasm, as well as harnessing the magical energies within.

Surrounding the city is such natural beauty and splendor that most find it hard to believe, when they first see it, that they have not been somehow swept off to some alien world. Nowhere else on Earth is there such a display of contrast as looking north from the southern rim of the canyon, where airships and ferries wait to transport visitors to the Arzno side. Standing on the rise just before the plummet into the canyon, the traveler looks over the seemingly infinitely deep canyon walls of red and gold; the city can barely be seen on the gentle slope of the north rim, eight miles (13 km) away. Beyond the initial sun-baked stone and dust, the green of pine forests can be made out on the vast plateau that stretches northward.



The view for Arzno residents is equally splendid, although many take it for granted. Looking southward from the **Sky Docks**, one can see the canyon stretching out to the south, as well as to the east and west. As if looking down on a mountain range from the heavens, the land peaks and rolls from thousands of millennia of artful carving by the Colorado River. At night, the dozens of ley lines that run throughout the Grand Canyon glow, painting the land with a faint blue sheen, like enchanted moonlight. For an hour every midnight, the slight bluish hue becomes an obvious light, so bright that Arzno sentries stationed on peaks throughout the canyon can stand watch by it. This emission of light becomes like the rays of a blue sun at seasonal peak times such as solstice, equinox, and during lunar eclipses, all because of the proximity of the lines to one another and the reflection of the light off of the smooth canyon walls. It is truly a stunning sight.

In addition to beautiful surroundings, the Grand Canyon provides Arzno with a number of other advantages. The canyon it-

self provides a natural barrier on three sides of the city. With the exception of Grigleapers, Leatherwings, and the occasional other cliff-dwelling or flying predator, would-be invaders, monsters and animals find the chasm insurmountable. Even demonic beings such as *Worm Wraiths* must travel miles out of their way in order to reach the city, which they must approach either from walls of sheer stone, or at the defensive wall built on the northern side of the city. Bandits and other hostile forces face the same difficulties, as even modern hovercraft cannot traverse the canyon; only vehicles capable of genuine flight.

The Grand Canyon also has beneficial effects on the weather, keeping the temperature relatively low compared to the desert and prairie immediately south. On average, daily highs are 20 degrees Fahrenheit (11 degrees Celsius) lower on the northern side, due to the canyon and the north rim's higher elevation. So great is the weather difference, the northern side sees a good deal of snow in the winter while not a flake touches the ground on the other side only a few miles away. This all adds up to excellent land for farming and ranching, plenty of pine for logging, and an abundance of water from the springtime snow melt.

The final advantage of Arzno's proximity to the Grand Canyon is the abundance of magical energy. Throughout the Grand Canyon and to the north run dozens of small ley lines with numerous nexus points. These magical junctions are unique in that they rarely result in random Rift activity, even during significant astronomical events that normally trigger dimensional anomalies. Two of these small nexus points are within the city of Arzno itself. The Arzno Mercenary Corps (A.M.C.) headquarters is built on top of one nexus, and Arzno Weapons Manufacturing (A.W.M.) on the other. Controlled by small stone pyramids, these mystic energy sources provide P.P.E. in abundance for the use of practitioners of magic for the benefit of Arzno, particularly the Techno-Wizards who harness them for the creation of their bizarre devices. For miles around the Grand Canyon, P.P.E. levels are very high, allowing mages to call on extra magical energy and increased spell effects.

Arzno's founding. It is unclear exactly when the town of Arzno was founded. There are clues to the early history of the city, but no written documentation has survived that dates back to the time of the city's origin.

Many of Arzno's citizens are practitioners of magic, particularly Ley Line Walkers and Techno-Wizards, which has led some local scholars to believe that Arzno was founded by sorcerers seeking to escape the harsh life of war and danger in the Magic Zone. This theory would seem to be further supported by the fact that Arzno's location is perfect for practitioners of magic, with its close proximity to the Grand Canyon and the ley line network contained therein.

Another idea stems from the name of the town itself. Scholars and historians note that the name "Arzno" is an easy mutation from the name of the pre-Rifts state of "Arizona" and probably developed over time as the Dark Age erased so much knowledge of even things as simple as the names of once-great cities and states of the American Empire. Thus, the theory goes that pre-Rifts defenders, perhaps a branch of the American military, chose this spot to relocate and try to rebuild or hold onto a piece of its past, and perhaps restart a nation. However, few ancient artifacts and fewer still that are military in nature have ever been found at the location, suggesting that Arzno came into existence in the later years of the Dark Age.

Another commonly held idea is that the founders of Arzno fled to the Grand Canyon region from the south to escape the vampires and demons of Old Mexico. Many of Arzno's residents are Hispanic, and Spanish is spoken in the town as much as American. The locals of the Arzno territory are also fiercely committed to fighting vampires and monsters of all kinds. Likewise, all forms of Summoning and Necromancy are banned, and Witchery forbidden.

The fourth and most commonly accepted belief is that Arzno was founded by a post-Cataclysm group of refugees and warriors. They could have originated anywhere in the southwest or Mexico, or came down from the north or northeast. Undoubtedly, the group picked up others along the way, making them a mixed group of humans and D-Bees, mages, scholars and warriors. The hostile nature of the environment, with monsters, dinosaurs and vampires, required the settlers to be fighters, giving Arzno a long history of warriors and mercenaries. That would explain why mercs, to this day, are highly respected and why the location has served as a base camp for mercenaries and adventurers for at least 150 years. It would also explain why humans and D-Bees, scholars and warriors, feel equally welcomed and at home, because Arzno grew out of a military camp and a haven for refugees.

The truth may never be known.

Arzno Mercenary Corps

Whether the location for Arzno was chosen by accident or design, it has served as an outpost and camp in the middle of a wilderness for generations. It has seen its boom times and its lean years, but never has it been more prosperous and populated than it is now. The next benchmark in Arzno's history occurred in 89 P.A. when a group of adventurers and mercenaries stumbled across the town while tracking bandits fleeing westward from Colorado. Arzno was part fort, part farms and part enclave for scholars, scientists and wizards. Total population was around 5,000 people, humans and D-Bees combined. A frontier town built around a small river with good land for ranching, farming, and logging, and plenty of available magic energy. The mercenaries stopped to re-supply and rest a night before moving on. After completing their task and dispatching the desperados, the group returned to Arzno for another night's rest.

Leading the adventurers was a young True Atlantean named Onra, the second son of the House of Libson of the Bagh-Dach clan. Renowned for its heroes, the younger sons of Libson have, for millennia, gone out into the Megaverse to fight great evils and right great wrongs. The Atlantean Prince saw in his human cousins an admirable fighting spirit and tenacity with which he could identify. The people of Arzno used their limited means to fight back raiders, monsters, and vampires. They even left the safety of their fortress town to meet threats head-on in the wilderness, fighting vampires and helping neighboring communities, often at great cost to their own fighting forces. Prince Onra decided to stay on and help them focus and grow their tiny kingdom into a prosperous new nation. A number of Onra's heroic companions also chose to stay to help, and the Arzno Mercenary Corps was born.

Among Prince Onra's great talents is marketing and persuasion. He saw Arzno's history and potential and, for the first time

ever, marketed it to the outside world. Not in a broad way throughout the continent, but in a focused, regional approach to other local people, places and powers. He established the **Arzno Mercenary Corps** (A.M.C.) as the face of his operation and immediately began to bring change to the small frontier town. He consolidated the Arzno power base and convinced several mercenary bands operating around Arzno to make it their central base of operation. He strengthened ties with Bandito Arms and expanded their operations in Arzno, convincing them to establish a permanent presence in the town. Not to be outdone, this led other, competing, arms dealers and combat service providers to look at Arzno as a *new* and *important* place to establish permanent showrooms and trade operations. With the increased number of mercenaries and arms merchants, including Bandito Arms, Wilk's and Northern Gun, came more Operators, Body Fixers, Cyber-Docs, restaurant owners, and business people.

The increased military presence, availability of technology and a growing number of merchants – all held in check by the True Atlanteans and the A.M.C. to maintain Arzno's long tradition of heroism, law and order – attracted more ordinary people from throughout Arizona, New Mexico, Utah and Colorado to settle in Arzno. The appeal of the town included the powerful belief they'd be safe there, because it was a town established and run by heroic mercenaries. For others, Arzno represented being part of something special – something good.

Prince Onra accomplished this by establishing the following facts in the minds of entrepreneurs and ordinary folks alike.

One, he said, Arzno was "the" growing military and trade power in the Southwest.

Two, it was a proven power that had survived for more than 150 years in a land most people claim is uninhabitable and impossible to survive.

Third, and most important, he accurately portrayed Arzno as a kingdom of heroes. The home to warriors, wizards, scholars, humans and D-Bees who believed in freedom and justice for all. A place that lived by the virtues of the old American Empire and for the past 150 years had beaten all odds.

As one might imagine, this appealed to other warriors, mercenaries, gunfighters and lawmen who reckoned themselves to be *heroes*. It appealed to the young, brave and bold who dreamed of being important, making a difference and becoming famous. That, in turn, attracted businesses that catered to the heroes/mercs. The promise of safety, law and order, and technology in a wild land had people coming to Arzno by the wagon full.

By 92 P.A., Arzno was a boom town.

Arzno Weapons Manufacturing

After hearing of Onra's venture, Lanis of House Nemesio, an older cousin and clansman to the Libson prince, decided to join the epic enterprise. They arrived in 92 P.A. Lanis brought with him a dozen of his colleagues and a plan to expand Arzno's small Techno-Wizard manufacturing operation tenfold. All Lanis wanted was the exclusive manufacturing and marketing rights to Techno-Wizard weapons, armor, and equipment. A shrewd but fair man, Lanis would cut the city of Arzno in on his profits, paying a juicy royalty and providing Techno-Wizard

items to the city defenders at wholesale prices. Within two years he would also win long-term contracts to provide power and water to the city, and becoming a permanent resident power in what was becoming a burgeoning city-state.

With so many mages already in the city, establishing A.W.M. and expanding Techno-Wizard operations was easy. The trick was enticing them to work under one guiding hand, his, at A.W.M., and with an exclusive contract in hand, that was easy too, especially once he showed the Techno-Wizards that they'd benefit well from the fruits of their labor.

Before long, Arzno Weapons Manufacturing was rolling out weapons, armor, and equipment off its assembly lines and into the hands of the fast-growing Arzno Mercenary Corps. A.W.M. generated the economy that Arzno really needed to take off, and provided trade goods to acquire farming equipment, electronics, tools and equipment to make life easier and better for residents of the city-state. The good life brought growth.

War in Minnesota

The onset of the Tolkeen-Coalition War created an unexpected boost in Arzno's economy as the demand for mercenaries and Techno-Wizards reached an all-time high. The infamy of the Coalition States reached even the most obscure regions of the old American Empire, so many people in the city of Arzno were eager to help Tolkeen's cause against the oppressive Coalition States. Arzno Weapons Manufacturing could never match the volume of TW goods produced at places like Stormspire or even the Colorado Baronies, but many of its most unique and original creations were singled out as exceptional and found their way into the marketplace. Soon, Arzno went from a completely unknown city in an uncharted wilderness to one with a growing reputation for quality TW items and combat services, at least in the New West and border kingdoms like Tolkeen, Lone Star and MercTown.

Despite the economic boon from war, Arzno's growth slowed down. One reason was its distant geographic location so deep in the New West, in a region most people in the East still believed to be a hostile wilderness full of monsters, savages and danger, and not a place to be settled. Another was the simple fact that there aren't a lot of people living in Arizona or New Mexico, and the threat of vampires from Mexico is emblazoned in people's minds, keeping outsiders to a minimum. It didn't help that the TW weapons made in Arzno and shipped north didn't bear the city's name, but bore the logo of *A.W.M.* for *Arzno Weapons Manufacturing*. Thus, Arzno remains one of the best kept secrets in the West.

Arzno also lost as much as a quarter of its population when thousands of fighters, heroes, practitioners of magic and adventurers traveled to Minnesota to fight on the behalf of Tolkeen.

The Coalition States don't even know Arzno exists, but they have noticed the increase in TW weaponry coming out of the New West and are trying to figure out where it's all coming from. Their first guess is that the TW powerhouse in the Magic Zone, *Stormspire*, has expanded its operations to the frontier. Given its recent experiences with the TW-armed populace of Tolkeen, the prospect of another arms manufacturer in the New West is disturbing for the CS. They've heard tell of someplace in Colorado, but that's all. Should the CS learn about Arzno,

however, it is so far away that they will not worry about them until something big or threatening brings Arzno to their attention. Thus, the possibility of a confrontation is remote, as the Coalition has plenty of bigger fish to fry and doesn't seem to be too concerned with events in the Western Wilderness beyond how they affect Coalition interests in Lone Star. Case in point, the CS has known that the Black Market runs significant manufacturing operations from somewhere in the New West, but was not concerned about them until *Bandito Arms* became a major player and began to sell SAMAS-like power armor and other weapons similar to the Coalition's own. This changed Bandito Arms from a barely noticeable blip on the CS radar to a star on the *CS Top Ten Enemies list*.

Arzno, on the other hand, is intensely aware of the Coalition States and wants to stay off their radar for as long as possible.

Arzno today, **in the Autumn of 109 P.A.**, stands at a major crossroads as events both within the city-state and in the world at large have caused her progress to stall.

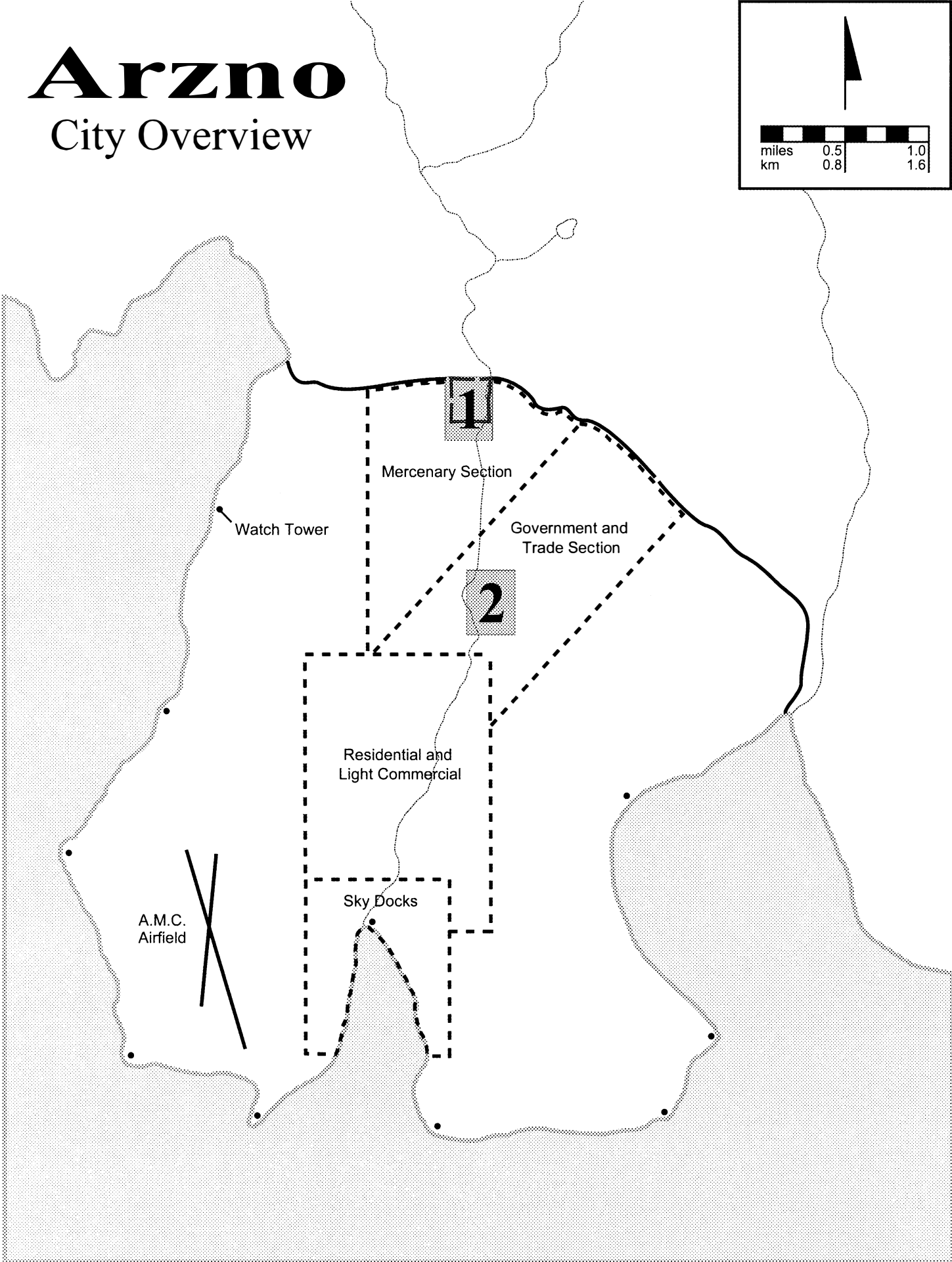
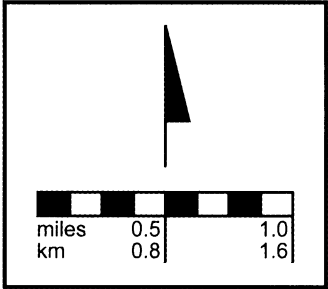
Following the tragic fall of Tolkeen, the soldiers and mages of Arzno returned home with thousands of refugees in tow. While this has replenished the population, it has also put a strain on the economy as the community struggles to absorb the influx of refugees into its society. While all who came would be accepted, employment was only guaranteed to soldiers, Operators, Techno-Wizards, and others who could find positions with the Arzno Mercenary Corps, Arzno Weapons Manufacturing and other skilled businesses. The rest would have to fend for themselves the best they could. While there is plenty of land for starting a homestead or little ranch or farm, such endeavors must be done outside of town, where the land is arid and the settlers are vulnerable to the dangers of the wild.

Expanding the population has been no simple matter for anyone. Much to the dismay of Arzno officials, institutions such as underground Body-Chop-Shops and Cyber-Snatching have recently appeared on its streets. One illegal operation recently run out of town even offered Juicer and Crazy conversions. Not that the city condemns such practices outright, but it certainly has no desire to tolerate the criminal element that back-alley Cyber-Docs bring with them. The city has always licensed and monitored such operations to make sure they are reputable and safe, not outlets for criminals. So far, all illegal operations have been successfully forced out by city officials or eliminated by Arzno Defenders, Cyber-Knights, Justice Rangers, and Sky Knights on the city's behalf. However, some try to sneak back in unnoticed, and others set up shop outside the city-state and let clients come to them. Being near the Great Trade Road keeps enough traffic coming for even a small, specialized operation like a Body-Chop-Shop to stay business. Other common underground industries include illegal blood sports (gladiatorial fights, brutal boxing and wrestling matches, animal fights, and similar), gambling, smuggling and racketeering. Since the fall of Tolkeen, cattle rustling and general banditry have seen a significant increase throughout the West, as desperate refugees, displaced criminals and out of work mercenaries (many of whom never got paid in the first place) turn to crime to survive.

Since the Coalition Army has effectively cut off escape to the East by seizing control of the Mississippi River and the land along its length, the majority of refugees, fugitives, crooks and mercs are forced to flee westward. Arzno is not the only com-

Arzno

City Overview



munity to suffer these problems, and many have fared much worse. All in all, Arzno is handling the situation better than most and continues to do well on all fronts.

The Gathering Storm. The people of Arzno don't know it yet, but they are about to face their greatest challenge. An aggressive vampire colony has secretly taken over *Fort Tombstone* and controls other outlying communities around it. The vampires' leader, Xavier Stuart, is concerned about Arzno's continuing growth and prosperity. If he and his vampire legions are to mold Arizona into the new Vampire Kingdom of America, they must deal with Arzno before it becomes too powerful. Although the bold vampire leader would have liked more time to grow his vampire army, he has decided that Arzno must be dealt with *now*. Over the next several months, he and his undead hosts will try to infiltrate, sabotage and seize control of the city-state. Failing that (and with True Atlanteans and so many vampire hunters, heroes, mercs and practitioners of magic, he half expects to fail), Xavier will unleash his vampire hordes and mortal henchmen to raze the city to the ground. Those who survive the vampires' onslaught shall join them or be enslaved or destroyed.

Arzno Technology Level

The overall tech level in the City-State of Arzno is roughly equal to the 1930's of pre-Rifts America. There are, of course, some notable exceptions, such as Mega-Damage weapons, armor and vehicles, bionics, and magical marvels created by the many Techno-Wizards in the city. Most of the city's power, water, and protection comes from, or is at least partially reliant on, Techno-Wizardry.

Government

An elected body known as the Council of Elders governs the City and Territory of Arzno. The Council of Elders is a senate of 11 elected citizens, one of them being the Chief Elder, who has no special governing power other than he sets the agenda and runs the meetings. Major issues are sent to the public to be voted on, and anyone 16 or older who is a citizen of the city-state may vote. An open-ballot vote is held every three years (at Summer Solstice) and the person with the most votes is Chief Elder, and the second through eleventh-most vote-getters fill the other ten seats.

The first two runners-up are appointed as alternates and are placed on reserve, attending all Council functions and meetings to serve as secretaries and perform various administrative duties. Elders also serve as judges in the city court in both criminal and civil matters. For high-profile or complex cases, a panel of retired Elders may be appointed by the Council.

Members on the Council do not get paid any sort of wage or salary, and all its members must find some means of support outside their service to the community; most own a business in town. The Council has managed to evade corruption and the basic dishonesty of most politics for years because of the non-paying position and relative lack of power. All of this is possible because the city-state is small, isolated, built upon frontiersman sensibilities and military order, and the community lacks powerful neighbors, rivals and enemies. Being a Council member is prestigious, however, making the Elders the most highly re-

garded citizens in the city. It is common to tip one's hat when passing a current or former member of the Council of Elders.

The Council is directly responsible for electing the leadership of the peacekeeping body of the city, the *Civilian Patrollers*. The Council nominates and elects the chief officer of the Patrollers (holds the rank of lieutenant) and must approve his choices for sergeants. The only qualifications for either position are: the candidate must be a citizen of the City of Arzno, must accept the job and its duties full-time (and therefore cannot be a member of the Arzno Mercenary Corps, though most are veterans of the A.M.C.), must be at least 25 years of age, and cannot be an active member of the Council of Elders. The lieutenant is stationed at the main precinct at the city court and there is one sergeant at each of the four precincts.

Emergence of Politics

While there have traditionally been no political parties or campaigning for Elder positions, recent years have seen this creeping into the mix. Members running on platforms of various political groups have not yet been successful in gaining a seat, but have managed to place one person as a Council alternate and are expected to be a serious force in the coming election. Groups have included everything from humanoid supremacists (generally anti-Fennodi and Cactus People, who are a little too "inhuman" for some folks' tastes), to religious groups, to militant factions for the destruction of the vampire threat. Various parties have come and gone in the last two elections, with another just over a year away. With the next election so close, many groups have banded together to form three much less fragmented groups who are all vying for seats on the Council of Elders.

The title of **The Arzno Independence Party** sounds strange since Arzno is an independent city-state, but what the group really wants is isolation from the rest of the world. There is a growing concern among some people that the evils of Tolkeen will come back to haunt all magic-using communities. War stories have reached the Arizona communities and the people want to distance themselves as much as possible from the Coalition threat. Members of this party are pushing to cut off communications and trade with communities in the East, including Lazlo, New Lazlo, Kingsdale, MercTown and even the Colorado Baronies. Some factions of this party are calling for the expulsion of refugees from the city as well. The overwhelming concerns are that either the Coalition is going to follow the refugees and the trail of TW trade back to Arzno and destroy them all, or that the evil of Tolkeen (whatever that is) will corrupt and ultimately destroy Arzno if they harbor anyone from Tolkeen.

The Traditionalist Party is a medium-sized group, roughly equivalent to the Independence Party in membership, influence and vocalizations. Leaders of the Traditionalists call for a return to the original mission of Arzno: the destruction of the vampire threat. This "mission" is more or less extrapolated from known Arzno history and the continuing vampire danger. These militants claim that Arzno was founded by refugees from northern Mexico under the expectation that they would grow strong and fight the threat head-on. While it is often thought that Arzno's founders may have come northward to escape the vampire threat, there is nothing to back up such a claim. Even if there

were, it doesn't mean Arzno has to exclusively dedicate itself to fighting vampires or freeing Mexico from vampire domination; they are way too small to consider the latter, and have never shirked fighting the undead. Still, this dedication and purpose has struck a chord with some of Arzno's residents. So far, the Traditionalists have had the most political success, placing one party member, the Undead Slayer Braythia Stayma, to a reserve seat on the Council.

A third and much smaller political group is the **Arzno Fortification Party**. This group is pushing for Arzno to make a military alliance with another larger or more capable kingdom. Given the recent manpower shortages and the Tolkeen crisis, this party fears Arzno can't stand on its own against any variety of dangers in the New West. Sooner or later, they say, someone is going to come along and wipe the small kingdom from the map. It may be vampires, demonic invaders, the bandits of the Pecos Empire or the Coalition Army, but the group fears that it is only a matter of time. Popular suggestions include petitioning the Lyn-Srial or Cyber-Knights to take the city under their control, or to establish extensive protection and trade agreements with the Colorado Baronies. This group has been publicly attacked by officials and prominent citizens as cowards and radicals, but they have done a good job of striking the proper note of fear within many people. The group is small, but persistent.

The largest, unofficial political group is the vast majority of citizens in Arzno who support the current government and incarnation of the Council of Elders. They like how the city-state has grown and take a more measured approach to the dangers, troubles and growing pains of Arzno. They don't ignore the vampire threat (never have), nor are they blind to the many threats from the hostile environment around them, they just aren't alarmists, activists or extremists – merely concerned citizens praying for a better future.

The current Council of Elders have seen a great deal of discussion about the emergence of these political groups and have decided that no current members *should* take up the banner of any. Most of the current members honor this agreement and believe that too much politics, overt jockeying for position and grandstanding will only divide and hurt the city in the long run. When the election draws nearer, however, some Council members may be tempted by the security that such political support can supply.

Notable political figures:

Lanis Nemesio, a distinguished 11th level Techno-Wizard and the founder and owner of Arzno Weapons Manufacturing (Scrupulous alignment; I.Q. 17, M.E. 14, M.A. 19, P.E. 13). He sincerely believes in a "help others help themselves" attitude and has done much good in the city and territory by that philosophy. Lanis is sincere in his quest to exterminate the vampires, though some just view him as a salesman. The truth is evident in the way he runs A.W.M., selling basic items to the common people for fractions of what they're worth on the mass market, just for the sake of helping others. Lanis is well to do, but he could be filthy rich. A.W.M. is worth millions, possibly billions of credits, but Lanis is more concerned about the welfare of all, and protection from the undead.

Lanis has a daughter, Patria, who is, much to his dismay, an Undead Slayer and sergeant in the A.M.C. His history with his daughter is rocky and they're constantly on the outs. Lanis has

always been a leader of people first and father second, a choice which he is beginning to regret.

Sinsonue Wisp, lady-killer and 12th level Elven Mystic (Unprincipled alignment; I.Q. 15, M.A. 18, P.B. 23). The people, particularly the ladies, adore Sinsonue, and he is only too glad to return the affections of lovely ladies. As an Elf, he looks much younger than he is and is constantly flirting with the women of the town. He is an honorable character and doesn't do anything to disgrace his position as Elder or embarrass himself. He just enjoys attention in the form of whispers and giggles. He owns two of the larger hotels in town.

Sinsonue served as Chief Elder from 102 P.A. until 108, then lost his position to Lanis (see above). For the past term he has been miserable, but still sits on the Council out of respect for those who saw fit to elect him. His fragile ego crushed by his defeat, Sinsonue has already started talking about "allowing" another to take his place on the Council and not accepting an elected seat in 111 P.A.

Braythia Stayma of Clan Skellian, more commonly known as "Bray," is a 5th level True Atlantean Undead Slayer (Aber-rant alignment; P.S. 25, P.P. 20, P.E. 22) and one of the two reserve Elders. He's a bright young man (97 years old but looks 24, practically a kid) with big plans and little time, so he says. He sees the city as not fulfilling its potential in the fight against the undead and he is anxious to change things. It is this belief that has led Bray to be the first Council hopeful to join the side of any political party, in his case, the anti-vampire *Traditionalist Party*. If he gets an audience, he could quickly become the poster boy for the new movement. The minority who follow him could easily be led into fanaticism that could spell big trouble for the city-state. Bray greatly respects (almost reveres) Prince Onra and assumes that they have the same outlook on how things should be done (but he's wrong). Bray is currently working his way up the ranks in the *Civilian Patrollers* and has gotten as far as Patroller 1st Class. If the vampire conflict erupts soon, he'll undoubtedly leave the Council and the Patrollers to join the Arzno Mercenary Corps to follow his idol, Prince Onra, to glory.

The Golden Ones/Lyn-Srial/Sky Knights. The Lyn-Srial are not a political party, but they are a neighboring power worth mentioning. The City of Arzno has a peace treaty with the Lyn-Srial and respects their claim to the Grand Canyon. The two communities have many mutual values, outlooks and enemies, so they get along nicely. Some citizens of Arzno frequent the glorious city of the Lyn-Srial, known as *Tryth-Sal*, and there are several of the Golden Ones living in (and fighting for) Arzno. They have an embassy near the Arzno Hall of Government, the only outside community to have such a permanent presence within the city.

The Law & the Civilian Patrollers

The Civilian Patrollers, a police force largely made up of ex-mercenaries, keep the peace, enforce the law and defend the City-State of Arzno. They are a civilian militia, but can be called to active military duty in a time of crisis. In a crisis, the Civilian Patrollers serve as extra troops under the control of the Arzno Mercenary Corps (A.M.C.).

The head of the Patrollers holds the rank of lieutenant and is appointed by the Council of Elders. The lieutenant appoints four

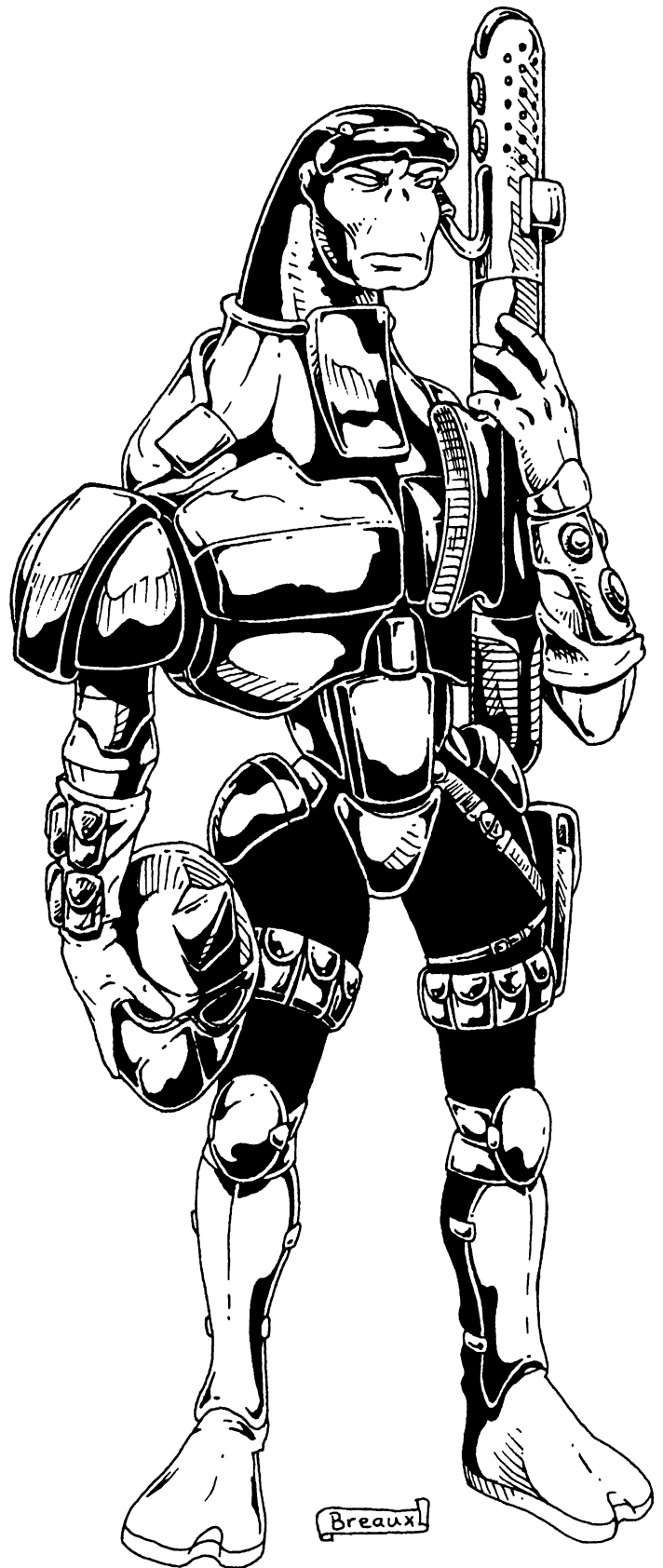
sergeants, with the approval of the Council; one at the city court precinct in the center of town near the Hall of Government (Precinct 1), one in the north by the East Gate (Precinct 2), another in the south near the Sky Docks (Precinct 3), and one in the other end of town (Precinct 4).

For each sergeant there are two deputy sergeants who help their superiors in the administration of justice and keeping of the peace. All officers carry a side arm (standard issue is a Wilk's-Remi 130 "Six Shooter" or A.W.M. equivalent to the TW-45 Revolver, but officers generally have their pick of weapons) and either a second side arm or a rifle (standard issue is a Wilk's-Remi 157 "Judgement Day," Wilk's 567 "Long Gun," or TW Hellfire Shotgun). They may wear a variety of light to heavy armors, with Bushman, Branaghan, or Bandito armor, often with some TW enhancements, among the most favored.

There are three classes of Patrollers: 1) The everyday law enforcement officer, **Patroller 3rd Class**, called a P3. This is your basic beat-cop who walks the streets in pairs. They keep an eye out for trouble, break up fights, settle disputes, and keep a lookout for vampires and bandits. They carry a side arm (standard issue is a Wilk's-Remi 130 "Six Shooter") and may use their own equipment with their sergeant's approval. Most wear medium body armor; standard issue is Bushman. The average P3 is a Cowboy, Deputy, mercenary, or the occasional practitioner of magic, levels 1-4. Most have an average I.Q., and physical attributes of 12 or higher. There are sixteen P3's per precinct, about half of whom are on duty at any given time.

2) **Patroller 2nd Class**, or P2, is the typical patrol-cop, generally working in pairs patrolling the streets in cars, on motorcycles, hovercycles, horseback or TW Wingboards or other TW Flyers. They are responsible for quick response to emergencies and crimes in progress, giving chase to criminals fleeing the scene of a crime or on the run, and providing general defense of the citizenry. Each carries a standard issue sidearm and a standard issue rifle or magic weapon. Bushman or Bandito armor are standard issue for P2's. The average P2 is a level 2-6 Deputy, Gunfighter, Headhunter, Combat Cyborg, Robot Pilot, Glitter Boy pilot, mercenary, other man at arms, or the occasional practitioner of magic, with skills including Sensory Equipment, a Pilot skill, two modern W.P.s, an average I.Q. and physical attributes of about 12. There are 8 P2's per precinct, about half of whom are on duty at any given time.

3) **Patrollers 1st Class**, or P1, hold the positions of either modern-day *detectives* or *specialized field agents*. The mechanics and Operators who maintain the armor and fleet of vehicles are all P1, as are the criminal investigators, SWAT teams, and Anti-Vampire Squads. So are the desk jockeys who work on the meager computer systems or perform other administrative duties. The average field P1 such as a Detective is typically a level 4-9 Bounty Hunter, Cyber-Knight, Wired Gunslinger, Cyber-Slinger Cyborg, Headhunter, Juicer, Crazy, Mind Melter, Psi-Slinger, Psi-Ghost, Psi-Slayer, Professional Spy, Mystic, Military Specialist, Commando, Ranger or specialized man at arms with skills in investigation and/or specialized combat. Magic Specialists include all the major magic O.C.C.s (except evil ones like Shifters and Necromancers) as well as Native American Shamans and Warriors. Desk jockeys are the equivalent of Technical Officers and Hack Rats. Weapons and armor are the choice of the operative and often dictated by his or her area of specialty.



The uniforms of all members of the Civilian Patrollers are basically the same, regardless of status. Dress uniforms have black trousers (men and women) with a double-breasted, dark red shirt with silver buttons and black accents. The C.P.'s silver badge is worn over the left breast and a pin showing rank is worn on the collar. No hats are worn on formal occasions.

Work uniforms are black jumpsuits with red stripes down the legs and arms, with a red "C.P." emblem on the right breast and

a larger one on the back. A black ball-cap with the red emblem is worn as well. A silver badge indicating the rank of the Patrol-ler is worn over the left breast, as well as an emblem on the right collar.

Officers and P1 Detectives aren't required to wear a uniform while on duty, and technical occupations such as Operator or Techno-Wizard are issued an alternative uniform for work, usually just a plain black or red jumpsuit with their name and rank over the right breast. Armor is painted red and black with the C.P. logo on the back and the rank on the upper-right torso.

Other defenders. In addition to relying on the C.P., when asked the Arzno Mercenary Corps may help in police investigations, function as deputies, and join in as a sort of volunteer militia to defend the city-state when under attack. Likewise, most psychics and practitioners of magic will join a battle to defend the city, help investigators and ride in a posse, as well as help heal and minister to the sick and wounded.

For protection, the main city takes advantage of the natural geography of the Grand Canyon. The city itself sits on a plateau within a tight bend of the canyon, with the gorge protecting the west, south, and east sides of the city. A large stone wall protects the northern side. Two sets of wide gates are open all day, but are closed at night and can only be opened from the inside by the guards. The A.M.C. and C.P.s share the duties of guarding the gates. The gates may be closed in the event of an attack, high winds, or some other emergency. The wall is tough, but it isn't enough to repel an invasion; just enough to give the city and its protectors time to rally a defense. It also acts as an effective buffer against predators and other dangerous animals.

Justice in Arzno

The Council of Elders is responsible for the administration of justice in Arzno, each Council member taking a week's turn on the bench to preside over criminal and civil actions. For the trials of severe or high-profile crimes, the Council may assign multiple Elders, past and present, as jurists. In criminal matters, the accused can hire an attorney or have one appointed, but it is just as common for a defendant to represent him- or herself. In civil matters, no legal representation is usually allowed, with the judge simply asking questions and calling witnesses, ascertaining for himself who is responsible.

Justice is swift and decisive in Arzno, but most people tend to handle issues on their own rather than getting the courts involved. The fact is that Arzno is a New West town, and judgments are often harsh and absolute. For civil matters and crimes such as theft, fraud, and other non-violent crimes, the penalty is usually a large fine and restitution, and possibly expulsion from the city limits. Violent crimes such as assault and armed robbery generally warrant huge fines (including the seizing of property by the city, or transfer of property to the victim), work details for 1-10 months at a time, and public flogging. The harshest crimes such as murder, rape, horse theft and willful harboring of the undead generally receive death by firing squad in a non-public area. In some cases, the Lyn-Srial ambassadors take a condemned man or woman into their custody for rehabilitation if allowed by the Council. Imprisonment is usually a temporary situation used under such circumstances as holding a drunken and disorderly individual until he sobers up, holding a suspect

until he can be questioned, holding a criminal until a judgement has been rendered and sentence passed, and similar.

Surprisingly, the justice system is generally swift, fair and free of corruption.

The Economics of Arzno

Arzno is, in many ways, two cities; a mercenary town supporting a small army of hired guns, heroes, professional soldiers, vampire hunters, and soldiers of fortune, and a Techno-Wizard/magic based industrial center.

As one would expect, most businesses in the city-state support one or both of these two industries. At times, it can be difficult to separate the mercenary economy from the magic side of things. Techno-Wizard weaponry, armor, and other equipment are routinely found in the arsenals of local mercenaries, both from the A.M.C. and among the freelancers and adventurers.

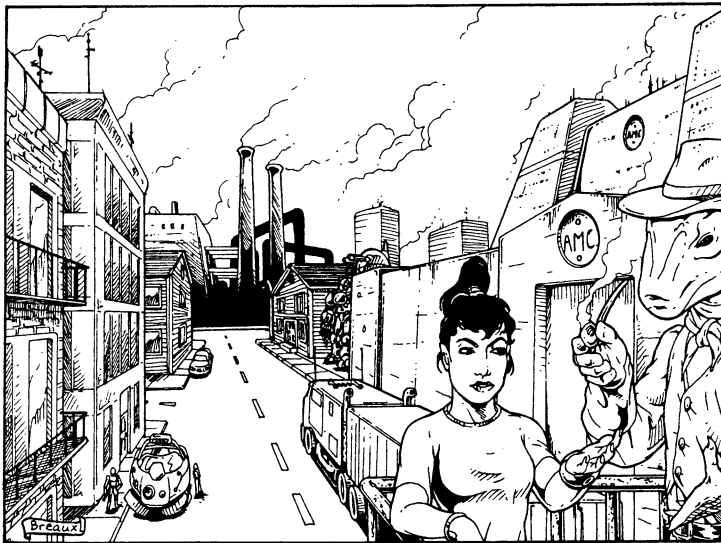
The Mercenary Economy. As the citizens of any merc town can testify, mercenary activity quickly becomes the life's blood of the economy. Soldiers of fortune tend to spend their money as quickly as they can make it and a variety of services and stores spring up to serve them, from barber shops to armored vehicle dealerships. Mercenaries are almost equally interested in high-technology merchandise like weapons, armor and vehicles, and the most basic luxuries such as food, liquor, and entertainment.

Mercenaries on payday. The first and most major expenditure of the typical mercenary is equipment to help them ply their trade. This is often both business investment and personal hobby rolled into one. While all warriors want the best equipment available, the definition of what that is varies dramatically from person to person. Mercs generally have strong personal feelings toward their equipment and have very specific tastes. Personal preference on a number of features such as make, model, payload, range, and so forth, are as likely to be the selling point to a mercenary as much as the level of damage it can deal out. Armor is as likely to be chosen based on weight, maneuverability, and style as much as the amount of protection it provides. Professional mercenaries may also buy weapons and gear based on their personal quirks, tastes, past experience and superstitions. This is an important distinction from most conventional soldiers, who use whatever is issued to them.

Second to the purchase of work-related equipment, mercenaries pour thousands upon thousands of credits into luxuries such as the finest food, drinks, clothing, entertainment, and company available. With such a dangerous occupation, many warriors live in the moment and are very loose with their money. It's not at all unusual to see an Arzno soldier buying rounds for the house or handing out boxes of cigars to his or her buddies after a successful job. Pushing the limit is the surest way to get the best flavor out of life, they say, and they want to enjoy it while the success lasts. On the other hand, there are those who appreciate the simple things in life and are careful with their earnings, often sending money home to a wife and kids, parents, loved ones or a special charity.

Mercs' favorite shops. The average mercenary's specific tastes provide for a large niche economy in the arms and armor markets. Walking down the street in the Merc Market, sometimes called Little MercTown, a visitor sees dozens of thriving

weapon shops, each with its area of specialty or a very broad selection without any depth. *Wilk's*, *Northern Gun*, and *Bandito Arms* all operate weapon shops on the same city block. Items from these and other domestic manufacturers can also be found in small, independent shops focusing on energy weapons, or long-range sharpshooter models, or heavy energy weapons, or TW guns, and so on. Some shops offer only the lower-end, basic models from virtually all manufacturers from across the continent and beyond. Many of these shops also sell armor (particularly those carrying Northern Gun and Bandito Arms products) and other equipment, while some shops sell only various types of environmental and non-environmental armor to the exclusion of weaponry. And this doesn't include resale shops, general stores, pawnshops, and Black Market dealers and other providers of weapons to the mercenaries of Arzno.



The long and the short of it is that in Arzno, you can find a huge variety of weapon and armor shops selling anything from fixer-uppers to the latest and greatest, catering to the various tastes and budgets of their customers. Of course, this is also great for player characters and Game Masters, because Arzno can support games of any scope, whether players are hot-shot, high-priced mercenaries with lots of cash to spend, or a small band of adventuring scientists on a tight budget. No matter what the demand, someone in Arzno can probably provide it. **Note:** Arzno is so off the beaten path and so small, compared to the big cities in the Domain of Man, that Triax and Naruni items are NOT available. Only *used* items from both manufacturers sometimes find their way into pawnshops and arms dealers who acquired the item in trade from a merc down on his luck.

Shop owners. An interesting aspect about Arzno and many mercenary towns, is a lot of shops and stores are owned and operated by retired soldiers of fortune. These businesses usually have a loyal clientele, because a veteran is likely to bring in business from his former comrades and associates, as well as newcomers who instantly feel a kinship with a fellow, former soldier of fortune. Given a choice, a merc will rather buy from a fellow war veteran than a businessman out to make a buck.

Shopkeepers, restaurant owners, or vehicle salesmen are likely to be *retired*, but *not* old. For one, few mercenaries live to a ripe old age. Most retired mercs turned in their spurs and left "the trade" because they had families, or were growing weary of

the hard life of a hired soldier, or experienced an injury or incident that made them reconsider their career choice, or combination of the above.

The Techno-Wizard Economy

Arzno Weapons Manufacturing (A.W.M.) is "the" Techno-Wizard manufacturing giant of Arizona and the Southwest, with hopes of branching out and surpassing the Colorado Baronies in a few years. Focusing on mass production and consistency, if you need a simple, unelaborate TW Firebolt Pistol, Lightning Rod, or a wood-firing rail gun, A.W.M. can't be beaten on price or quality. The company also has some unique bits of Techno-Wizardry that can't be found anywhere else and keep customers coming back for more. However, A.W.M. has its weaknesses.

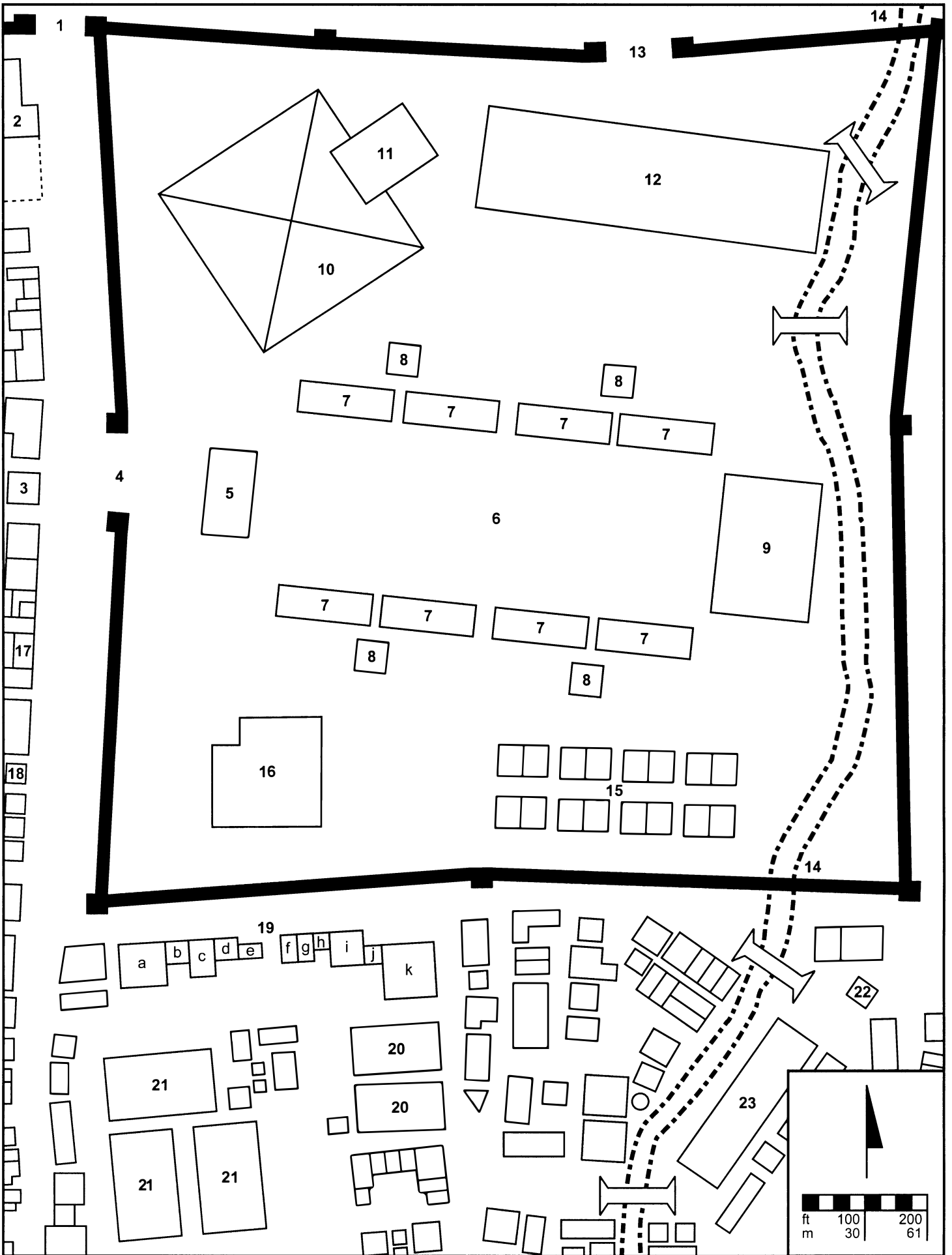
TW Repair and maintenance. A.W.M. is unable to offer affordable repair and maintenance services; time and labor are simply too valuable. So, a number of independent Techno-Wizards in the city make a good living correcting battle damage, replacing components as they wear out, and providing upgrades.

Custom design. A.W.M. offers custom design jobs, but at a premium price. Independent Techno-Wizards, particularly mid-level (levels 4 to 8), do very well hiring themselves out as *consultants* and specialists to draw up plans and design specifications for devices, which A.W.M. or they can then construct at a better price.

Materials. A.W.M. pays top dollar for quality gems, stones, and precious metals. To capitalize on this, a number of entrepreneurs make their living acquiring these items and then selling them to A.W.M. Some are prospectors, others merchants and investors who buy in bulk from other areas and import the goods, and some are Techno-Wizards who specialize in salvage and components for TW equipment.

It's not just all that glitters that A.W.M. is after. Arzno Weapons Manufacturing also offers cash or credit toward purchase for usable components such as weapon casings, optics, armor pieces, and M.D.C. materials. Such mundane materials don't fetch a great price, but if delivered in large quantities, can be worthwhile (average around one credit per M.D.C. point for broken or damaged weapons and salvageable scrap, or 10 credits per M.D.C. point for weapon casings and armor pieces that are in relatively good shape). A.W.M. generally does business by the *ton* for recycled materials and scrap, though many small-time Techno-Wizard outfits will buy in lesser quantities.

Spell trade. Many practitioners of magic sell their knowledge to A.W.M. either by offering their spell-casting services, selling scrolls or talismans that they create, or by selling spells to A.W.M. mages outright. In fact, A.W.M. maintains a special office within their headquarters to facilitate all such transactions. Some non-mages provide magical services by trading magic artifacts, amulets, talismans, and scrolls they have acquired, while some mages offer to cast spells for Techno-Wizards who lack the knowledge in a specific spell. In the latter case, a Techno-Wizard contacts the spell caster, probably a Ley Line Walker, and the Line Walker comes and casts the spell that the Techno-Wizard directs into his TW device where it is contained for whatever purpose the TW item is designed for. A.W.M. Techno-Wizards are encouraged to increase their spell



knowledge on their own through reimbursement programs, paid bonuses, and consideration during annual reviews standard for all employees.

Unique, powerful, or illegal items. A.W.M.'s focus is on "stock" items with mass appeal and application, and on specific designs unique to the company. Many truly unique or made-to-order items are easier or cheaper to get through independent Techno-Wizards. And, of course, there are some items that A.W.M. simply will not manufacture, as well as some clients to whom they will not sell so much as a TW can-opener. Such situations require finding an independent Techno-Wizard who has no such scruples.

Convenience and timeliness. Patrons will often pay more for an item if it can be turned out right away or is done right in the neighborhood TW "mom and pop" operation. A.W.M. can't always offer such service and thus leaves a large opportunity for independent Techno-Wizards to establish their own client base.

Places of Note in Arzno

West City Entry

The northern wall that separates the city of Arzno from the open land beyond has two gates. While the East Gate is generally used by those headed into the city for trade, the West Gate leads visitors into the section of the city dominated by mercenaries and the influence of the Arzno Mercenary Corps (A.M.C.).

1. West Gate. Three A.M.C. guards eyeball each person coming or going through the West Gate, check packages and question those they don't know or find suspicious. Inspections are generally swift and friendly, and unless the person gives cause for the guards to be suspicious, things usually go smoothly. One guard of the trio is typically a psychic sensitive, using powers such as Empathy, See Aura, and Telepathy to try and screen potential troublemakers, spies and undead. Psi-Stalkers, Dog Boys, Mind Melters, and other psychic sensitives are paid a bonus by the city for standing guard duty, so they are rarely in short supply. The East Gate functions in the same way, but is manned by the Civilian Patrollers.

Body armor, small arms, hovercycles, and horses are allowed in the city, but giant robots, medium to heavy power armor, heavy weapons, explosives and large, monstrous riding animals are not. These items must be left outside the city, or may be checked and stored by the Arzno Storage and Holding Co.

2. Arzno Storage and Holding Co. This company is licensed by the city government to store restricted weapons, equipment and vehicles at its warehouses just inside the city gates. Run by the Harris family, who have deep roots in the community and can trace their family line to the early days of the city, the Arzno Storage and Holding Co. has an operation at each of the two gates in the northern wall, as well as at the *Sky Docks* in the southern end of the city. For a small fee, the company will store and insure materials that can't be taken freely into town. The alternative is to leave it outside the gates. A representative from the company takes possession of any restricted items at the gate and brings them in himself.

The storage of heavy energy weapons and rail guns costs a *flat rate* of 5 credits per weapon per day. Power armor can be stored for 10 credits per day, and military vehicles and robots incur a fee of 50 credits per day. Stabling exotic riding animals costs 100 credits per day (30 for horses), and non-restricted vehicles can be parked and insured in the private lot for 5 credits per day.

In addition to storing prohibited materials, the company provides secure safe deposit boxes (about the size of a shoe box) for 10 credits per day or 150 credits per month, or a secure 2 x 2 x 4 foot locker (0.6 x 0.6 x 1.2 m) for 25 credits per day or 350 credits per month. Prices are considerably higher than at any of the several banks in town, but the Harrises are far less picky about what goes into the lockers and more secure.

Various other services are available at competitive rates, including E-Clip recharging (1000 credits), basic vehicle inspection and maintenance (50 credits), tire repair (10-20 credits) and washing and detailing armor and vehicles (10 credits).

3. The A.M.C. Subcontractor's Office. The A.M.C. is the sole provider of mercenary services in the city-state, so to get mercenary work with the city of Arzno or any businesses in the city-state, a mercenary or adventurer is supposed to sign a temporary *freelancer's contract* with the A.M.C. In turn, the A.M.C. will help find the merc work and introduce them to their employer. The A.M.C. takes 10% of the freelancer's pay for this service. Any merc or adventurer who gets caught working under the table without A.M.C. sanction will have a chance to make amends by paying them *half* their pay, or face getting run out of town. The A.M.C.'s brokerage fee is actually low and reasonable, so most soldiers of fortune don't try to circumvent them. Furthermore, mercs in good standing will get the best jobs, while unknowns, drifters and those known to have dodged the A.M.C. in the past, get grunt work and the least desirable assignments (lowest pay, most unpleasant, and most dangerous). Such subcontract work may go to individuals, small groups and/or large merc companies.

Most of the work is simple security details for merchants and travelers headed to one of the local communities or up and down the Great Trade Road. The contract might be a for a short time or specific assignment in which once the job is done, so is the work, or for extended work such as a bouncer at a bar or a bodyguard for a prominent individual.

No matter who the party is, each individual who takes a job through the Subcontractor's Office must buy a license for 500 credits per year. This helps the city keep track of who is operating within its borders and helps A.M.C. officials keep out the troublemakers or those who routinely fail to fulfill their obligations to their clients.

Bounties and contracts are also issued through the office of the A.M.C. Bounties on monsters and vampires are always outstanding, but require kill confirmation that can be difficult in some cases. Some creatures, most notably vampires, must be completely destroyed to truly be killed, leaving no evidence for the collection of a bounty. Most vampire hunters, and many mercenaries regardless of what they are hunting, hire off-duty A.M.C. soldiers to act as witnesses. In the case of vampires, they can bring in the undead's severed head and then destroy it on site (the A.M.C. has a special vampire disposal yard where it can be tested and burned). Magical interrogation (i.e., Words of Truth) is also a suitable method of confirmation.

The current rates for common bounties are as follows. All require confirmation/proof of a kill.

100 credits per head of a Mega-Damage monster (Leatherwing, Grigleaper, Mega-Mole, Pit Lion, etc.).

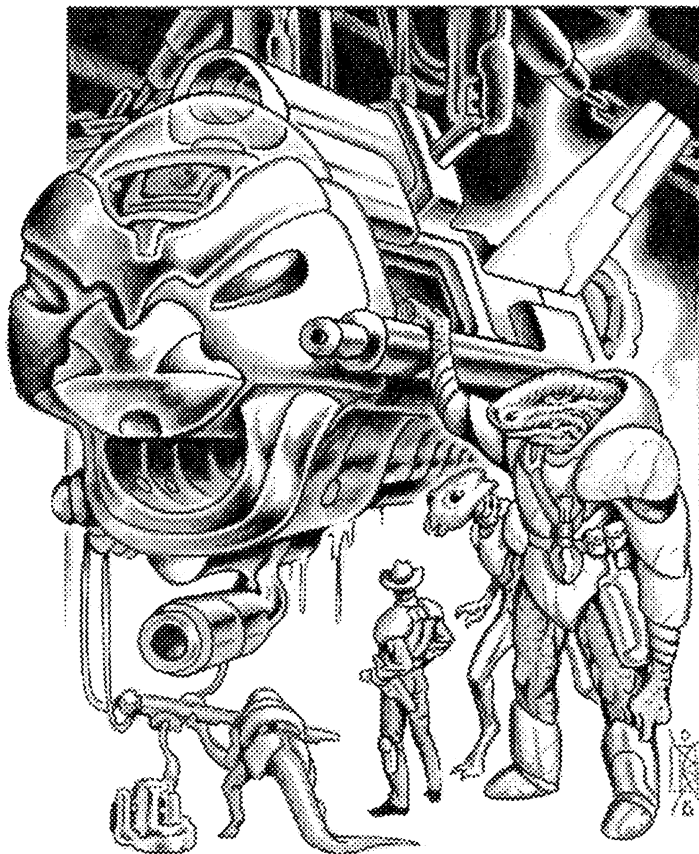
150 credits per head of a Brodkil, Simvan, or Gargoyle.

200 credits per Worm Wraith.

2,000 credits per supernatural monster or demon.

300 credits per Wild Vampire.

1,000 credits per Secondary Vampire.



Arzno Mercenary Corps (AMC) Compound

The Arzno Mercenary Corps compound covers over 40 acres of land just inside the city's West Gate. It is within these walls that the professional soldiers of fortune who defend Arzno live, work, and train.

4. The A.M.C. Compound Wall and Main Gate. The wall surrounding the grounds occupied by the Arzno Mercenary Corps is 25 feet (7.6 m) thick and 55 feet (16.8 m) tall. Each 3 foot x 3 foot (0.9 m x 0.9 m) section of reinforced Mega-Damage concrete wall has 100 M.D.C. Each of the eleven guard towers around the wall extends up an additional 10 feet (3.0 m) and is crewed by at least two soldiers with energy rifles and a mounted rail gun. The walls are constructed such that the guards can see everywhere along the length of the wall on either side of them.

The main gate is flanked by guard towers with guardhouses at the ground level of each that check incoming and outgoing visitors. The gate closes at night and during emergencies, sliding

into place from within the walls on either side, and has 150 M.D.C. per 3 foot x 3 foot (0.9 m x 0.9 m) section of Mega-Damage steel.

5. A.M.C. Headquarters. This three-story M.D.C. building houses the business offices of the Arzno Mercenary Corps. The first level has high ceilings and polished stone floors and walls, all intended to "wow" potential clients. Everyone wears pressed work uniforms, while officers and representatives wear dress uniforms. There are conference rooms with sophisticated TW and conventional video presentation equipment, a large map room with an interactive display showing current operations and personnel assignments, and a lounge in which guests can relax and read up on A.M.C. procedures and capabilities in hard-bound, official-looking documents.

Upper levels are less formal, with all soldiers wearing work uniforms. They house debriefing rooms, conference rooms, some classroom space, and the offices for the administrators who see to the daily tasks that face the A.M.C. at home and in the field. Soldiers come and go through a back door and don't generally come into the front area, which is reserved for the entertainment and sales-pitching of those looking to secure the A.M.C.'s services.

6. Drill Field. A large, open field roughly the size of four football fields. This area is used for all manner of activity, from small-unit tactics to athletic competitions and ceremonial parades. It is in use 16 hours a day, every day.

7. Barracks. Each of the eight, two-story barracks can house 64 soldiers comfortably, two soldiers to a room; four under tight conditions, and eight under crowded conditions. The construction is not unlike that of a college dormitory. The typical room is roughly 17x25 feet (5.2 m x 7.6 m) with one full bathroom shared between every two rooms. There is a lounge area on the first floor of each barracks building where soldiers can meet, game and socialize. A.M.C. soldiers are not required to live in the barracks, but living in the compound, free, is a great money saver. Typically, only freelancers and mercenaries with families live off-base. One barracks building is typically reserved for recruits, while officers are housed in a separate area of the compound.

8. Instruction Rooms. Four buildings serve as classrooms where soldiers hold debriefings within their companies, are given training in specialized and technical areas, and gather for all types of meetings. These buildings are used for less-formal situations, in addition to the debriefings and conferences.

9. Mess Hall. Simply put, this is where the soldiers of the A.M.C. take their meals. It is also sometimes used as a large assembly room. It has facilities to prepare all of the food, including baking bread and purifying water. Water is pumped from a well drilled below the building. The building also houses the laundry that services all of the soldiers who live on the base.

10. Pyramid. This stone pyramid has a footprint of 300x300 feet (91.4 x 91.4 m) and stands 150 feet (45.7 m) tall. One of two pyramids in the city, it helps control ley line activity and serves as a power source for the recharging of TW weapons and equipment by A.M.C. Techno-Wizards.

11. Armory. Connected to the pyramid is the Arzno Mercenary Corps armory. Since roughly half of the weapons used by the A.M.C. are TW devices, having the armory convenient to the power source provided by the pyramid is a good logistical

arrangement. At a moment's notice, the armory can provide conventional energy weapons for 432 soldiers, heavy weapons (rail guns, plasma, etc.) for 144 troops, and TW weapons of one kind or another for 288, plus 100 light, 75 medium and 50 heavy suits of body armor, and 24 Jackrabbit, 18 Raging Bull, 12 Guardian Angel and 10 Thunderbird power armor suits. **Note:** Half the armory is built underground, making it look smaller and less stocked than it really is.

12. Motor Pool. The A.M.C. utilizes a wide array of vehicles, from off-the-line production models to custom TW marvels. The motor pool houses and maintains the dozens of trucks, hover craft, personnel carriers, and other ground vehicles used by the troops. Rotary- and fixed-wing aircraft are maintained at a small airstrip in the southern part of the city near the Sky Docks.

13. A.M.C. Exterior Gate. The A.M.C. uses this gate to come and go from the compound without having to use the public streets. The soldiers commonly refer to it as the "side door" or "side gate."

14. River Gates. These two gates, one on the north side of the compound and one on the south, are metal grates that make sure that no one can circumvent the wall security by sliding in via the river. These gates can be totally closed by dropping a solid Mega-Damage door into place. This has the added advantage of dumping water out into a ditch that runs along the outside of the north wall and eventually creating a sort of shallow moat. While ineffective against most foes, against a vampire attack it becomes an effective deterrent. The water level depends greatly on the time of year and how long the northern river gate has been closed. **Note:** The grates each have 90 M.D.C., and the solid M.D.C. doors have 200 M.D.C. each.

15. Officer Housing. Eight duplex-style houses are the homes of officers and senior sergeants of the A.M.C. Each is a comfortable two-bedroom, two-bath house with its own kitchen and living area. Some are occupied by only one officer, while some house two. Prince Onra lives alone in the house closest to the headquarters building.

16. A.M.C. Medical Center. Not a real hospital, but more of a care center for soldiers, this three-story building serves the emergency and other medical needs of the soldiers. The first story is an emergency facility with an ICU, surgical rooms, and medical equipment such as x-ray, MRI, CT, and other high-tech imaging equipment. The second floor houses examination rooms and the equipment and materials necessary to maintain, upgrade, and repair bionics and even install some basic cybernetic systems. The third floor houses offices for the doctors and nurses, as well as a lounge, triage, and several conference rooms. **Note:** The full service, *Arzno Hospital* is #41 on the map.

Mercenary Section of Town

This is a small sampling of the types of shops, restaurants, and facilities that surround the A.M.C. compound and exist throughout the merc section of the city. While most of the actual dealers selling weapons, armor, and other combat goods are in the *Merc Market* near the town center, common services and day-to-day entertainment are in this part of town where most Arzno mercenaries live and work.

17. Barber Shop. No fancy names for this place. The Barber Shop is the most popular place for A.M.C. soldiers to get a trim or a shave. The eleven barbers are all retired Arzno Mercenary Corps veterans, ranging from 35 to 65 years old; nine males, two females. Ten credits gets you a haircut, and three will get you a good shave with a straight-razor. The atmosphere is friendly, rowdy and raucous, and the language is often foul. There are always 1D6 guys hanging around chatting and laughing, even when nobody needs a fresh cut. Still, it's like a home away from home for mercs who come as much for the camaraderie as the actual services. **Adventure Note:** The Barber Shop is where just about everybody goes to get their ears lowered, including many of the big shots at the A.M.C. In a casual setting, the barber's chair is about as close as a civilian or young merc can hope to get to Prince Onra, other True Atlanteans and A.M.C. officers.



18. Needles. This small, run-down building is the *premier tattoo parlor* for members of the A.M.C. and wannabes alike. Needles is the owner and sole artist in the establishment. He is a Mutant Rat who escaped the Lone Star Complex ages ago. He's assisted by a multi-pierced, tattoo-covered Ogre called Hammer (really a 3rd level Undead Slayer from Atlantis) who handles most of the piercing and assists Needles around the shop. Needles himself has several conduits in his ears, and has some of his fur shaved in patterns exposing detailed tattoos on his arms, neck, and back. The mutant rat does all tattoo work for his customers, and designs most of them himself. He has a good eye and a gift for art, equal to the professional Art skill at 90%. He charges anywhere from 20-50 credits for a small, single-colored

tattoo, to hundreds of credits for more elaborate work. All piercings are 10 credits each, or six for 50 credits. He also sells cheap, stainless-steel jewelry averaging 5 credits per item.

19. Victory Row. This row of bars and pubs is legendary around Arzno as a merc hangout. It gets its name because after a big, successful mission (and payoff), local mercenaries hop from one bar to another throughout the night. It is tradition for a young merc returning from his first successful mission to start at one end and visit all of the establishments in a single night, having a couple of drinks at each. Despite many a long day of duty for the celebrating mercenaries following such a marathon, the tradition continues. Prices vary from 2-5 credits for a mug of beer to shots running about 3 credits each.

a) 8 o'clock Charlie's. This bar and restaurant is where the Victory Row tradition begins with dinner at 8 o'clock (give or take an hour). It serves light drinks, but has an extensive grill that serves terrific steaks and other meats. The trademark drink is "The Kid," a 44 ounce mug of the house ale traditionally ordered as the first drink of the night for new initiates at a cost of 9 credits. The average steak dinner is 18 credits.

b) The Wild Turkey. This bar is standing-room only and features 151 types of liquor and shots. The trademark shot is a homemade Wild Turkey that patrons can see distilling in a big contraption sitting on a table behind the bar. Most drinks are 2-3 credits a shot.

c) Rowdy's Dance Hall. This is one of the only bars on Victory Row (except for Last Call) with anything to do except drink and eat. There is a small dance floor in the back that is always packed, and a juke box that plays a variety of pre-Rifts music, mostly upbeat country-western songs and some rock n' roll. "Rowdy" Bergman, the owner, keeps plenty of good-looking waitresses on hand who are allowed to dance with patrons so long as they keep buying.

d) Merc's Tavern. There is little special about this place except that it is yet another stop on the Row, offering hard liquor at fair prices, 2-3 credits per shot.

e) The Well. This isn't so much a bar as it is a booth. There is a counter, behind which stands a bartender and his assortment of drinks. Patrons simply walk up to the open-air establishment, covered by only a wooden awning, and buy drinks that come in disposable plastic cups, which are usually carried off only to be tossed into the alley next door. Prices are one credit per cup of cheap beer, one credit for a house specialty that tastes like dirty dishwater but packs a wallop, and 1 credit per shot for a small variety of homemade moonshine and cheap whiskey.

f) Moonshine's. The halfway point of Victory Row is owned by a fellow named Gannon "Moonshine" Cullen, a soft-spoken man who keeps his place tidier and classier than most. He serves only 13 kinds of alcohol, but each of them is a quality home brew. He serves beverages distilled from grain, corn, cactus blossoms, apples, honey, potatoes, pineapples, oranges, and plums. Some varieties have a hard liquor as well as a lighter wine version. He is supplied with most of his juices from Ray and Cyrus' farm (see #46 on the map). The quality of his brews are very high, making him the most successful of the bars when the mercs aren't just looking to get loaded. **Adventure Note:** Moonshine Cullen is more than he seems. He is, in fact, a mind slave to the Master Vampire, Xavier Stuart. The trouble is that Moonshine doesn't even realize it. He was kidnaped from the

city three years ago and brought, blindfolded and scared out of his wits, into the desert. There he was starved and beaten until one day he met Xavier, and was bitten and enslaved. For weeks after he was continually abused, until he one day awoke to find himself well, laying in his own bed in Arzno. He came to realize that he had apparently been gone for weeks. From the day he was abducted, his store was posted with signs saying he was away on business and would return the day after he mysteriously found himself in bed. Moonshine doesn't remember most of his ordeal and has convinced himself that he must have had a bad reaction to a new drink he was developing.

The truth is that he was selected by Xavier's minions as the perfect inside spy. He is not a former merc who would know anything about vampires and has access to A.M.C. soldiers on a daily basis. Cullen is principally active at night, allowing for easy contact to be made when necessary. If Moonshine has a greater purpose, it is known only by Xavier and will not come into play until the vampire makes his move against the city.

g) All Aces. Run by mercenary and legendary gambler Allen "All Aces" Adams, this bar serves hard shots. The signature drink is actually *five* drinks taken in rapid succession, known as the Royal Flush. The contents of each shot are a trade secret, but the end result is a momentary hot rush in the face and very often, everything going black as the drinker passes out for 2D6 minutes. A save of 16 must be rolled (save vs poison bonuses are applicable) to keep from going unconscious. There seem to be no lasting ill effects other than those normally associated with being drunk. The whole Royal Flush setup costs 10 credits. As one might expect, the tavern also offers gaming tables where patrons engage in friendly games of poker.

h) The Burnout Bar. The trademark drink at this bar is called the "Burnout," a shot of some sort of alcohol that is set on fire and then dropped into the glass of another beverage. The reaction causes the whole mug to become frosted in ice. Rumor has it that the drink is a concoction created by Faerie Folk that instills a longer buzz even in superhuman metabolisms, plus the drink tastes great and is extra-smooth, but costs 9 credits. This makes the Burnout Bar a favorite of Juicers, Crazies, Tattooed Men, and others with a high metabolism and constitution.

i) Molly's. A tavern and eatery, Molly's specializes in hearty Southwestern-style breakfast foods like steak and eggs, scrambled eggs with onion and jalapeno peppers, flapjacks, grits, country fried steak, beans, bean soup, and meat burritos. It opens at nine o'clock at night and stays open until about ten o'clock in the morning. Breakfasts range from 3-8 credits for a hearty plate full. Of course, being on Victory Row, a basic selection of alcohol is available. Most patrons enjoy spiked coffee or heavy beer with their late-night or early morning breakfast.

j) Bull's-Eye Shots and Tonics. Playing to the extra-late-night crowd, this small bar features nightcap beverages as well as a variety of tonics designed to alleviate headaches or upset stomach, aid in sound sleeping, and even invigorate the libido in preparation for a stop off at Last Call next door. The retired mercenary and former (detoxed) Juicer Assassin, Ricky "the Bull's-Eye" Martin, owns this bar and Last Call (#19k, below), so he finds it best to have his customers feeling pretty good and ready to extend their night.

k) Last Call. This is a bar and gentleman's club owned by Ricky "the Bull's-Eye" noted in "j" above. After making a few

million credits in his three years as a Juicer Assassin, Ricky retired, detoxed, and bounced around to several cities across Lone Star and the New West. He finally settled on the flesh trade and settled in Arzno where he opened the *Silver Star Gentleman's Club* in the mercenary section of town. The *Last Call* is his second and most successful enterprise. He also owns the *Morning Flower Motel* near his Silver Star establishment, and is looking into buying the *Ranchero Hotel* (#20, below) to expand the operations of the Last Call.

The bar serves strong drinks and a modest short-order menu featuring a variety of hot and cold sandwiches, but the real draw is in the back where scantily clad female dancers put on shows for audiences of hooting and howling mercs. The real action takes place in private rooms, where the girls perform acts of vice to relieve drunken mercs of their hard earned cash. Most dancers are human, but there are a pair of Psi-Stalkers, several exotic-looking D-Bees and the house favorite, a lady who calls herself *Enigma*. She is a shape-shifter with the ability to alter her shape and size, skin color, hair color and length, and general facial features. She has quite a regular following, but doesn't do private sessions for less than 500 credits. More personal encounters with any of the dancers cost extra, averaging around 100 credits.

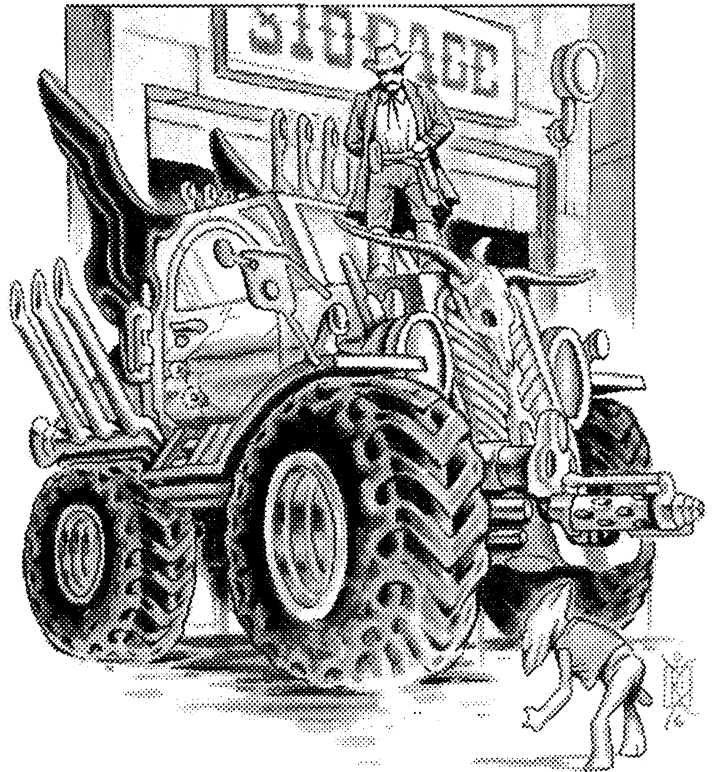
20. The Ranchero Motel. This dive gets most of its business from mercenaries who flop there for the night, unable to make it home after spending a few hours on Victory Row. A lot of other guests use the motel for encounters with ladies of the evening. The front desk can arrange for male or female companionship via the service Elite Escorts for a 10% commission. The one-story, porch-style motel has 72 rooms between its two buildings, priced at 50 credits a night.

21. The Canyon Apartments. This two-story, three building apartment complex is home to many mercenaries who work freelance, as well as A.M.C. soldiers with families who don't want to live in the barracks and who can't afford an actual house. There are 250 units, mostly small and medium apartments with two bedrooms, a living room, small dining area, a small kitchen, and one bathroom. Rent averages 450 credits a month. It is well-maintained, but lacks many comforts such as air conditioning and hot water, but is always near total occupancy because of the good price.

22. Mama's Diner. Run by a large D-Bee woman known affectionately as Mama by her customers, this diner is the *unofficial members-only club* of veteran troopers of the A.M.C. While young bucks go and get plastered on Victory Row, more seasoned veterans go and enjoy a quiet dinner and brew at this understated, quiet restaurant. Mercs sit and play cards and dominoes, smoke cigars, and laugh over old stories from lunchtime until several hours after midnight. If a green soldier shows up, he or she is coldly stared out of the room by the staff and the patrons alike. When it's time for soldiers to be accepted into that particular fold, they are invited by one of the regulars.

The large, blue-skinned trans-dimensional being known as "Mama" has been in Arzno for 20 years. She is a heavy-set D-Bee with average looks, but is warm, friendly, and has an amazing memory. She always remembers every one of her regulars, even after years of absence, remembers everyone's favorite drinks and meals, and knows just how they like it prepared. She has two daughters who help her around the diner and in the

kitchen, plus a staff of 12, humans and D-Bee misfits. Drinks are around 3 credits each, meals from 6-12 credits a plate, and hand-rolled cigars are two credits apiece (quality tobacco provided by the ever-popular Ray and Cyrus and their TW farming operation; #46 on the map).



23. Arzno Garage and Storage. This large, Mega-Damage concrete structure is a combination parking garage and self-storage facility. It offers long-term parking, private garages and/or storage space for the bargain price of 55 credits per month, paid in advance, with hefty penalties for not claiming one's belongings at the end of the rental period. Each unit is totally separate from the others, with its own pull-down garage door. Renters are free to put their own locks on the doors or purchase them from the facility. Security monitors the more than 250 units, and guards patrol the building 24 hours a day. However, the owner is not responsible for theft or loss of property. Each unit is approximately 15x20 feet (4.6 m x 6.1 m), and 12 feet (3.7 m) high. While designed to fit vehicles, anything may be stored in any of the units, without restriction. Insurance is separate and made with an outside insurance agency referred to by the storage facility. Failure to pay rent for one month means the forfeiture of property.

Residences of Note

Along the river near the A.W.M. campus and the Hall of Government are the homes of the many movers and shakers who reside in Arzno, particularly prominent merchants, practitioners of magic, and successful mercs and adventurers. Below are details on some of the most notable of these residents.

24. Machiavelli Residence. Once one of the finest homes in Arzno, this three-story mansion has fallen into a serious state of disrepair. Its owner, Eman Machiavelli, is a powerful independ-

ent Techno-Wizard as were his father and grandfather. He once rivaled the influence of Lanis within the TW community and had a reputation for innovation beyond any other in the New West. However, with Lanis' political success adding to his notoriety as a wizard and businessman, Eman seemingly gave up and went into seclusion. He closed his home to visitors and boarded up the doors and windows of his TW shop in the marketplace (Machiavelli's Marvels, #62 on the map), but refuses to sell it. After a year he apparently left the mansion altogether in favor of the servants' quarters behind the house. He leaves only once or twice a year to briefly reopen his store to sell amazing inventions beyond the dreams of any wizard, only to shutter the doors a few days later and slink back into seclusion.

Despite spending three years as a hermit, Eman has not been idle. Strange lights and noises come from his shack at all hours of the day and night. The locals whisper that he has gone insane and have labeled him "Mad Machiavelli," and give his home a wide berth. **Adventure Hook:** A local parent is overheard talking about her child and recent mischief that he has caused. It seems that, on a dare, the child scaled the fence to the Machiavelli grounds and peeked inside the servants' quarters. He saw no sign of the mad Techno-Wizard, but saw a workroom strewn with equipment and a large iron tank or coffin sitting in the middle of the room with vast amounts of equipment hooked up to it. The child saw it begin to open, and ran away for fear of what might come out. What is this strange machine? What does it do? Is it to blame for Eman's sudden and inexplicable change in behavior?

25. Azelfudd Residence. Ficklerum Azelfudd is a short, boisterous D-Bee and Ley Line Walker who is said to have lived on Earth since before the founding of Arzno. Ficklerum is a very unique D-Bee known as a Raddel, notable for their general good nature, short and round stature, colorful crests on their bald heads, and the fact that they are positively irresistible to the opposite sex. It seems that the Raddel excrete a pheromone that acts as a powerful aphrodisiac and affects about 65% of humanoid species and a number of lower life forms. There were only a dozen or so Raddel on Earth 100 years ago, and since interspecies unions do not result in offspring, their numbers may be half that today. Heck, Azelfudd may be the last of his kind.

Azelfudd lives in this large, but modest home with his three human wives (all young and beautiful, ages 19, 25, and 31 with P.B. attributes of 23, 19, and 24, respectively). He has dabbled in a variety of businesses, but is most seen about town relaxing, gambling and enjoying good dining and entertainment. Nobody knows where he made his fortune (it is rumored he's worth millions) or why he has chosen to settle in Arzno – in the middle of nowhere. Could he be a wanted man in the east? Speculation runs wild.

26. Colby Residence. Michael Colby is an elderly statesman and community father-figure who is in his last days. For all of his 96 years, he has lived in Arzno, where he has owned and operated the Colby Savings and Loan and served five terms on the Council of Elders before stepping down a decade ago. His health is failing him and he is being cared for by his grandson, Steven Colby, who stands to inherit the family business and the fortune associated with it. Steven is a relative newcomer in Arzno who has yet to earn the people's trust and respect.

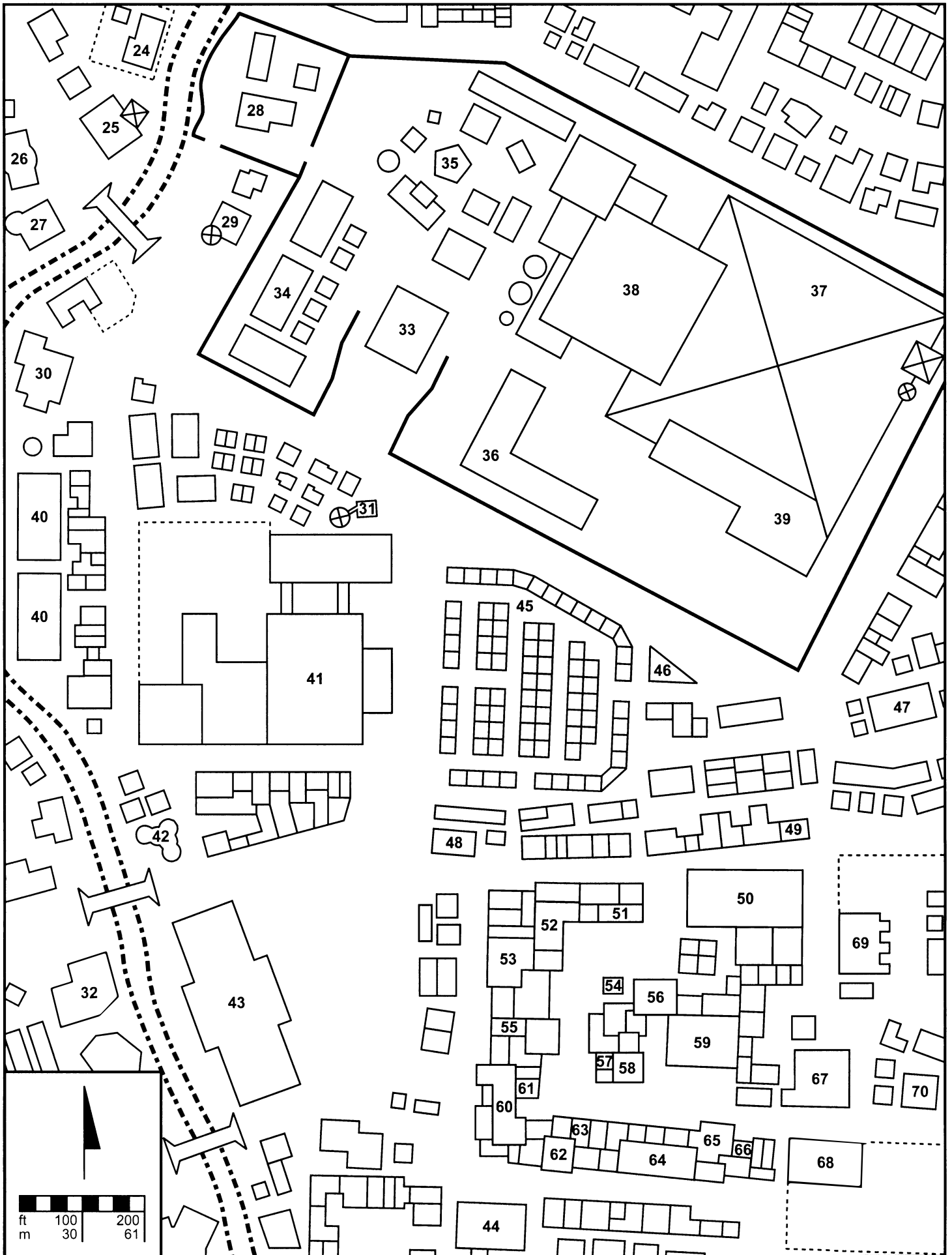
27. Ramirez Residence. This home is almost always empty, but is owned by K.D. Ramirez, the wealthy cattle baron. He uses the house when business or pleasure brings him from his ranch to the city. Ramirez always makes a big show when he's in town. If he plans to stay longer than a few days, he almost always throws a big party for the city's elite. The round section of the house is a large ballroom, the grandest in the territory.

28. Nemesio Family Grounds. This isn't the largest house in Arzno, but it's close. Within tall security gates lies the home of the True Atlantean, Lanis Nemesio, the founder, owner, and president of Arzno Weapons Manufacturing. Lanis is also currently the Chief Elder on the Council, and Prince among True Atlanteans. All of this makes him the most powerful man in the city.

The three-story mansion is accompanied by two other large homes on the grounds. Each houses members of Lanis' extended family; one for his younger brother (Archimedes, a 6th level Techno-Wizard) and his family, and the other for two of his late wife's cousins (Astella and Borista Piscentenese, both 7th level Ley Line Walkers) and their families. Astella is betrothed to the son of one of the princes in the Bagh-Dach clan on another world, but Borista is unattached and widely considered to be the top prize for any of the elite bachelors of the city, though none have had any luck. The warm, but shy Borista is regularly found dining and socializing with the elite of Arzno wearing stunning gowns modeled after those portrayed in classic pre-Rifts Western films and literature.

29. Holding Residence. An 80 foot (24.4 m) tall tower extends skyward from this large home, all of which is made entirely of stone. Cerona Holding is a lifelong student with a brilliant mind and knack for picking up any subject she chooses to study. The wild-eyed enchantress has achieved some level of mastery in dozens of subjects, including no less than six different mystic arts, though she is far from an expert in any of them. Cerona is a 5th level Ley Line Walker/Wizard, 3rd level Diabolist, 2nd level Stone Master, first level Shifter/Summoner, and has learned three low-level Blue Flame incantations and four low-level Temporal Magic spells. She can also read runes and wards, and knows all of the simple magic circles. She is dying to learn some Cloud Magic but has been denied by the Lyn-Srial due to her less-than-dedicated outlook toward any particular mystic art. Her thirst for knowledge is insatiable and she can't resist taking up the study of some new obscure spell or discipline if the opportunity presents itself. The Techno-Wizards at A.W.M. sometimes contract Cerona for the use of her spell knowledge in creating exotic TW devices. **Adventure Note:** Cerona represents the widest array of magical knowledge in Arzno, but not the greatest depth or experience. She is protective of her mystical secrets but can easily be convinced to teach a spell or two, or provide some other service in exchange for a magic item, unique spell or interesting story or bit of information. She also has a sizeable collection of magic items, but mostly TW items. Many believe Cerona is secretly a dragon in human guise.

30. Hazel Mansion. The bewitching and beautiful sorceress, Hazel, hasn't been to her home in more than three years. She and her entourage are away touring the British Isles. Six months ago, her two grown sons moved back to Arzno after living in the Magic Zone for the last six years. Born in Arzno, Magnol and



Hamame couldn't stand the boredom of New West life and went in search of their fortunes while in their teens. They apparently found it. The two are incorrigible bachelors and hedonists. They throw wild, drunken raves in their mother's stately manor day and night, and have all but brought the house down on itself. The parties are by invitation only, but it's not too hard to buy your way in for a few thousand credits. A pair of Titan Juicers watch the door and take care of any uninvited guests. What the two brothers did while out in the world, or how they have the cash to support their wild lifestyle, nobody seems to know, but plenty of people are suspicious and starting to nose around. The C.P.s have noted a rise in drug activity in recent months, and suspect the two wild-men. It's only a matter of time before the authorities raid the place.

Adventure Note 1: Magnol and Hamame are just barely a step ahead of a *Dead or Alive* contract placed on their heads by the Black Market in MercTown (100,000 credits each). The only thing saving them thus far is that they were using assumed names while in the Magic Zone, going by Norman and Alex Woellenburg. They got heavily involved in setting up and financing underground drug rings, and weren't fond of paying the Black Market their protection money. The pair hit it big in MercTown for a while before the heat got too bad and they had to go on the run.

While in Arzno they are (foolishly) still in business. The two have set up a shop that sells designer drugs at their private parties for big-time money. The entire second floor of the mansion has been converted into a major drug lab capable of making virtually any narcotic known to man, plus most Juicer-Wannabe drugs and a dozen varieties of hard liquor. The two are unbelievably careless, and even with their real names being clean so far, it won't take long for anyone investigating them to figure out who they are. It's just a matter of whether the Black Market, a hit man, or the Civilian Patrollers get to them first. It's also possible that the A.M.C. could get wise to them, as their hired bodyguards and doormen aren't registered with the Mercenary Subcontractor's Office.

Adventure Note 2: If, somehow, the two brothers manage to evade their enemies, they would not be able to escape their mother's wrath should she return home to find them. It would be all the worse for the pair since, unknown to them and everyone else, she is returning from her lengthy *honeymoon* with her new husband, whom she met abroad. The happy couple, both powerful practitioners of magic, will be outraged to find the place trashed and a drug den set up in their mansion.

31. Ikereth Tower. This relatively small home is attached to the tallest tower in Arzno, a needle-thin construction of brick standing 300 feet (91.4 m) high. *Kanirr of Ikereth* is a D'norr Devilman and one of the few refugees from Tolkeen to manage to find his way to Arzno a few years before the kingdom fell. Kanirr is a quiet and reserved 12th level Air Warlock and has kept mostly to himself since he came to Arzno. He spends most of his time sitting atop his tower, communing with the air around him and mourning the fall of Tolkeen and the loss of so many lives. **Adventure Note:** Some of the paranoids fear he may be a fugitive wanted by the CS and that he will bring trouble to the city. With the recent appearance of other refugees by the thousands, Kanirr has become more socially active, speaking on their behalf and trying to find them some work. Though

Kanirr doesn't realize it, this has caused a stir among the human supremacists and paranoids of the city. Enough of a stir that one of them has uncovered that Kanirr is, indeed, on the Coalition's "Wanted" list of Tolkeen fugitives. Kanirr had no idea. He is a peace-loving person who was never involved in politics or the war, but his being a D-Bee, and past association with other, more notorious freethinkers and practitioners of magic has gotten him named to the list nonetheless. Could this lead to trouble with the CS, with the paranoid activists in the city, or with a bounty hunter?

32. Narnelis. When Sinsonue Wisp first became Chief Elder, he bought several lots of land across the river from the Arzno Hall of Government and built this lavish mansion. He named it for his ancestral home in another dimension and has it decorated in valuable silk wall hangings, huge mosaics on the floor, and gold finish everywhere. The house stands three stories tall and is very open, with few walls of stone, mostly just thick drapes that can be pulled shut over doors, windows, and to divide up rooms. It is lavish and comfortable, fit for a king. Even though he lost his Chief Elder seat to Lanis in the last election, Narnelis is almost always the first stop for important visitors when they come to Arzno, as Sinsonue is a marvelous host and a loyal friend to most of the wealthy and powerful in Arzno and many notable communities in the New West, including New Durango, the Clarkdale Confederacy, and Colorado Baronies.

A.W.M. Compound

The gated compound of Arzno Weapons Manufacturing contains all of the company's business and manufacturing operations. Built atop one of the two ley line nexuses within the city of Arzno, it accounts for two thirds of Arzno's commercial and industrial economy and employs thousands of laborers, sales representatives, technicians and practitioners of magic. A.W.M. produces common TW devices to powerful military vehicles, as well as some conventional weapons and combat gear. The company strives to help the common citizen by providing goods and services to improve the quality of life without damaging sales.

33. A.W.M. Business Office. The business of A.W.M. is conducted from this four-story M.D.C. office building. The first floor is principally a showroom for equipment, weaponry, and even an occasional vehicle. The other levels are all offices where the business minds investigate new product possibilities, assemble focus groups, hold board meetings, track profits and expenses, and deal with human resource issues. The feel and makeup of this business center is much like that of any other domestic manufacturer in the time of Rifts, or that of a Golden Age corporation. Having an extensive network of associates, friends, and family across the Megaverse is a very handy asset for any entrepreneur, and many of those in top positions in the company are from other worlds. There are a dozen or so True Atlanteans at or near the top of the ladder, plus several humans from other worlds, as well as other species from Rifts Earth and beyond.

As with the rest of the compound, all of the systems in the building, from lights to the glass elevators, are all powered by Techno-Wizardry. The few acres of land that the A.W.M. occupies are as advanced as what you would find in Lazlo, or formerly Tolkeen.

34. Dormitories. Several hundred A.W.M. employees live on the compound in corporate dormitories or small homes. The space is modest but comfortable, and very affordable. The dorms are also used by students who come to A.W.M. to learn the principles of Techno-Wizardry.

35. Research Center. Called "The Brain Building" by employees, this structure functions as the primary office and design studio for Techno-Wizard research and development teams. It is the central cog in a small campus of offices, garages, diagnostic centers, classrooms, and libraries. The Research Center is where ideas are first born and teams of Techno-Wizards, Operators, scientists, artists, and others develop ideas for new TW devices, ways to improve existing models, and theorize on new design and construction methods. Once the idea is developed and a basic plan approved, the team splits up to work on various aspects in other buildings. Research specialists pore over ancient and modern tomes of technological and arcane knowledge, mechanics develop approaches to design problems, and Techno-Wizards draw up and test mystical and high-tech schematics and prototypes for TW systems. **Adventure Note:** Of all of the buildings in Arzno, it is the Research Center that contains the most magic treasure. In the right hands, the notes, sketches, models, and prototypes laying around inside this building are potentially worth billions of credits. Yet security *seems* surprisingly light. There are four guards who patrol the grounds around the clock, and only two additional guards posted inside the main entrance of the "Brain Building." Everyone *assumes* that a host of magical and/or automated defenses are in place inside, but it would take a bold and daring thief to break in and find out for sure. So far, there have been no takers.

36. Ground Vehicle Assembly Building. This building is where the bodies of A.W.M.'s ground vehicles are constructed. Aircraft are built in a separate assembly facility (see #39). Only the mechanical shells of vehicles are built within. Everything is constructed on an assembly line, and the facility can be set up to build four small vehicles or two large vehicles at a time, or a combination of the two.

There are no modern robotics, automation, or other such devices used to build vehicles, so it all must be done by hand. Each crew of eight workers can usually build the outer shell of one large vehicle, like a Sand Ranger Combat Truck or a Sandstorm Hover Craft, or two smaller, simpler vehicles like a Cliff Rider ATV or a Rover Dune Buggy, in one, eight hour shift. The vehicles are then taken to the pyramid complex for Techno-Wizards to install and enchant the engines, electrical systems, weapons, etc.

37. Pyramid. This 200 foot (61.0 m) tall pyramid is used for a variety of purposes, channeling P.P.E. for the creation of TW devices, powering TW creations, keeping stability over the ley lines, and other uses in the creation of TW items. The pyramid structure itself is a viable workplace with space for workshops, labs and production of TW vehicles, generators, weapons, armor, and gear. Every mass-produced product made by A.W.M. is enchanted somewhere inside the pyramid.

38. Pyramid Annex. Attached to the pyramid is a large complex of buildings and towers. The buildings include one-story office facilities, a huge, four-story experimental laboratory and engineering compound, production facility, storage and a nine-story tower housing classrooms and lecture halls. Most of the



space is used for the production, advancement, and development of new and experimental Techno-Wizard creations. Most of the office space is used by A.W.M. exploratory teams. These men and women are responsible for securing new resources for the company, including but not limited to precious metals, gems and precious stones, Mega-Damage building materials, new or salvaged weapon and equipment casings, etc. Exploratory operations also send teams out across North America in search of competition, bringing back samples of other devices to be studied and possibly copied.

The majority of the square footage of the annex is immediately adjacent to the pyramid and draws on its P.P.E. reserves to provide Techno-Wizards P.P.E. for use in advanced and experimental devices. While the pyramid itself is used in the final steps of construction and enchanting of devices put out on the mass market, this complex is used in building more unique and specialized items. While one would go to the pyramid to see the final mystic and technical touches being put on a suit of Exterminator armor or a Wing Board, one would go to the annex and see the custom-installing of magical features into armor or vehicles, the final touches being put on a special-order Imitator armored suit, or to witness the installation of advanced equipment such as TW bionics.

The nine-story tower houses facilities used to train and educate A.W.M. employees. It is here Techno-Wizards are taught basic through advanced incantations, and apprentices are trained in the basic TW arts. The tower also offers classes to Arzno citizens on monster lore, combating vampires, advanced farming techniques, basic mechanics and electronics, computer operation, radio basics, first aid, literacy, and any other number of

courses with practical applications to everyday life. This is done to help the citizens survive and prosper in the harsh world of Rifts Earth, and to foster good relationships between the people and the company.

39. Air Vehicle Assembly Building. This is the newest building in the A.W.M. compound and is basically the same as #36 above with the exception that various fixed- and rotary-winged aircraft are both assembled *and* enchanted within. The outer shell of one aircraft can be built at a time, regardless of size, and takes a crew of 16 workers four 8-hour shifts to assemble the aircraft, plus the time it takes the Techno-Wizards to equip and enchant it. Once completed, the wings and/or rotors are removed so that it can be shipped via truck to the airfield, where it is reassembled and tested.

Arzno Town Center

The heart of the City of Arzno's political and economic life is centered around the Hall of Government and the A.W.M. compound. A multitude of shops are built in their vicinity and citizens not involved in the mercenary trade can find everything they need in the merchant district.

40. Riverside Hotel. A hotel owned by statesman and local Elven celebrity, *Sinsonue Wisp*. It provides upscale accommodations and dining, and the restaurant is popular among many elite wizards who live in the area. Rooms on the west side of either of the two buildings overlooking the river cost 190-400 credits per night, while rooms on the east side are less swanky and less expensive, averaging around 150 credits per night. The restaurant features one of the best grill menus in the region, as well as an extensive beverage selection. Dinner runs about 80 credits per plate, and drinks are 10 credits each.

41. Arzno Hospital. This facility is the most advanced in a thousand miles (1600 km), with the possible exception of the Lyn-Srial healers in Tryth-Sal, 100 miles (160 km) away. The huge building has over 200 beds, emergency care facilities, an ICU, plus facilities for surgery and advanced diagnostics. Up to 200 patients can be housed comfortably, twice that in an emergency and three times as many could be treated and discharged. The parking garage attached to the hospital is designed to act as an emergency shelter and crisis center in the event of a major catastrophe. Cyber-Docs at the hospital can install, remove, or repair pretty much any cybernetic or bionic systems with the exception of TW bionics, which are done at A.W.M. and by a private practitioner in Arzno's residential section. Six ambulances (all hover vehicles) service the city, plus helicopters can airlift the sick and injured from the surrounding territory to a landing pad on the roof.

Patients at the hospital are treated by a variety of methods, from holistic healing to modern medicine to psionic and magical healing abilities. The doctors can provide care at a level comparable to those of the 22nd century. If the professionals at the hospital can't help a patient, there is not likely to be anyone else who can.

42. Lyn-Srial Embassy. A contingent of half a dozen Lyn-Srial and a few other citizens of Tryth-Sal reside in a building near the Arzno Hall of Government. These ambassadors deal with the Arzno Council of Elders in matters of trade, de-

fense, politics and social exchange. The noble Sky Knights are good friends to the people of Arzno and do their best to help when asked. Astute diplomats, the Lyn-Srial also know to stay out of local affairs when their opinion is not sought.

The building itself is unusual, built for the ambassadors by the city nearly 20 years ago. It resembles a billowy cloud sitting on the ground, and is so polished and gleaming white that in the midday sun onlookers have to shade their eyes. The interior is decorated in the Asian-like style to which the Sky Knights are so accustomed and there are numerous openings through which the winged champions can come and go without landing on the ground level.

43. Arzno Hall of Government. This building houses the entirety of the Arzno government, including the Council of Elders, city administrators, the court, and the main precinct of the Civilian Patrollers. It also houses the small jail where those awaiting trial or serving a short sentence are held. This large, stately building is reminiscent of the courthouses of the Old West, complete with central clock tower and a large staircase in the front of the building.

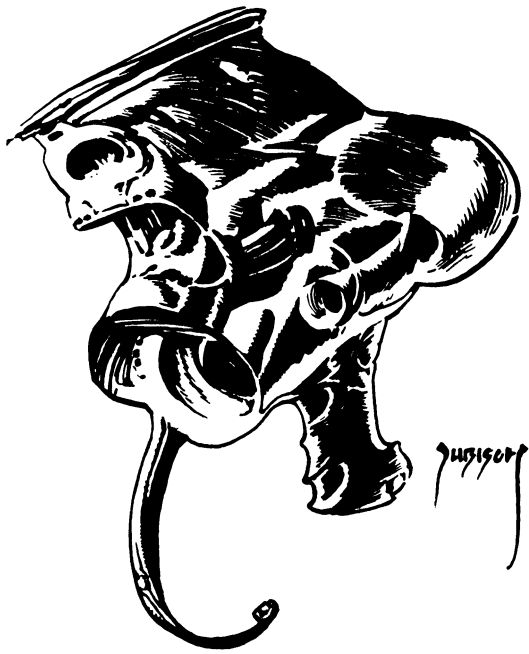
Walking into the Hall through the front door at the top of the stairs, one enters the large central corridor. It has high ceilings and hardwood floors. Straight through another set of doors is the Council Room, where the Elders hold meetings and govern. The round chamber holds nearly 100 seats for meeting attendees, and a long table where the Elders sit, facing the audience. Beyond the chamber are offices for the Elders and the modest administrative staff who assist them.

A right turn after entering the main doors leads to the north wing, the city's courtroom where trials are held. Elders rotate the responsibility of serving as judges between them, each presiding for a week at a time to hear cases. Other space in the wing hosts judicial chambers, a few offices, and a small, comfortable holding cell for the housing of the accused during trial recesses. The two floors above house files and records, plus the offices of city officers responsible for water and power, tax collecting, and other public works.

The south wing is the main precinct (Precinct 1) of the Civilian Patrollers and the city lockup. The lieutenant keeps his offices there where he sets policy for the rest of the force. A contingent of C.P.s keep watch over the 35 cells on the third floor of the wing.

44. Old Red Boarding House. This small inn is run by a young couple originally from the Colorado Barony of Hope. Pat and Linda Abbott enthusiastically maintain and operate this 16-bedroom hotel known for its mediocre lodgings, but excellent service. When they acquired it, it was little more than a flophouse that had been condemned by the city. Linda spends most of her days washing linens, cleaning and minding the desk. Pat spends his time as the handy-man, painting, repairing and making sure everything is operational. The two have sunk all of their savings into the business, but are starting to turn a modest profit. Soon they hope to be able to hire an additional worker or two and dedicate themselves to making additional improvements and running a successful business.

45. Techno-Wizard Market. The TW Market provides every imaginable service, part, component and product related to Techno-Wizardry – well, almost. Dozens of merchants operate small booths covering two acres of land in this flea-market style



shopping area. The market grounds and the booths are owned by the city, but leased by the individual retailers. There are prospectors who buy and sell precious metals and gems, subcontractors who can repair, build pieces of TW equipment or draw up schematics, dealers in recycled Mega-Damage materials and plastics, independent Techno-Wizards selling handcrafted TW items, stalls selling used or new TW weapons, merchants willing and able to recharge TW items with P.P.E. (for those who can't do so for themselves), merchants buying used TW equipment, others refurbishing (like new) old TW equipment, magic appraisers (TW and magic items), employment agencies for Techno-Wizards and other mystic professions, and booth after booth selling TW weapons, armor and devices. Competition is extremely high, so prices are always fair and often 10-20% below market value; bargaining, haggling, and price shopping are the norm. The City of Arzno charges 2,000 credits per month for the use of a booth, or 20,000 credits for a year lease.

Civilian Patrollers are always roaming the crowds to keep the peace and settle disputes where they can. Likewise, merchants are always on the lookout for goods stolen from the A.W.M. or hijacked from a convoy on the Great Trade Road, and report their suspicions to the police to nab the thief. They may be in competition with the A.W.M., but they know that the company is important to Arzno's economy and the prosperity of their community.

46. Ray and Cyrus' Exotic Produce. Two local Techno-Wizards, Ray and Cyrus Terrell, have entered an unusual business and opened an expansive fruit farm to the north of the city. They are so successful that the town in the hills bears their family name and employs most of the townsfolk. Adjacent to the TW Market they have opened a produce market to sell their fruits and crops, and products made from their crops (jelly, jams, juices, oils, etc.). Using advanced TW techniques to create the perfect environmental conditions for each type of fruit or crop, they are able to grow fruit and crops that normally can't grow in Arizona or even on the North American continent, like coconuts and pineapples.

Ray or Cyrus can usually be found at the market with a small army of workers loading, unloading, and selling the delicious

fruits, vegetables, grain and products at reasonable prices. The two brothers live with their families in a large farmhouse on their extensive plantation.

47. Big Time Pawn Shop. A large, sprawling, but run-down pawn shop that deals in everything. Half of its products are crummy, used, run-down pieces of someone else's past at discount prices (50-60% off the market price for new). It's a popular place for adventurers to dump off second-rate booty, battered armor, spare parts, ammo clips, E-Clips, junker vehicles (in the back), and items they can't identify or sell anywhere else, for a few credits (and we mean a few; 1-4 credits). Sloth, the owner, also buys old stereo equipment, saddles, riding gear, wilderness supplies, leather goods, clothing, used bionics, false teeth, or whatever anyone wants to sell or pawn off for about 5-10% of its actual value. The store looks like a scrap heap more than anything else. If a particular item is exceptionally nice or can be fixed with little effort, he puts it in a case in the front of the store where he sells his "premium" items. If it's no good, or he doesn't think he will be able to sell it himself, the slob sells it as scrap to a local Techno-Wizard.

Known only by his nickname, Sloth, the owner of the Big Time Pawn Shop is a lazy, good-for-nothing Larmac who has been around the city for as long as anyone can remember (at least 50 years). He won the place in a high-stakes poker game and has lived there ever since. For all his laziness, Sloth actually has a decent business. While he doesn't sell much in the way of the normal merchandise, his de-facto scrap business turns a tidy profit. He pays about half a credit per M.D.C. point of busted armor, weapons, etc. That's pretty low, even for scrap metal, but most places won't do business for less than thousands of pounds of scrap. Sloth, on the other hand, will buy it by the ounce if that's what is offered him. He can then turn around and sell it for 2-5 times what he paid for it to A.W.M., independent Operators, and mercs or adventurers looking for spare parts and materials on a low budget. And sometimes he stumbles across some valuable items. He sells about 25,000 credits worth of goods per month; not bad for barely lifting a finger.

While Sloth's operation functions more as a scrap yard, it is a pawn shop. He pays only 10% of real value for working goods, and only holds them for two weeks before they must be bought back or he places them up for sale. He also buys and sells good, working weapons, armor and adventuring gear at discount prices (pays 10-20% of market value). Sloth never asks questions, doesn't remember a face, and his bookkeeping is non-existent, so this is a great place for two-bit thieves and bandits down on their luck to sell their ill-gotten gains without fear of being found out or identified. ("Um, let me see officer. This was sold to me by, um, some guy. Kinda short an' oldish, no . . . tall an' young. Yep a tall, young dude, nothin' special about him. Or was it that lady? Nope, it was that guy, you know the one I just tol' ya about. The tall, heavy set Injun. Or was it a kid?")

48. City Bank of Arzno. Arzno enjoys the presence of several small, independent banks within the city. The City Bank of Arzno is one of the most successful, but requires an average monthly balance of 10,000 credits in order to keep an account open. Because of this, it is only available to the highly successful mercs and businesses in town, but offers the best interest return on their clients' money, and gives them the best rates on high-dollar loans. The building is very secure, protected by a

Techno-Wizard security system designed by Lanis Nemesio himself.

The Merc Market

The Merc Market, sometimes called “Little MercTown,” is located in the middle of town and is a defining point for the city. On its gravel roads (closed to vehicles during the day), a soldier can find anything he or she might need to ply their trade. Each store is privately owned and well kept. The market is intentionally designed such that there is only one path through its interior, so that foot traffic is maximized. The reasoning is that if prospective customers must walk by your establishment, you have more opportunity to make a sale to them. This also makes the properties at one end or another very valuable, since they are more accessible. Most shops open early in the morning, and close sometime after sundown, though many of the bigger operations stay open late.

49. Double Deal Saloon. A burly, ex-Headhunter named Brock Toronto runs this bar near the Merc Market. He caters to the many dealers and businessmen who set up shop in the market, as most don't want to frequent the overcrowded and pricey bars on Victory Row or other mercenary hangouts. Drinks are cheap (1-2 credits for beer, 2-3 credits for liquor) and you won't find any food on the menu. It's just a good place to sit and relax after a hard day's work.

The saloon is also a hangout for Black Marketeers looking to do business. Brock isn't actually “in” the organization, but had his bar muscled out from under him by two of his employees. One is a Black Market Liaison named Mia McCoulsky and the other a Merc Ops representative named Sam Thurgood. Mia works as a barmaid while Sam is a waiter, and both pretend to just be go-betweens with a higher authority, though they each have a free hand to make whatever contacts or deals they want in the name of the Black Market. They both answer to the local Black Market bigwig, *Amon Worcester* (see #50 for details on Amon and his Black Market operations).

50. Bandito Arms Shop. This massive showroom is one of the biggest and best arms dealer facilities in the New West. All weapons and equipment are brand new from the factory. The dealer's close proximity to the secret Area 51 headquarters of Bandito Arms means the shop is always fully stocked. The dealer also gets in the newest Bandito Arms merchandise sooner than anyone else.

The proprietor of the shop is an 8th level Black Market Arms Dealer named Amon Worcester. Amon dresses like a dandy and has a silver tongue, but his smooth and unruffled demeanor masks a cold and ruthless core. He is the top Black Market agent within 500 miles (800 km) of Arzno and runs a number of other businesses, including a hotel, two bars, two pawn shops, and a restaurant that fronts for a Body-Chop-Shop. He also engages in unlicensed bounty work (through a representative at the Double Deal Saloon, #49 on the map) and racketeering.

The Bandito Arms dealer strictly carries Bandito Arms products, including common knock-offs of other domestic brands, including old (pre-105 P.A.) CS weapons, armor and gear. The shop can also perform licensed, legal, Juicer (Standard, Hyperion, Phaeton, and Titan varieties) and Crazy (Standard, plus the Wired Gunslinger) conversions at the best prices in the territory.

51. Money Changing Office. Owned by the Colby Savings and Loan (located in the residential section of the city), this office changes virtually any currency common to North America. They deal in the credit systems of the Black Market, Northern Gun-Manistique Imperium (NGMI), Lazlo, Universal Credits, and gold. The office will also appraise precious metals and gems, with an offer to buy within 24 hours for those looking to trade hard currency for credits. As a fairly unique side of the business, the Savings and Loan also sells simple gold and silver coins, both at the Money Changing Office and at their main branch. Each is engraved with “Colby” on one side and the weight in ounces and the purity on the other. Colby takes a commission of 2% on all deals involving the buying and selling of any form of hard currency, and 0.5% for most of the debit systems.



52. Exotic Arms. A dimension-hopping trader set up shop a year ago dealing exclusively in rare and foreign weapons. Hameel Luca is supposedly a human from another dimension or time; how or why he ended up in Arzno is a mystery to everyone. What is known is that he offers exotic weapons he claims come from other parts of the world, including Eco-Wizard weapons from Dinosaur Swamp, Millennium Tree wands, staves and leaf armor from England, Xiticix guns and weapons, a selection of Kittani weapons, Horune Pirate weapons, Triax guns and ammo (but no armor or vehicles), and a selection of magic items he claims come from India, Russia, and even China and Japan. Notably *absent*, however, are Naruni and Splugorth products, and he never deals in Bio-Wizard weapons, although he will sell the occasional rune weapon. The only constants among the diverse inventory are that they are all unusual weapons from other lands and are very expensive (at least three times the listed book price, in credits). His stock is always changing, but his

store is constantly full of new merchandise. Nobody can seem to figure out where it all comes from, and Hameel certainly isn't telling. Given his access to advanced technology and strange magic items, nobody has ever dared try and shoplift or break into his store. Many people find something sinister about Hameel's calm demeanor and supreme confidence. He is clearly an educated man with an aristocratic bearing and a condescending attitude toward most people in Arzno, particularly adventurers, mercs and cowboys, but people put up with it and keep coming to buy. He is also a supremely greedy guy and clearly a man of many secrets. He never offers discounts for any reason and is indifferent to hard luck stories.

53. Arzno Arms and Armor. An eclectic shop filled with weapons, armor, and equipment common to the New West. Prices are good and selection broad, but not especially deep. The place carries most common Northern Gun, Wilk's, and general Black Market weapons and armor, both new and used. Bill Musser, the owner, manages to compete with all of the "name brand" shops in the market by offering most new items at 10% off the book price, and used items at a 25% discount, but with an "all sales are final" policy. The feel of the place is a lot like a small-town auto dealership, with lots of smiles, laughs, and handshakes up until the deal is signed, and then not a second glance afterward.

54. Trader John's Bargain Wilk's Shop. To begin, John isn't so much a "trader" as he is a "hustler." His merchandise isn't so much a "bargain" as it is a "steal," and it isn't a "shop" he works out of, it's more like the trunk of his car. Other than that, John is totally on the up and up. Yeah, right.

Nobody seems to know who Trader John really is, but there is little doubt that he's a smuggler, highwayman, or a thief. At irregular periods he shows up in the Arzno Merc Market with some cart, van, tent, or even just a duffle bag full of brand-new, top-of-the-line Wilk's equipment and weapons. He starts his street cries of "Come one! Come all!" and then sells his wares as fast as is humanly possible before taking off again. John sells items for whatever someone is willing to pay, prompting spontaneous auctions where items sell for 60% to 75% of their true worth. Everyone assumes that the goods must be stolen because they are always new and it's the only way he could turn a profit, but nobody can seem to find out from where. The representatives from the Wilk's Shop in Arzno have been trying to track down records of goods stolen or missing from *their inventory*, or those of other shops in the region, but have found nothing. Nor can they get some dirt on John to muscle him out of town. For now, the crafty salesman still has the "lowest prices west of the Mississippi!" and there's not much anyone can do about it. **Note:** While the location on the map is where John usually sets up, he can sometimes be found pedaling in other parts of the market or elsewhere in the city.

55. The Ironwood Armory. Two brothers raised in the wild, wooded Rocky Mountains have settled down in Arzno and established a truly unique niche market. Roger Ricks is an experienced Naturalist, while his younger brother Randall is an Earth Warlock. Through practice and magical means, they are the most skilled woodworkers in the city, and have devoted their talents to creating beautiful, intricate suits of *wooden armor*. These wooden suits of plate may then be transformed into Mega-Damage structures via the *Ironwood spell*. These suits of

armor are often sought-after by mages, who see their spell-casting power reduced by conventional artificial armor, and by vampire hunters who use the wooden armor in their war against the undead. Even Arzno Weapons Manufacturing sells a series of these suits of Ironwood armor. A single suit of the Ricks brothers' armor costs 90,000 to 150,000 credits due to the quality and beauty of the design. A suit of wooden armor that is not transformed into a Mega-Damage structure costs about half the price.

In addition to wooden armor, the pair also make and sell high quality wooden arrows (+1 to strike, and costs 25 credits per arrow), artistic and ornate crosses (100-400 credits), decorated staves, canes, and jewelry boxes, as well as artistic sculptures made of wood, clay, stone, and iron. Small works of art sell for 100-400 credits, while large sculptures sell for 1D4x1000 credits. Their work can be found decorating the homes and offices of the wealthy and elite of Arzno. They occasionally do wooden weapons, but generally find that the work bores them and isn't nearly creative enough to be worth their time.

56. Merc Market Pawn Shop. This is one of the Arzno pawn shops owned in secret by the Black Market (the other is in the Sky Docks section of the city, both under the governance of Amon Worcester; see #50, above). The proprietor of the shop is a huge Grackle Tooth known as Stoker. He's feisty, with a short fuse and a legendary temper. When he gets upset, there's no settling him down until he's broken something (or someone). Popular lore amongst local mercs includes many, many stories about his tantrums, including that he once ate a live kitten for making too much noise. Nobody messes with Stoker.

The pawn shop is really standard fare. It deals mainly in weapons, armor, adventuring gear, and light vehicles (parked out front if for sale, or stashed in a storage unit a few blocks away if being held), and pays 25-50% of the market value for pawned items, depending on its condition, quality and market demand. The seller has three weeks to return to buy it back for a 10-20% markup, or else the pawn shop gets to keep it and resell it, usually for about 75-90% of the list value. Most combat items are missing 1D4x10% of their M.D.C., and new items are a rarity. Only common or older models are regularly available, but sometimes the lucky shopper can find a great deal on a unique piece of hardware.

The Black Market operates the shop as a front for fencing stolen merchandise, laundering money, and conducting shady business deals. All of the six employees, plus Stoker, are in the crime syndicate and all but the Grackle Tooth sometimes do other work for the Black Market as enforcers, debt settlers/leg breakers, or just old-fashioned muscle.

57. Manheim's Man-Hunters. The Arzno Mercenary Corps may handle most of the military and security work in the territory, and get a cut of every contract and bounty that goes through the city, but plenty of mercenaries make it on their own, including the veterans of Manheim's Man-Hunters. This squad of heavy-hitters has made quite a name for themselves as enforcers, recovery experts (stolen goods and kidnap victims), monster slayers, and all-around hard cases.

Manheim, the commander of the small tactical group, is a 10th level *Heavy Combat Cyborg* with all the trimmings. Most of his crew are 'Borgs or Headhunters, including **Lincoln** (an AWOL, 5th level *CS Cyborg Strike Trooper*), **Grimes** (a 7th level *CSLNGR "Gringo" Cyborg*), **Tucker** (a 6th level Techno-



Hound Headhunter with partial cybernetics), **Owl Feather** (an 8th level *Momano Headhunter* with major psionics and TW bionics), and **Marshall** (a 7th level *Heavy Combat Cyborg* with an emphasis on explosives and demolitions). Another dozen mercs, including a Dog Boy, a couple of Native American warriors, a Shaman, and a fellow who washed out as a Cyber-Knight, are also part of the group. They specialize in taking out large predators and heavily-armed bandits, and generally excel at blowing things up.

This particular group of mercs is worth special mention for two reasons. First, is their stellar reputation and list of successful jobs. Second, is the respect they've earned from the A.M.C., who doesn't bother them and looks the other way when they take jobs under the table. This means that if the player characters need a hand with a touchy situation and don't want to involve the A.M.C. or local authorities, Manheim and his boys might be able to help out if the characters can afford them.

58. Lou's Tavern. Smack in the middle of the Merc Market is a tavern run by a tough old *woman* named Lou "The Lady" Thomason. Lou is at least 70 years old, and is one of many retired adventurers and mercenaries who settled down and started a business in the city. Her tavern has actually been in its current location since before the Merc Market really sprang up around it, so she has enjoyed a great deal of prosperity because of it.

Lou's is a good place to sit and have a frosty beverage or grab a meal in the middle of your walk through the market. It's always packed inside and out, and tables pour into the street around the building where barmaids serve beer, ale, hamburgers, chopped beef or sausage sandwiches, and barbecue chicken. Drinks are 3 credits each, and most plates are 8-10 credits. Open from mid-morning until an hour after sunset.

59. Wilk's Laser Technologies. The legendary company's Arzno branch is the most successful high-tech arms dealer in the territory, maybe the New West. This two-story building is a fully-finished, two-story Mega-Damage concrete structure that is the nicest in the market. It even has air conditioning, which alone guarantees that nearly every passer-by will at least walk in to take a break from the sun beating down on their shoulders.

The mood of the dealership is very professional. All of the sales associates wear uniforms (black Western-cut pants and jackets, with starched white shirts, leather boots, and usually black or brown cowboy hats) and know the company line inside and out. There is almost always a sale on of some sort, be it E-Clip recharging, promotional deals on accessories such as gun sights, carrying cases, or big discounts with a weapon trade-in. About 85% of their stock is brand new off the assembly line, with the remainder being used weapons in excellent, good as new, condition. Most importantly, absolutely every item sold by Wilk's is in stock and available on a cash and carry basis. Customer service is excellent, and through all of their efforts they have managed to convince a lot of Arzno's merc population that every hard-earned credit put down in the store is well-spent.

One promotion currently underway is an experiment in the sale of used weapons not normally up to the standard of quality that the shop requires to resell an item. As a rule, when Wilk's gets an energy weapon or other piece of equipment in trade that isn't up to snuff, it is shipped off to other Wilk's dealerships in other parts of the country or sold to other dealers. Recently they started selling these less-than-perfect weapons to local Techno-Wizards and even A.W.M. for TW conversion. Wilk's weapons are a favorite of many mercs who use TW, because they carry all of the advantages of Techno-Wizardry, but maintain the light weight and superior balance of a Wilk's weapon. So far, the idea has done well, and the dealer is in talks with A.W.M. to sell converted Wilk's weapons right there in the store!

60. Shortcut Novelty Shop. Like in any mall, in the Merc Market there is a constant fight for foot traffic. Without a good location, it's tough for any business to be successful. One merchant who has the business strategy of location nailed down is the owner of the *Shortcut Novelty Shop*, a human mutant named Braden Harrison. Braden is in his mid-thirties, and is an albino with white eyes and very little body hair (must stay out of the sun for any length of time, and wear sunglasses), a flat nose, small ears, and minor psionic abilities. He is extremely mild-mannered but friendly, with a big crush on the 20-year-old niece of Lou Thomason (see #58, above) who works as a barmaid in Lou's Tavern. His shop sells a wide variety of items that one would expect to find in a convenience store: soda, juice, beer, ice cream, candy, sweets, cookies and snacks, plus personal items like sun block, painkillers, soap, shampoo, cosmetics, combs, hygiene items, etc. He also sells some basic grocery items like milk, bread and butter, seasonal fruits and vegetables, canned goods, dry tack, flour, and so on. A dozen assorted D-Bees, mutants, and humans work at the store.

Braden's shop is unique in the fact that it is the only "short-cut" in the entire market, meaning that you can walk through his store and avoid having to travel all the way through the winding market street to get out at one end to the other once you're in the marketplace. Nobody else can seem to manage it, since every other shop has one behind it on the other side. So in addition to

selling snacks and groceries, his shop is effectively a toll booth. For the purchase of some small item, one can walk through the swinging gate alongside the island containing the cash registers, and pass from one side of the store and out the other.

The real mystery about Braden's shop is why nobody else is in the same business that he is. It wouldn't be any big thing for a couple of back-to-back shops to start a similar toll system to make some easy money, or for one shop to simply buy an adjacent property and set it up like that. But, whether it's out of sympathy or respect for Braden, or for some other reason, nobody has followed through with any such idea. So, at least for now, Braden Harrison maintains his corner on the shortcut market. **Note:** Being a mutant, it's possible that Braden is more than he appears to be. It's difficult to say what abilities a mutant such as he may be capable of, and it may be that he has powers of intimidation or mind control that keep others from imitating his shortcut and walk-through business enterprise.

61. Madame Christine's Fortune Telling. This tiny, one-room shop is where the psychic Madame Christine reads palms, interprets Tarot cards, and gazes into her crystal ball for a glimpse of her subject's future. She claims to have predicted the occurrences of Sorcerers' Revenge and the fall of Tolkeen, in addition to a number of more local events. She is popular with a lot of the more superstitious mercenaries, and is very expensive, charging 100 credits per reading. She really is a psychic, but it's difficult to tell if her predictions are legitimate or if they are simply theatrics.



62. Machiavelli's Marvels. This small TW shop is closed almost every day of the year, but when it opens for 1D4 days once or twice a year, it contains TW creations so amazing (some fun, some practical, some weapons) that they are beyond the average

Techno-Wizard's wildest dreams! Supplies and variety are very limited, as the strange wizard known as "Mad" Machiavelli works alone and creates whatever he feels like. He opens the shop when his workplace becomes overcrowded or as he feels like it. (See #24 for details about his strange habits.)

When the shop is open, people flock to it hoping to catch a glimpse of some bizarre new creation. In the past this has included odd flying machines that are worn on the user's back like giant wings, armor that changes shape, color, and substance, a device that allows the wearer to travel through solid walls, extravagant children's toys that seem to be alive, and wonders that other Techno-Wizards have been unable to duplicate. All of Machiavelli's inventions are extraordinarily expensive and many of them costly to operate, but demand is always high when the old man opens the door to his shop.

63. Gunny's Custom Hardware. "Gunny" is a seasoned Techno-Warrior from Kingsdale who hit it big years ago and decided to retire. Determined to leave behind old grudges and rivals, he struck out for the New West. By the time he reached Arzno, he figured he had gone far enough and set up shop. The aging fellow is a font of knowledge about making it as a mercenary, especially when it comes to the care and customization of weapons and armor. When he put down roots and turned his long-time hobby into a career, he established himself as one of the foremost armorers in the territory.

Gunny can do pretty much any form of customization on most any type of non-magical equipment, from installing and aligning weapon sights and optics, to beefing up or slimming down armor to meet an adventurer's specific needs. He sells new and used equipment, and will customize any weapon system, suit of armor, and even some bionic systems at fair market rates. (See the **Rifts® Game Master Guide** for pricing details for various customizing options and pricing. Some armor options can be found on page 202, and some modern weapon modifications are listed on page 127.)

While he loves his life of comfort, Gunny does sometimes get the itch for action. He satisfies this by living vicariously through his clients. Many have found that they can get little tips or a discount here and there if they entertain the old Headhunter with some exciting tales about their work as soldiers of fortune. Thus, he also sometimes happens upon valuable information on various activities in and around Arzno. For example, he is one of the few who has a pretty good idea of how some of the underground Body-Chop-Shops operate, and knows how to get in touch with them as well as the Black Market and a number of local mercenary outfits.

64. New West Wheels. This bike shop specializes in personal ground vehicles, mostly dirt bikes and small ATV's, but also sells some hovercycles and small hover vehicles. It is extremely popular with local mercenaries shopping for transportation, as well as couriers and racers looking to juice up their vehicles. Half of the building is a showroom, and half is a small garage where as many as six small vehicles can have body or engine work done at a time. The mechanics there can do customized styling or paint jobs, add or remove armor plating (increase or decrease weight and Main Body M.D.C. by up to 15%), and soup up engines (generally increase top speed by up to 10% with minimal effort). More dramatic work can sometimes be done at the risk of damage to the vehicle's structure or

engine, loss of stability, reduced speed, etc. Work is expensive, at least 20% more than average costs for all work done, but quality is top-notch.

65. Bottled Miracles. This is the only pure magic shop in town. It sells various products from across North America and beyond, but does not deal in Techno-Wizardry or Bio-Wizardry. Instead it sells healing potions, holy water, a variety of Faerie Food, and some minor Native American fetishes. However, the most popular items are amulets, scrolls, and talismans made-to-order. The owner of the shop, a 13th level, young Demon-Dragonmage (described in **Rifts® World Book 12: Psyscape**), and his three human Ley Line Walker apprentices (levels 2, 5, and 9) can provide pretty much any spell available, up to 9th level. Prices are high, but so is demand, so the Demon-Dragonmage is doing extremely well for himself. Amulets cost an average of 30,000-50,000 credits each, while scrolls cost an average of 10,000 credits for every level of the spell to be written on it (so a scroll to cast *Armor of Ithan*, a 3rd level spell, would cost 30,000 credits). Talismans cost triple the price of an equivalent scroll. The shop also sells magic spells up to level 7 at double the cost listed on page 190 of **Rifts® Ultimate Edition**. If a mage has a spell that the Demon-Dragonmage doesn't know (unlikely), trades of spell magic can usually be worked out.

The shop has only been open for a few months, and nobody knows who these people are, or even their names. The presence of a Demon-Dragonmage, even a young one, bothers Onra, Lanis, and other True Atlanteans a great deal, and has caused a scuffle or two on occasions when dragons visit the market. The four keep to themselves, and apparently live in the shop. One of the three humans occasionally leaves to go out and buy food (not as often as one would think), but other than that, they are never seen about town.

Having a Demon-Dragonmage around can only cause problems in the long run. They are violently hated by true dragons, and cooler heads do not usually prevail before a fight breaks out. Arzno doesn't see a great many dragons in the market, but some do pass through from time to time. If word spreads that the Demon-Dragonmage is in the city, older, hot-headed dragons may decide to get rid of him on their own.

Furthermore, there is the mystery of what the proprietor of the shop and his lackeys are doing in Arzno in the first place. There are plenty of other places where such a shop could make far more money, and such things aren't normally the chief concern amongst Demon-Dragonmages anyway. There is perhaps a more sinister reason for his presence.

66. Gunman's Schematics. The popular and widely-known Techno-Wizard designer, "Gunman" Geoff Yant, has his shop set up in Little MercTown rather than the TW Market. For one, this allows him to own his own place rather than lease from the city, and secondly, it puts him in much better contact with his client base. Yant designs TW energy weapons, mostly rifles, side arms, and vampire slaying weapons, for TW-loving mercenaries who want something truly unique, or fitted to their specific needs. He doesn't do any construction, much preferring the creative aspects of design to the drudgery of construction. He is a local legend and guarantees that his designs will work, or your money back. He can accomplish most anything with a weapon designed from scratch, from extremely long effective ranges, to

above-average damage, to stun or knockdown, or most anything possible from a spell effect. His only hard and fast rule is that he won't enslave Elementals or other beings to power his devices.

Yant's prices are fair, generally a flat 20,000 credits for handguns and 50,000 for rifles. Designs generally take about a week, and there is always a waiting list (usually a month to six weeks). Heavy weapons or oddities may cost more and take longer. Yant also provides material price estimates, but can't guarantee what it will cost to have a device built. And that's the wrinkle, one of Yant's designs may cost anywhere from 100,000 to a million credits to actually make. The more unique the item, the higher the cost. A.W.M. and the A.M.C. sometimes commission him to do freelance custom work to be mass-produced.

67. Northern Gun Weapon Depot. Northern Gun's primary shop is a large, stand-alone Mega-Damage concrete building three floors high, making it the tallest in the Merc Market. The top floor holds all of the offices for the weapon shop, and the vehicle dealership across the street (#68, below). The lower two floors are filled with merchandise on shelves, on racks, and in display cases. The shop carries all varieties of new and used NG weapons, armor, power armor, and field equipment. Robot vehicles, large suits of power armor, and personal vehicles are across the street.

The Depot is run by a smooth-talking human named Bit Ramson (I.Q. 15, M.A. 27, P.B. 18) from a prominent family in Ishpeming. He's great at what he does, a truly gifted salesman. Whenever he tells you that you really need the new NG-11F "Red Hawk" power armor, it just makes sense. When he insists that the NG-P7 Particle Beam Rifle is simply the best deal in firearms, you're inclined to agree. It's not mind control, just superior salesmanship.

The NG Depot has pretty much every model made by the company, and if it is out of stock, it can be ordered. The store does well, but its sales lag behind the more locally-based Wilk's, Bandito Arms, and A.W.M. TW items, even with its top salesman running the show. Mercs from the New West are familiar with the local manufacturers, and while transplants from the Midwest enjoy having Northern Gun represented, their numbers are too small to equal big profits for the company. As a result, NG is thinking about scaling back its operation in Arzno.

68. Northern Gun Vehicle Dealership. While owned by the same parent company and only 50 feet (15.2 m) away, the vehicle end of the NG business is really hurting. The manager is a husky slouch named Jack Rosen (I.Q. 9, M.A. 7, P.B. 7). Rosen was successful in his last enterprise, a small vehicle retailer in the Barony of Hope that ran well due to some top-notch salesmen rather than his guidance. Jack was only too happy to take the credit that landed him as the new manager in Arzno when his predecessor retired. Now the bloom is off the rose and the big shots back in Ishpeming aren't pleased. Given the continued success of the Hope dealership, it's now apparent Jack is a poor manager and lousy salesperson. The truth is that Rosen wasn't pleased with the transfer in the first place, and is all the more worthless for it.

If you can get anybody to help you at the NG dealership, there are some excellent vehicles at good prices, especially when it comes to the Big Boss and a fine selection of motorcycles, hovercycles, robot horses and power armor. Most of the sales are in hovercycles and power armor, particularly the Sam-

son models. Prices are at list due to the fact that the dealership can't afford to discount because of sagging sales. Rosen's time at Northern Gun is undoubtedly drawing to a close.

69. New Durango Freight and Mercantile. Not really a part of the Merc Market, but rather just outside of it, is the Arzno office of New Durango Freight and Mercantile. Owned by Marshall McMillan of New Durango, this shipping company is the most successful in the New West. See the section on New Durango and the Great Trade Road earlier.

70. Lightning Courier Service. This high-speed delivery service is owned by Marshall McMillan of New Durango, who also owns the New Durango Freight and Mercantile (#69, above), as well as being a major stockholder in many similar services in the New West. This service uses high-speed rocket bikes to make deliveries of correspondence and small packages across Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, and the Pecos lands in Lone Star. For the right price, McMillan will send his couriers anywhere, including Coalition territory. Clients pay an average of 10 credits for local delivery, or expenses and a daily 100 credit travel fee for long-haul delivery. This means that it can cost 1,000 credits or more to deliver a simple letter, but the citizens of the New West are lucky to have even this service. All deliveries are insured. For more information on McMillan and the Lightning Courier Service, see the section on New Durango and the Great Trade Road.

Residential and Light Commercial Section

Not shown on the map.

This area is home to most of Arzno's average citizens, and is where those not involved in the mercenary or TW trade work. The streets are lined with grocery stores, bakeries, clothing retailers, churches, and all of the other things that one would expect in a town of Arzno's size.

Reverend David Raider. This fire-and-brimstone Preacher has become a staple of the residential section of Arzno over the last several years. The white-haired man stands on street corners and ministers to any who will stop and listen, wearing light body armor and carrying a holstered revolver and a silver knife. He hands out wooden stakes and crosses, cloves of garlic, and vials of (legitimate) holy water. His message is one of salvation through vanquishing the vampire threat that constantly looms overhead. He is widely dismissed, but has a small, vocal following who raise the cry for a crusade against the vampires in Council meetings and other venues.

Dr. Dawson's Cyber Shop. Nestled amongst homes, apartment complexes, and small businesses is an ordinary-looking office that takes up a large portion of a community strip-mall. Between a small barbecue restaurant and a boot repair shop is the most prestigious provider of Momano Headhunter conversions in the New West. Dr. Dawson isn't really a doctor, but a Techno-Wizard. With the assistance of a Cyber-Doc associate, Dr. Dawson installs, repairs, and upgrades TW bionic systems. His is the only place in town to offer full Momano conversions, and probably the best place west of Stormspire. The Colorado Baronies have some limited services in TW bionics, but nothing near Dr. Dawson's level of expertise.

Sky Docks

Not shown on the map.

The Sky Docks are the industrial part of the city. There are industrial factories and shops where metal is machined or recycled, TW factories that draw power from the ley lines that run throughout the Grand Canyon, plus machine shops, manufacturing and processing operations, warehouses and similar businesses. Most such complexes have large spires protruding from the roofs, with huge cables that run to the ground and down the canyon wall to some mystic generator built on a precipice or in a cave in the stone. Also present is the A.M.C. airfield, and a number of ferry services that take cargo transports traveling on the Great Trade Road back and forth across the Grand Canyon.

The A.M.C. Airfield. Unable to launch contemporary fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft from within the city, The A.M.C. operates an airfield where it keeps its small fleet of aircraft and TW Flyers. The airfield is also available for use by travelers coming to Arzno by aircraft. The fee to use the airfield is a mere 15 credits per landing and takeoff, and there are hangars that can be rented for as little as 100 credits per week (large vehicles and giant robots can also be stored in these hangars).

Grand Canyon Ferry Service. The largest and most successful of the four ferry services operating out of the Sky Docks, because it exclusively caters to commercial business. The Grand Canyon Ferry Service uses huge TW skiffs to float back and forth over the canyon via the ley line energy that runs throughout. This service has landed most of the big contracts available in Arzno, mostly cargo transports crossing over the canyon on to their next stop on the Great Trade Road, some traveling along the length of the canyon. This company is 40% owned by Arzno Weapons Manufacturing, who makes and maintains the fleet of twelve skiffs, each able to carry 10,350 tons of cargo, people, or whatever else can be fit into the space equivalent to two 18-wheeler trailers put side to side. The cost to transport commercial cargo from one side to the other is a flat rate of 10 credits per person (i.e., drivers and work hands accompanying the cargo) and 30 credits per ton. Companies on contract to do a considerable amount of repeat business can see their fees lowered by as much as half.

Three other ferry services cater to small businesses and travelers. They use small skiffs and TW flyers to transport people across the Grand Canyon for 20 credits per person, double for power armor, cyborgs, and those carrying 100-300 pounds (45 to 135 kg) of gear, luggage or packages.

Transporting a small vehicle, like a hovercycle, jeep or pickup truck, or a horse or other a riding animal costs 100 to 350 credits depending on the size, and requires a medium-size TW ferry. The other ferry services are **Jet's Rapid Transit** (people-mover only, with monthly passes available for 120 credits each), **Arzno Ferry** (personal vehicles and passengers from 200 credits per trip, flat-rate), and **Heavy Haul Cargo Transport** (two skiffs about half the size of the Grand Canyon Ferry Service's, but with a history of mechanical failure).

Gorge Jumpers. The Grand Canyon is a thrill-seeker's paradise. Gorge Jumpers is an "extreme sports" company that rents *TW Wingboards* and *TW Flyers* of all types, as well as hang gliders, jet packs, and all other forms of fast and fun transportation above, down in and along the yawning chasm of the Grand Canyon. They also provide guides for rock climbing and base-

jumping on the walls of the canyon, and give both easy-going and fast-paced tours. Their most famous “ride” and something of a tourist attraction, is their TW train that ferries passengers across the canyon and takes people on tours down into the canyon and along its length above and within the canyon itself. The train does canyon tours and trips to the city of the Lyn-Srial a hundred miles away, built into the cliffs of the canyon itself (a 70 minute trip by TW locomotive).

The owner is a young Techno-Wizard and speed enthusiast named “Crazy” Cody Airhart. He formerly worked at A.W.M. but quickly realized that he wasn’t cut out for that kind of work. He spends his time in the garage overlooking the canyon, dreaming up ways to go faster, faster, faster, doing aerial stunts, as well as taking thrill-seekers out on amazing rides on the network of ley lines crisscrossing the expanse between the canyon walls.

Rental of most equipment averages about 100 credits per hour, including insurance. Guides for climbing or base-jumping expeditions run about 50 credits per hour, and guided tours (exciting or relaxed) of any part of the canyon cost 20 credits per hour, per person. The train ride costs 50-100 credits and is worth every penny.

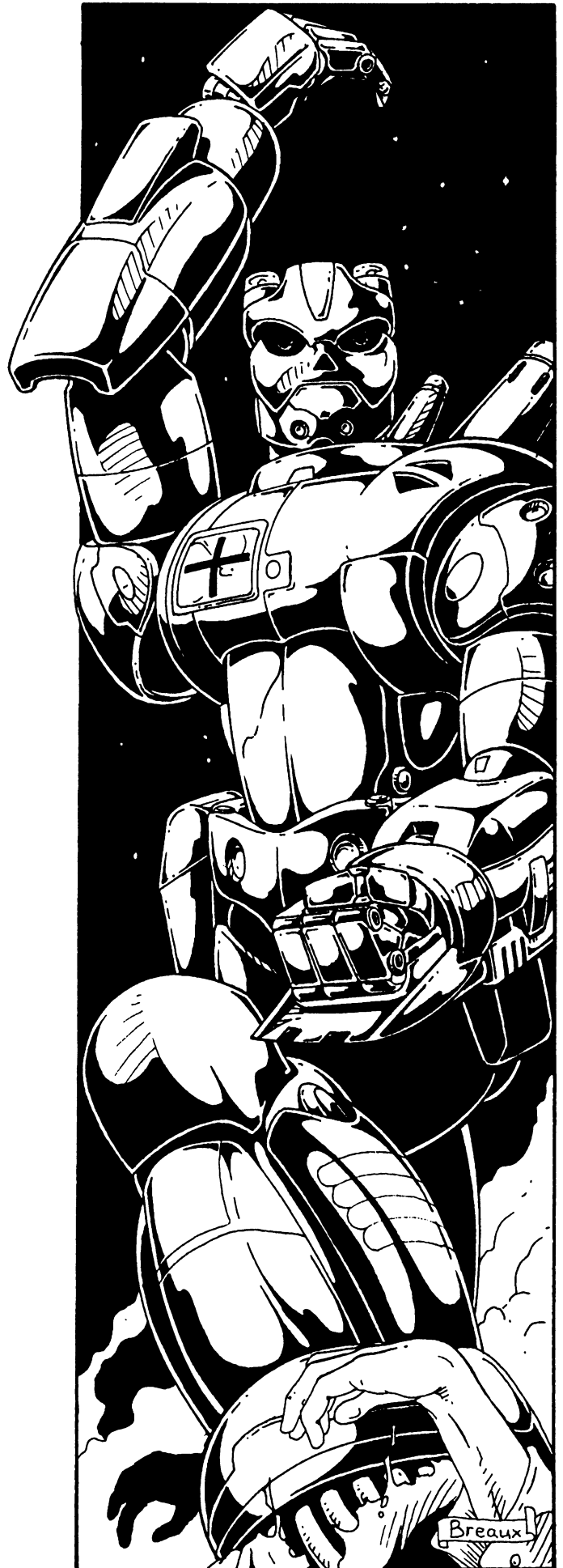
Nobody on the planet knows the expanses of the canyon better than the guides at Gorge Jumpers. All of them have adventurous spirits, and love nothing more than to take mercenaries or adventurers down into the depths on expeditions in the gorge. They know everything there is to know about the threat of predators, the natural territories of the species that live in the canyon, where in the canyon the small tribe of Gargoyles may be found, and even a general idea of where Tryth-Sal is located. They are an invaluable asset to anyone venturing into the Grand Canyon. Most are Wilderness Scouts and Techno-Wizard joy seekers ranging from levels 4-11.

The City’s Edge

The Southern Watches. The A.M.C., ever vigilant, has sentries posted along the northern ridge of the Grand Canyon that marks the western, southern, and eastern ends of the land claimed by the city. Each of the ten towers is manned by two A.M.C. or C.P. troopers who keep watch over the canyon for approaching dangers. These include not just hostile forces, but predators and sudden storms as well. At least two A.M.C. roaming sentries are always on duty, flying from one watchtower to another on wing boards, rocket bikes, power armor or by magic.

Beyond the City. In addition to watchtowers on the city’s borders, there are three posts set up on natural spires of stone that stand up to towering heights like needles in the middle of the canyon. A.M.C. soldiers watch over the canyon from these perches and patrol on the backs of the silent Glitterwings or flying animals as the first line of defense and warning against coming dangers.

As noted earlier, a number of ranches, farms, small towns, and homesteads are scattered around Arzno and considered to be part of the city-state. Nomadic tribes, traveling shows, medicine shows/con artists, independent merchants, mercenary companies, adventuring groups, drifters, bandits, cowboys, and travelers may also pass through the area and make camp outside the city or on the edge of the city-state where they can sleep under the stars.





The Arzno Mercenary Corps

The young soldier, Emory Reins, awoke suddenly to the scent of the desert in his nostrils. Momentary confusion raced through his mind before he remembered where he was. He groped in the darkness for the lamp and flipped it on, illuminating his small, one-man tent so quickly and completely that it stung his sleep-filled eyes.

As Emory adjusted to the new light, he found the tent's control box and pressed a button. A brief crackle was heard as the shelter dissipated into the air and left the private sitting on his bedroll in the middle of the advance camp. The warmth of the desert sun had vanished beneath the horizon line and the stars sparkled in the night sky. Emory hurried to lace up his boots and slip on his armor.

It seemed like a long time ago, but it was only just over a year since he hooked up with the A.M.C. A few months of training, some sharpshooting lessons, and he was good to go. This was only his third real operation, and he had already killed ... nine? Ten? A dozen vamps? Not bad for a kid from Benson. It sure beat waking up at the crack of dawn to milk cows or plow fields. He just wasn't a farmer, but his Ma and Pa never under-

stood that. So, when he decided to hitch a ride on a trade convoy up the Great Trade Road to Arzno, he didn't bother to tell them where he was going. He just took off and never looked back. If only Ma and Pa could see him now. Someday he intended to make it back there. They sure would be proud to see him in uniform!

The baying of a wolf or coyote shook the thoughts of home from his mind and swept away the remaining cobwebs of sleep. The sixteen-year-old kid tugged the last strap tight on his boot, grabbed his rifle and a pouch of shells and jogged to the perimeter. He was up on first night watch. The vamps knew his outfit was on the prowl and they'd be gunning for them after last night. He was already experienced enough to know that maybe the howl in the distance was an ordinary coyote, or maybe it was vampires looking for some revenge. At least he got a good five or six hours of sleep in before his watch. He'd be alert and ready if they came.

The howl was returned by three or four others not far away, a sure sign of vampires. It didn't look like anybody would be sleeping much tonight.

A.M.C. Mercenary Organization Point Allocation

- A. Sponsorship: Government and Company (Arzno and A.W.M.). 0 Points.
- B. Outfits: Specialty Clothing. 20 points.
- C. Equipment: Magic Technology. 40 Points.
Cheap Gear. 2 Points.
- D. Vehicles: Combat Cars. 20 Points.
- E. Weapons, Power Armor, and Bots: Basic Weaponry. 10 Points.
- F. Communications: Basic Services. 2 Points.
- G. Internal Security: Tight. 10 Points.
- H. Permanent Bases: Fortified Headquarters. 20 Points.
- I. Intelligence: Scout Detachment. 5 Points.
- J. Special Budget: Small Potatoes. 15 Points.
- K. General Alignment: Unprincipled and Scrupulous. 7 Points.
- L. Criminal Activity: None. 0 Points.
- M. Reputation: Known. 10 Points.
- N. Salary: Good Salary. 10 Points.
- Total Points Spent: 171 Points.
- Size & Orientation: Free Company.

History

The Arzno Mercenary Corps (A.M.C.) was born from of a sense of purpose and tradition by the noble Onra Misvina, a True Atlantean prince and adventurer. In accordance with the custom of his house, Onra sought to lend his aid to the tenacious people of Arzno, teaching them what he knew about combating the supernatural, vampires in particular. Weapons were updated, and the city militia learned about new strategies and tactics for fighting vampires, Were-beasts and demons. The Prince and his comrades also helped the mercs round out their military structure and provided financial support to improve and modernize. Soon, the Arzno Mercenary Corps became a private army to defend and protect the burgeoning city-state. Freelance work for outsiders would help defray the costs of the modern military outfit and also give the new recruits and volunteers the combat experience they needed.

Although they don't realize it yet, it may have been fate that brought the young Atlantean warrior to Arzno, for a new vampire threat brews in the south at Tombstone. Xavier Stuart, lord of the Tombstone vampires, has big plans for the undead in the Americas. It is only a matter of time before his undead forces clash with the Arzno defenders in what may be a battle for control of the Southwest. Nobody, however, knows what's brewing.

Vampire-Hunting Tactics

The officers and soldiers of the Arzno Mercenary Corps try never to take anything for granted.

Many freelance vampire hunters are well intentioned, but surprisingly careless and sloppy. A common tactic is to stroll into a town "known" to harbor the undead, during the daylight hours, and start staking "easy" prey, asleep in their tombs wherever they are found. However, their search is seldom thorough and there is usually little or no prep work, so they don't do

enough to finish the entire job. Furthermore, most vampire hunters don't stick around till the night laying in wait for vampires who might have escaped their notice during the day. This means they seldom destroy the entire horde, leaving a few to spread the vampire curse and continue their legacy of evil. This is simply a bad strategy, because even one vampire survivor can regrow a new colony of undead, and once regrown, may seek vengeance on the town as well as the vampire hunters. (When fighting an enemy as sophisticated and cunning as the undead at Fort Tombstone and their leader, Xavier Stuart, sloppiness can only spell disaster.)

The A.M.C. also conducts daytime or sunlight purges, but only after they are reasonably certain they have identified *all* the vampires and their hiding/sleeping places. This means engaging in *late-night reconnaissance operations* to identify the undead and pinpoint their lairs, places of activity, people and places with whom they have ties, and so on. Then, when the purge begins, the A.M.C. takes careful note (and even video documentation) of which vampires are *confirmed kills* and who, if anyone, escaped or are *unaccounted* for. Then they lay in wait that night, with the hopes of spotting the vampire and slaying it before it can make good its escape. In addition, good reconnaissance enables the squads to locate and identify feeding zones, slave pits, human servants, and those who hate the vampires enough to be willing to help the merc team destroy them. All this intelligence allows the Arzno mercs to make effective surgical strikes, neutralize the vampires' servants, set ambushes, free civilian hostages, and be prepared for whatever the vampires and their mind slaves might throw at them. It's always a little easier to deal with an enemy when you know what you're up against.

A.M.C. reconnaissance missions into a vampire infested location *may* also involve dangerous *undercover infiltration* to get the full picture of the infestation, get clues on secret lairs and to identify the vampire leaders and their henchmen. Vampire leaders are primary "hot list" targets because they are the most dangerous.

A surprise attack first thing in the evening, or an ambush away from the lair, are ideal for catching vampire leaders off-guard, because they don't expect a nighttime hit. Of course, one wants to make sure the attack is a *killing strike* or that the team can make a clean escape if things go badly, otherwise, it's like stirring up a hornets' nest. A successful nighttime strike that takes out the vampire leaders is usually followed up with a daytime purge at dawn. A one-two-punch that can wipe out a nest of vampires within 24 hours. Of course, this tactic works best against small infestations of 4-24, maybe even as many as 48, but more vampires than that, and things start to get dicey.

The A.M.C. has found magical energy weapons to be the great equalizer when fighting against undead prepared for combat and clad in their own body armor. A vampire on its own is vulnerable to a silver bullet or wooden stake, but against a vampire wearing M.D.C. armor, such weapons are useless. Conversely, traditional Mega-Damage weapons can be used to blast away armor, but are useless against the vampire once the shell is breached, inflicting no damage at all on the undead creature itself. Switching from an M.D. weapon to an S.D.C. weapon in the heat of combat can be deadly, even if it only takes a few seconds. Weapons that fire magical blasts of energy, on the other hand, are every bit as effective against modern Mega-Damage

defenses and the creature itself. Most magic weapons do at least some damage to the undead (half damage in Hit Points in most cases). Thus, Prince Onra has made certain that rune weapons, magic items and Techno-Wizard weapons play a major roll in the A.M.C. Such weaponry can blast a vampire down to nearly nothing, wounding it severely, and opening it to, comparatively, easy attack by water, stake, silver and fire. Due to the number of TW weapons employed in the A.M.C.'s tactics, a sizeable percentage of Arzno soldiers are psychics, mages, or others who have grown into the ability to use TW weapons as adults.

It's worth noting that this methodology in fighting vampires flies in the face of the traditional approach of heroes, adventurers and vampire hunters. Members of the A.M.C. refer to those heroes without formal training, or who are gung-ho, barn-stormer, fly-by-the-seat-of-their-pants types (without reconnaissance and intel) as "amateurs" or "daylight slayers" and even "cradle robbers." The Arzno mercs also have something of an elitist attitude when it comes to vampire hunting, since very few vampire hunters actually fight the undead in real combat with the same regularity that they do. This has led to countless bar brawls and disagreements between A.M.C. soldiers and other self-styled vampire hunters. The one exception being Reid's Rangers, who use similar strategies and tactics.

Colors & Banners

The official colors of the Arzno Mercenary Company (A.M.C.) are red and black with silver accents. The A.M.C. emblem is a crossed pair of swords, one wood and the other silver, behind a large shield on which the letters "A.M.C." are emblazoned vertically. Behind the letters are different fields, varying in color and style with the unit of the wearer, or simply red to identify the A.M.C. as a whole.

Standard issue uniforms are brown and olive drab desert camouflage utilities with a black "A.M.C." over the right breast, and on the back below the collar. The name of the soldier is over the left breast, and rank is worn on the collars. Dress uniforms for officers (sergeant and up) are black with silver buttons and red accents, with rank on the collars and the A.M.C. logo over the right breast.

Standard issue armor is desert camo with "A.M.C." in black over the right breast and rank on the left. Both rank and logo are on the back of the helmet. Non-standard armor is frequently used when on assignment away from Arzno, and black armor is used for night operations.

Terms of Service

As a mercenary army, contracts rarely keep a soldier around if he or she wants to leave, but at least a minimal contract is required if the merc is to be a full-fledged member of the Arzno Mercenary Corps, with all the benefits that come with that distinction. Contracts for 1, 2, 4, or as many as 10 years are available, with options for re-enlistment (at least half of the troops are career soldiers). Small signing bonuses coupled with large end-of-contract and advancement bonuses are used to encourage the signing of service agreements and to convince soldiers of fortune to live up to their commitment. Typically, a signing bonus of 1,000 credits is given when the merc first signs, payable

at the end of their training, with a substantial bonus payable at the end of the merc's contract, increasing with the duration of the completed contract, from a 1,000 credit bonus for a 1-year contract, to 50,000 credits or more for a completed 10-year contract. Promotions generally give a bonus of 1,000-4,000 credits as well, in addition to pay increases.

Pay fluctuates with what the A.M.C. makes on freelance contracts and their cost of operations. Typical pay is noted with each rank, below. All pay is available in precious metals (gold and silver) or Black Market credits, and bonuses are routinely given as hazard pay and when large freelance jobs are completed. Bonuses average out to around 1D4x100 credits per month for chief sergeant and lower ranks, payable only to soldiers who are actively deployed. All officers (lieutenant and up) receive a typical bonus of 1D4x1,000 credits four times a year when times are good.

Rank

Rank in the A.M.C. is loosely based on pre-Rifts and other conventional military structures as found on Rifts Earth, though they have been altered to suit the smaller mercenary unit. There is a rough timetable for advancement, but it can be greatly hurried by a hardworking and disciplined soldier, especially if proven in combat.

A **Recruit** holds no rank until basic training and orientation are completed. Until then, he is not permitted to wear a uniform, and is not issued any weaponry (or allowed to carry his own). Those without combat experience go through an eight week training program where they learn basic weapon and combat skills, plus other skills essential to soldiering, like Land Navigation and Radio: Basic. This is followed by a four week course in combating vampires, the supernatural, and generally the Arzno way of doing things (standard formations, rank and privileges, unit makeup, etc.). The training is intense, but only a small percentage (5 to 10%) drop out. The methods used and skills taught reflect the abilities and ultimate position the soldier is expected to hold. This also means that a private may be a green, first level merc, or 2nd, 3rd or even higher. It all depends on how he performs in combat and as a teammate. Characters with a bad attitude, a chip on their shoulder, a history of disobedience or problems with authority may stay a private or corporal for years and years. This is a mercenary company, not a uniform military body. Pay is 50 credits per week plus room and board for the duration of the recruit's initial training, all payable upon completion of the required courses.

Experienced combat veterans take only the four week vampire course, to get acclimated to the standard operating procedures of the A.M.C. and fighting the supernatural. They may also start off with a rank assigned to them that reflects their experience and positions currently available in the army. Pay varies by rank and actions.

Private is the entering rank for the average soldier. Rank is denoted by one horizontal bar. Privates are the workhorses of the A.M.C., doing jobs from basic maintenance to ground-pounding infantry. Typical time as a private is 1-4 years, depending on the skills of the soldier, rate of attrition, and the flow of new recruits. Salary is 350 credits per week.

Corporal is the rank of most skilled enlisted soldiers, from radio operators, to pilots, to medics, sharpshooters, etc. Most corporals have some additional job to supplement their usual combat duties, setting them above and apart from the grunts. A corporal wears two horizontal bars. Salary is 400 credits per week.



Sergeants are the low-level leadership of the A.M.C. and oversee most of its basic operations. Sergeants can command fire teams, oversee work teams and operations, and may lead a squad or platoon. Ideally, a sergeant is always supervised by a superior officer. Sergeants are also eligible for other unique positions, the most prized of which is instructor; those who train the incoming soldiers. This special job is only performed through one or two recruit classes and is a high honor. The insignia of a sergeant consists of one chevron. Sergeants generally maintain that rank for 4-12 years. Sergeants earn 500 credits per week, with a bonus of 50 credits per week for instructors.

Chief Sergeants carry on the same duties as a sergeant, but on a larger scale, see less direct involvement in favor of a more managerial role, and are more autonomous in the fulfillment of their duties. They oversee the sergeants in their jobs and can command a unit of any size if there are no available lieutenants, though they are usually the second gun. The "chiefs," as they are often called, wear a chevron over a small triangle. In addition to being eligible to serve as instructors, lucky chief sergeants who have formerly served as instructors can hold the position of chief instructor, the overseer of training for one entire recruit class. Chief sergeants may hold that rank for 2-12

years or for life. A chief sergeant's salary is 550 credits per week, with a bonus of 50 credits per week for instructors or 100 credits per week for the chief instructor.

Lieutenant is the primary commander on the ground for the A.M.C. He leads squads, platoons, and larger units, oversees major areas of technical and logistical support, and supervises a dozen or more chiefs in their jobs. A lieutenant wears one chevron over one bar. Before becoming a lieutenant the soldier must pass a short, three-month evaluation of command, all the while wearing the chief sergeant rank. Advancement past lieutenant is rare in the A.M.C., and depends on position availability, since the number of captains is set. Salary for a lieutenant is 700 credits per week, plus bonuses as described above.

Captain is as high a rank as most leaders can expect to reach in the A.M.C. A captain oversees all major areas of operation. There is a captain assigned to head each division: Infantry, Mechanized, Armor, Magic, and Combat Support. The job is not unlike that of a department head in a major corporation. For all intents and purposes, their word is law. The captain's insignia is one chevron over two bars. Captains pull a salary of 1,000-1,200 credits per week, plus bonuses.

There is one captain who outranks all others and is second in command of the A.M.C., known as the **Deputy Commander**. Currently, this is the mutant power armor pilot and former bandit, Commander Psythe, one of the founding members of the A.M.C. and the captain of the Mechanized division. A small, four-pointed star overlaying the bars on his captain's rank distinguishes him from his peers. The deputy commander receives a salary of 1,200 credits per week, plus bonuses.

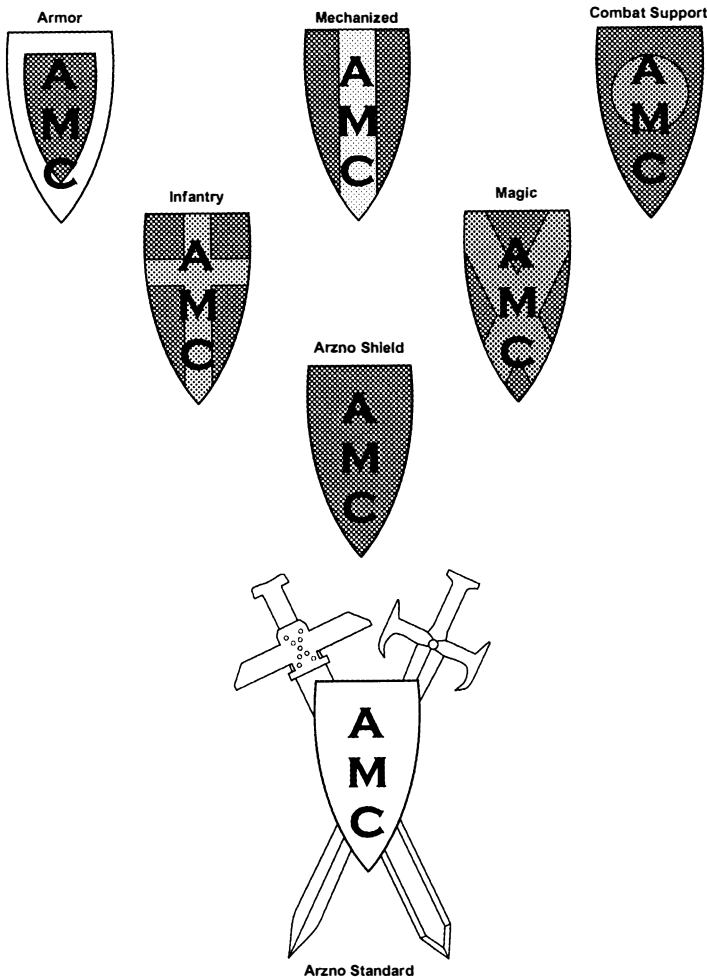
The head of the A.M.C. holds the rank of **Commander**, and wears a large, four-pointed star for his rank. This is currently Prince Onra, founder of the A.M.C. This position will only be available upon his death or resignation. The city and its leaders have put absolute trust and authority in the True Atlantean and his ability to run their army and protect the community. He, in return, considers this his solemn duty, and he works hard to live up to the responsibility. The commander's salary would be 2,500 credits per week, but Prince Onra is wealthy and only draws enough to cover his most basic expenses (200-300 a week). As a prince in a noble True Atlantean house, money isn't a concern for Onra.

Personnel

The Arzno Mercenary Corps, being made up of contracted soldiers of fortune, does not maintain the same constancy of employees that conventional military forces enjoy. That said, there are general trends in the number of soldiers holding membership with the A.M.C. at any given time such that rough numbers can be provided. Numbers always stray toward the lower end during times of relative calm, and reach the upper levels when there is more work to be had. Rough numbers for how many mercenaries are employed by the A.M.C. at any given point are provided below with the descriptions of the different units within the company. In the case of a crisis, these numbers will double in a matter of 1D6 weeks, triple if one includes volunteers who would rise up to defend their home and city-state.

It is important to note that A.M.C. mercenary soldiers span dozens of races. 35% of the force is made up of D-Bees and mu-

tants, 30% have some form of magical aptitude, and 55% have at least minor psionic abilities. Due to special powers, or simply because they were raised using them, 65% of the members of the A.M.C. are able to use Techno-Wizardry devices.



Unit Breakdown

Infantry

Unit Shield: Silver cross on a red field.

Typical Strength: 96 to 288.

Description: Infantry are the basic, front-line soldiers in the A.M.C. They are expected to engage the enemy infantry troops, provide security and support for other units, and go places that larger units can't. Also included with the infantry are reconnaissance squads, special forces and commando units utilized for special tasks. Led by Captain Brandon "Ban" Marshall, an 8th level Crazy.

Typical O.C.C.s: Any man of arms can be an infantry soldier in the A.M.C. The most common include Bounty Hunters, Cowboys, Dog Boys, Gunfighters, Gunslingers, Headhunters, Merc Soldiers, Psi-Stalkers, Psychics, practitioners of magic, Special Forces, Wilderness Scouts, bandit types, and anyone with at least basic combat training in hand to hand and one or two modern W.P.s (including CS equivalents).

Mechanized

Unit Shield: Three vertical stripes: red-gold-red.

Typical Strength: 48 to 96.

Description: The Mechanized troops of the A.M.C. are those specially trained in piloting *combat vehicles*, including giant robots, tanks, aircraft and other combat vehicles. This is important given the wide expanse in which the A.M.C. operates and the necessity for rapid transit and good communications. The Mechanized division is responsible for everything from the transport of supplies, to long-range reconnaissance, troop support, front-line combat and sieges on fortified positions. The Mechanized division also includes the A.M.C.'s limited experimentation with fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft. Led by Deputy Commander Psythe.

Typical O.C.C.s: Mechanized fighting men and women may include most of the same character classes as the infantry, with training in operating combat vehicles, but are primarily Glitter Boy pilots, Headhunters, Operators, Phaeton Juicers, and Robot Pilots: Robot MOS; or any O.C.C. with extensive piloting skills.

Armored

Unit Shield: Red shield inscribed on white.

Typical Strength: 72 to 144.

Description: The Armored division of the A.M.C., made up principally of heavy *Combat Cyborgs* and *power armor*. May be considered a heavy infantry division with heavy weaponry. These heavy-hitters are designed to take heavy fire and keep moving, providing troop support, conducting surgical strikes, punching through enemy lines, and more. The armored division may employ ground-based units and/or flying power armor. Led by Captain Ferdinand Merris, better known as "Rumble," a full-conversion 'Borg (6th level Mining Borg, 3rd level Military Borg).

Typical O.C.C.s: Combat Cyborg, CyberSlinger Cyborg, Glitter Boy, and Robot Pilot: Power Armor MOS; full conversion 'Borgs make up half of the division.

Magic

Unit Shield: Blue "X" on a red field.

Typical Strength: 48 to 96.

Description: The Magic division is made up of all types of practitioners of magic, particularly spell-casters. Mages supply support, healing, and heavy firepower for other divisions as well as engage directly in combat alongside other forces. Special teams may be composed entirely of magic practitioners, or mages and psychics, or a mixed group of mages, psychics and special ops. Note that practitioners of magic (and psychics) are assigned throughout the A.M.C. serving in roles from Infantry to Combat Support, as their skills allow. Most are humanoids; there are very few dragons or other creatures of magic in Arzno, other than the Lyn-Srial. The Magic division is led by Captain Sul Lyross, a 7th level Lyn-Srial Cloudweaver.

Typical O.C.C.s: Ley Line Walkers, Mystics, Techno-Wizards, Warlocks, and the occasional Cloudweaver (Lyn-Srial) and other magic O.C.C., and most conventional spell casters are commonly found in the Magic division. Necromancers are never employed by the A.M.C., and Shifters are a rarity.

Combat Support

Unit Shield: Orange circle on a red field.

Typical Strength: 96 to 188.

Description: Every army needs support from behind the lines. Anything from food to vehicle repairs to medicine and communications are provided by the dedicated soldiers of the Combat Support division. While they are not primarily combatants, all are expected to be able to defend themselves in a fight. Led by Captain “Slim” Jim Mahoney, a 10th level Techno-Wizard.

Typical O.C.C.s: Body Fixers, Cyber-Docs, Psychic Healers, Operators, Preachers, Psychics, Rogue Scientists, Rogue Scholars, Techno-Wizards, and Vagabonds are the most common. May include psychics, other O.C.C.s, and any number of personnel to keep the army and its soldiers, weapons, and machines running properly, including volunteers, civilian militia personnel, retired soldiers, Sheriff, Deputies, and any able body or skilled individual able to fill a needed position.

Weapons and Equipment

As a mercenary organization, the A.M.C. has a great percentage of its troopers who provide their own equipment, including weapons, body armor, and even a vehicle or riding animal. The A.M.C. is only too happy to provide repairs, ammunition, and E-Clip recharging for those who bring their own gear, as well as provide basic food, supplies, room and board for the soldiers in the A.M.C. There is also equipment available for those in need, and weapons, gear, and vehicles provided by the A.M.C. for special assignments.

What the A.M.C. provides to every merc in its army is vampire-fighting equipment, both conventional and magical (typically Techno-Wizard weapons and devices in the case of the latter). Most soldiers come to Arzno with only a vague idea of what is needed to properly fight a vampire, and without the proper weapons, gear and armor they are easy targets. To that end, the A.M.C. supplies all types of anti-vampire equipment for use in the field, though the best of the best are usually reserved for officers (sergeants and higher), soldiers who have distinguished themselves in the line of duty, Special Ops, and for use on special assignment.

A.M.C. Characters of Note

Prince Onra Misvina

Commander of the Arzno Mercenary Corps

Onra Misvina is the younger of two sons in the ruling family of the house of Libson, in the True Atlantean clan of Bagh-Dach. While his father is a ruling lord on a far-distant world and his older brother is the heir to all that his family has attained, Onra believes that he is the most blessed of his family, able to wander the Megaverse and be a hero to champion those in need. Such heroism has been a long tradition in his family for millennia, and he is proud to follow in their shoes.

His travels eventually brought him to Arzno, where he feels a sense of purpose and destiny. He has a feeling that the hand of fate has brought him to this land and that something important is about to unfold. For a while, he thought it might be riding to the aid of Tolkeen, but he decided that was not it. For the last few years, he has had an aching feeling that his destiny involves battling with the undead. Indeed, he has even had a dream about making a stand, right here at Arzno, against hordes of the monsters. He prays that his dream is nothing more than paranoia, but since he cannot shake the feeling of impending trouble, he has been making preparations for a fearsome battle with the walking dead.

In the meanwhile, he works to make a better, safer life for the people of Arzno. He sees in this fortified city of mercs, mages and simple folk a budding, new kingdom in the Southwest. He also knows that will make Arzno a target for bandits, usurpers and the undead. In fact, he sees Arzno as the vampires’ greatest obstacle for an invasion from the south.

Unlike the misguided people of the “civilized” world, the citizens of Arzno have a fighting spirit that would not die. That’s what attracted the young prince to this desolate land in the first place. With the help of several companions he has gathered to help him, he has made Arzno stronger and helped to instill an even greater sense of honor and gallantry in its warriors.

Prince Onra is more prepared for vampire trouble than anyone but his closest aides and captains of the A.M.C. realize. He has heard rumors that a vampire army is building somewhere in the south. The obvious location would seem to be Bisbee, but his gut tells him otherwise. He doesn’t know about Xavier Stuart or his legions in Fort Tombstone, but he is prepared for the worst. Until he and his agents (player characters working secretly for Onra to locate the vampire threat?) find out more, he must be satisfied with continuing to build and protect Arzno and destroy as many of the undead as his mercenary army encounters.

Onra Misvina Stats

Real Name: Onra Misvina, of House Libson, clan Bagh-Dach.

Rank: Commander. **Race:** True Atlantean.

Alignment: Scrupulous.

Attributes: I.Q. 19, M.E. 19, M.A. 17, P.S. 26, P.P. 19, P.E. 23, P.B. 19, Spd 31.

Height: 6 feet, 5 inches (2.0 m); **Weight:** 260 lbs (117 kg).

Age: 126; looks to be in his late twenties.

Hit Points: 54; **S.D.C.:** 94.

P.P.E.: 113; **I.S.P.:** Not applicable.

Experience Level: 12th level Merc Soldier (Point Man/Scout).

Description: Onra is tall, as all True Atlanteans are, and incredibly well-built with broad shoulders and an athlete’s physique. He always seems to be wearing clean, pressed clothes of the highest quality, and his weapons and armor are always spotless and polished. Everything about him exudes the air of a soldier and knightly gentleman; he is exactly what you would expect of a True Atlantean prince.

Disposition: Onra is a youthful looking, eager hero with an adventurous spirit and vigor that belies his vast experience as a warrior and traveler of the Megaverse. He seeks to bring

honor to his family and peace to the region by defeating the threats that constantly present themselves to Arzno and its neighbors. While he is not a zealot, he certainly loathes vampires and the Splugorth, and is highly protective of his friends and comrades. A soldier and warrior by trade, he has learned to accept his shortfalls (he is not a tactician, for example), and turns to trusted officers and advisors for their views and suggestions. He is a natural leader, trusted and respected by his men and the people of Arzno. More than anything, Onra prefers to be in the thick of battle, in all-out melee combat, particularly when combating vampires.

Skills of Note: R.C.C. Skills: Language: Atlantean/Greek (98%), Language: American (98%), Language: Dragonese/Elven (90%), Literacy: Atlantean/Greek (98%), Literacy: American (90%), and Literacy: Dragonese/Elven (90%).

M.O.S. Skills: Detect Ambush (98%), Detect Concealment (95%), Intelligence (96%), Land Navigation (98%), Prowl (98%), Surveillance (98%), and Wilderness Survival (98%).

O.C.C. Skills: Climbing (98%/98%), Computer Operation (98%), Athletics (General), Mathematics: Basic (98%), Military Etiquette (98%), Radio: Basic (98%), Running, and Sign Language (Military, 90%).

Physical Skills: Fencing, Boxing, and Kick Boxing.

Other Assorted O.C.C. Related Skills: Lore: Demons & Monsters (80%), and Law (55%).

Secondary Skills: Pilot: Hover Craft (Ground, 98%), Swimming (98%), First Aid (90%), Horsemanship: Exotic (75%/65%), Language: Spanish (67%), Literacy: Spanish (55%), and Pilot: Automobile (65%).

Weapon Proficiencies: W.P. Knife, W.P. Sword, W.P. Energy Pistol, and W.P. Energy Rifle at 12th level of experience, and W.P. Handguns at 1st level of experience.

Special Abilities: Standard for True Atlanteans, including the Marks of Heritage and other magic tattoos (see below), increased P.P.E. recovery (10 points per hour of sleep, or 15 per hour of meditation), cannot be physically transformed by any means, continue to grow as an adult, *sense vampires* in a 1,000 foot radius (305 m), recognize vampires by appearance (98%), operate dimensional pyramids (90%), and other bonuses already included in various statistics. Also see Magic Knowledge, below.

As a well-traveled soldier in the service of his family's military guard, Prince Onra has a number of contacts throughout Rifts Earth and the Megaverse. Most notably, he knows arms dealers and mercenaries in Lazlo, the Magic Zone, and the Colorado Baronies on Earth, as well as many across the Three Galaxies.

Psionics: None.

Magic Knowledge: All True Atlanteans have an understanding of the fundamentals and use of magic, in addition to lore and the use of magic tattoos. Also, True Atlanteans can sense ley lines (120 mile/192 km radius, 90% to locate), sense ley line nexuses (98% to locate), sense the opening of Rifts (160 miles/256 km), and can ley line phase (4 times per hour, up to 16 times per day) same as the Ley Line Walker.

Magic Tattoos: Sword covered in Flames (10), Heart Pierced by a Wooden Stake (15), Simple Weapon: Wooden Sword (2), and Simple Weapon: Silver Knife (2).

Combat Training: Hand to Hand: Martial Arts, Boxing, Fencing, and Kick Boxing.

Attacks Per Melee: Eight.

Combat Modifiers: +2 to initiative, +4 to strike, +10 to parry and dodge, +3 to pull punch, +5 to roll with punch/fall/impact, +2 to entangle, +4 to disarm, and +15 to damage.

Other Combat Info: Body flip/throw, all hand strikes, all foot strikes including leap kick (plus roundhouse kick, axe kick, and knee strike), critical strike on an unmodified roll of 18, 19, or 20, paired weapons, all holds, back flip, back flip escape, back flip attack, knockout/stun on an unmodified roll of 20, +1 to strike and parry with a sword or dagger, and +1D6 damage with a sword.

Other Modifiers: +5% to all skills (already included), +2 to save vs psionics/insanity, 45% trust/intimidate, +16% to save vs coma/death, +4 to save vs poison, +6 to save vs magic, 45% charm/impress, and +4 to save vs Horror Factor.

Weapons of Note: Access to anything in the A.M.C. armory or the A.W.M. catalog, plus a few personal favorites. **The Pyrus Blade** is an heirloom of the house of Libson, traditionally wielded by a younger son of the ruling family. This broadsword has been in the hands of thousands of True Atlantean warriors over the ages, and predates the separation of the True Atlanteans from Earth and the disappearance of Atlantis. While not extraordinary in power, its presence is enough to inspire fear in those who have faced it before, particularly ancient vampires and minions of the Splugorth. It is Onra's favorite weapon to use in combat. While not a rune weapon, over the millennia the magic sword has developed its own sort of minor consciousness and hatred for vampires and Splugorth minions. Whenever entering combat with either of those groups, the blade of the sword becomes engulfed in flame, inflicting double damage. This magical flame inflicts its damage even to those normally impervious to fire, but not those impervious to magic. Damage: 4D6 S.D.C. damage or 4D6 M.D. against Mega-Damage opponents (8D6 against vampires and Splugorth). Length: 3 feet (0.9 m).

A TW Converted NG-LP25 Laser Pulse Submachine-Gun: Mega-Damage: 2D6+1 M.D. per single shot, or 5D6 per rapid-fire, triple-shot pulse. Rate of Fire: Standard. Range: 1,000 feet (305 m). Payload: 10 single shots per 7 P.P.E.

NG-P7 Particle Beam Rifle: Mega-Damage: 2D4x10 M.D. Rate of Fire: Standard. Range: 1,200 feet (365 m). Payload: 10 shots with a long E-Clip; plus 4 long E-Clips.

Body Armor: Onra normally wears a suit of personalized A.W.M. Exterminator armor with an extra-heavy force field. He has access to anything in the A.M.C. arsenal, and occasionally even prototype designs from A.W.M. M.D.C.: Main Body: 100, Arms: 40 each, Legs: 50 each, Head/Helmet: 75 M.D.C., and Magic Force Field: 120 M.D.C. Other items include a TW Stake Driver (described in the weapons section), a pair of silver plated throwing daggers (1D6 S.D.C. damage, +2 to strike when thrown), a dozen stakes and a mallet, large Wilk's laser flashlight, high-powered binoculars, a survival kit, Robot Medical Kit, an IRMSS, a Vibro-Knife (1D6 M.D.), and wears a large silver cross around his neck. Otherwise, he takes whatever gear is necessary for the job, but prefers to travel light.

Vehicle: While he has any of the A.M.C.'s military vehicles available for his personal use, he owns a Hunter Glittermount named *Ippos* that is his personal favorite.

Cybernetics: None.

Other Notable Members of the A.M.C. & the Friends and Advisors of Onra

Psythe – A.M.C. Second-in-Command

This is the A.M.C.'s strategy and tactics genius. He is a master at picking ambush points and selecting targets, and has plenty of anti-vampire experience from his days near the Mexican border. While Onra is the moral center and example for the soldiers to follow, it is Psythe who has developed them into one of the best mercenary armies on the continent.

Deputy Commander Psythe is a mutant human, though he doesn't have any spectacular powers. His minor genetic aberrations are enough to prevent him from taking part in mainstream human society, and caused him to be persecuted terribly by the Coalition States. After a stellar career as a highwayman and outlaw, Psythe crossed paths with Prince Onra Misvina and the two unlikely characters became great friends. Fact was, Psythe is a hero at heart who never had the opportunity to be one until hooking up with Onra and his crew.

Deputy Commander Psythe despises people who are xenophobes and bigots (including the CS army) almost as much as the undead and demons. His one great soft spot in the world is for non-humans and human mutants.

For personal combat, Psythe loves to use his "salvaged" old-style Death's Head SAMAS, which he picked up in his early days of raiding. He learned the basic piloting and combat skills from a member of his gang, but has put a lot of time into flying and even learning how to patch up little things when they go wrong. It is his pride and joy, and he has discounted ideas by others to get him a Wild Weasel or other style of SAMAS, or to add TW improvements to his existing suit or its weaponry.

Quick Stats – Alignment: Unprincipled (was once Anarchist), but is slowly moving up the ladder and may one day reach Scrupulous. **Attributes:** I.Q. 12, M.E. 12, M.A. 11, P.S. 13, P.P. 11, P.E. 13, P.B. 11, Spd 11. **Age:** 44. **Hit Points:** 48. **S.D.C.:** 51. **P.P.E.:** 6.

Experience Level: 9th level Bandit: Highwayman.

Skills of Note: Language: American (98%), Language: Spanish (94%), Literacy: American (35%), Mathematics: Basic (95%), Radio: Basic (95%), Basic Mechanics (35%), Camouflage (80%), Detect Ambush (90%), Find Contraband (72%), Trap Construction (72%), Trap/Mine Detection (70%), Demolitions (98%), Pilot: Hovercycles, Skycycles & Rocket-bikes (94%), Trick Riding, Horsemanship: Cowboy (90%/74%), Land Navigation (83%), Streetwise (62%), Weapon Systems (70%), Pilot: Robots & Power Armor (65%), Robot Combat: Basic, Sensory Equipment (30%), Wilderness Survival (80%), Prowl (70%), Surveillance (75%), First Aid (85%), Gambling (Standard, 70%), Lore: Demons & Monsters (65%), Climbing (70%/60%), W.P. Energy Pistol, W.P. Energy Rifle, and W.P. Knife, all at 9th level of experience, W.P. Heavy M.D. Weapons at 7th level

of experience, and W.P. Handguns at 3rd level of experience. Power Armor Combat: Basic at 4th level.

Special Mutant Abilities: Alert and Quick Response (bonuses already included).

Psionics: Minor psychic, requires a 12 to save vs psionics. Resist Fatigue (4) and Resist Hunger (6). **I.S.P.:** 47.

Attacks Per Melee: Six – Expert.

Bonuses: +6 to initiative, +2 to strike, +3 to parry and dodge, +5 to pull punch, +4 to roll with impact, +3 to disarm, +4 to save vs Horror Factor, karate punch, karate kick, critical strike on an unmodified roll of 18, 19, or 20, paired weapons.

Additional Bonuses in Power Armor Combat: +1 attack per melee, +1 to strike, +1 to parry, +1 to dodge, and +1 to roll with punch/fall/impact. Sensor bonuses listed with the PA-06A SAMAS give an additional +2 to strike and +1 to dodge in ranged combat only.

Weapons of Note: Psythe has access to anything in the A.M.C. armory. His favorites include: TW Grenades of Carpet of Adhesion, Flash Freeze Grenades, TW Fireburst Rifle (3D6+6 M.D.), Wilk's 237 Backup pistol (3D6 M.D.), C-40R Coalition SAMAS Rail Gun (1D4x10 M.D. for a burst; 4,000 foot/1,219 m range; good for 50 bursts).

Body Armor: PA-06A "Old Style" SAMAS. **M.D.C.:** Shoulder Wings: 30 each, Main Rear Jets: 60 each, Main Body: 250, Arms: 50 each, Legs: 100 each, and Head/Helmet: 70 M.D.C. **Speed:** 60 mph (96 km) running, 300 mph (480 km) flying.

Cybernetics: None.

Fidel – Lieutenant in the A.M.C.

Lt. Fidel is a Rogue Coalition Dog Boy who went AWOL to fight vampires. He hired himself out as a mercenary and bounty hunter throughout the Southwest until he joined the A.M.C. Now he knows this is where he's supposed to be. Like Prince Onra, the Dog Boy believes it is fate that has placed him with the A.M.C. and that a crisis with vampires is brewing.

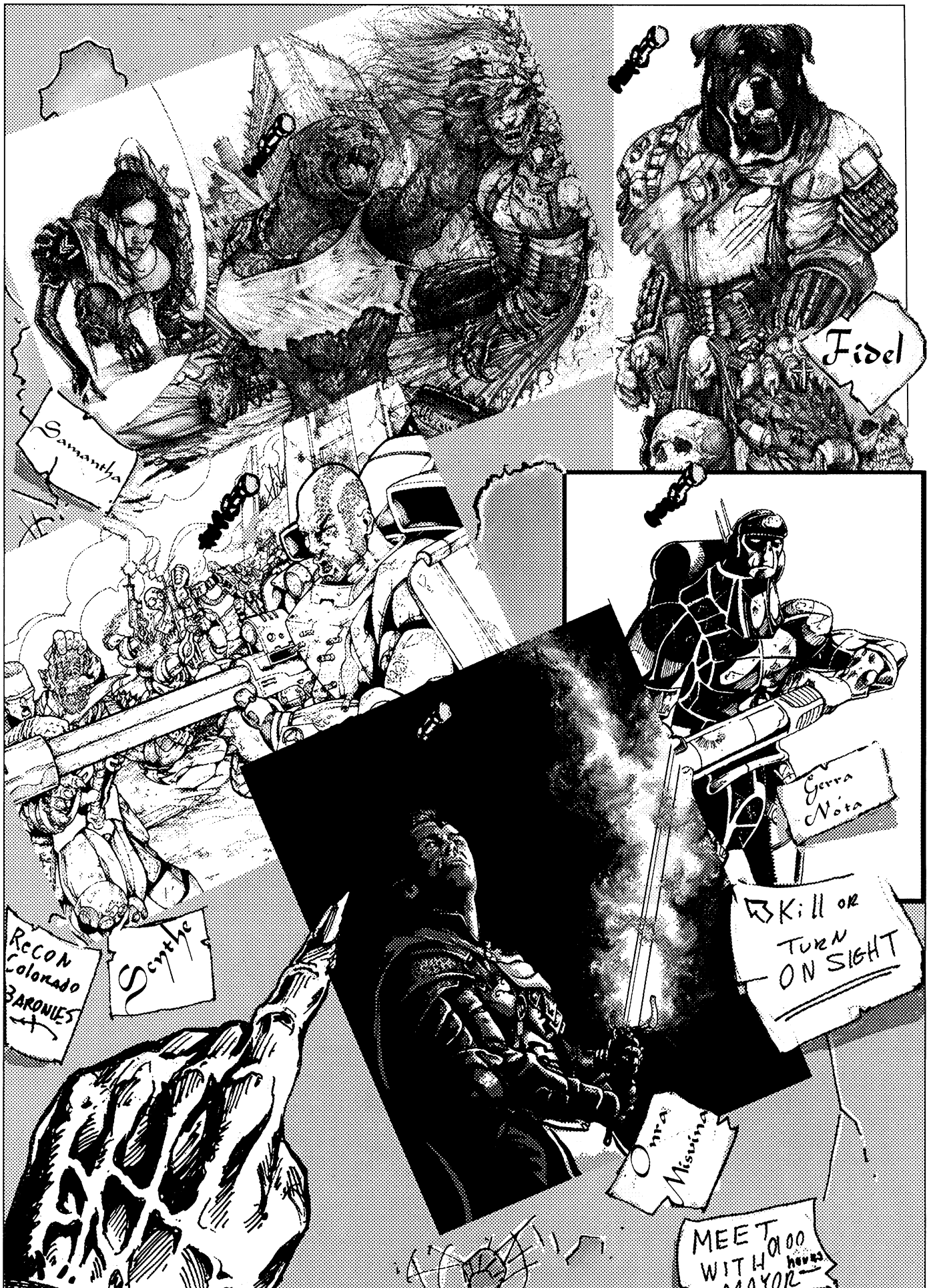
In the A.M.C., Lt. Fidel oversees the training and indoctrination of new soldiers. As the only officer in the outfit to serve in an honest-to-goodness military aside from the A.M.C., he has a unique perspective and background in military operations, structure, and maintaining order and discipline even under the worst combat situations. The position of instructor seems to fit him very well, and he has turned out many of the sharpest classes of cadets to ever bear the A.M.C. colors.

Quick Stats – Mutant Canine/Dog Boy (Rottweiler).

Alignment: Unprincipled. **Attributes:** I.Q. 11, M.E. 13, M.A. 12, P.S. 25, P.P. 18, P.E. 28, P.B. 8, Spd 41. **Age:** 11. **Hit Points:** 48. **S.D.C.:** 82. **P.P.E.:** 12. **I.S.P.:** 93.

Experience Level: 6th level Dog Pack R.C.C.

Skills of Note: Language: American (88%), Language: Dragonese/Elven (70%), Language: Spanish (62%), Literacy: American (60%), Climbing (75%/65%), First Aid (70%), Intelligence (58%), Interrogation (60%), Land Navigation (66%), Lore: Demons & Monsters (55%), Lore: Magic (55%), Military Etiquette (70%), Pilot: Automobile (70%), Pilot: Motorcycles & Snowmobiles (76%), Pilot: Hover Craft (Ground, 85%), Prowl (50%), Recognize Weapon Quality (50%), Radio: Ba-



sic (80%), Running, Wilderness Survival (65%), W.P. Energy Pistol, W.P. Energy Rifle, W.P. Blunt, and W.P. Knife, all at 6th level of experience, and W.P. Rifle at 3rd level of experience.

Special Abilities: Standard for Dog Boys. **Psionics:** Master psychic, requires a 10 to save vs psionics. Empathy (4), Mind Block (4), Sense Evil (2), Sense Magic (3), and Sixth Sense (2). **I.S.P.:** 93. **Magic:** Lore only, but loves using TW weapons and devices.

Attacks Per Melee: 5, Hand to Hand: Martial Arts.

Bonuses of Note: +4 to initiative, +5 to strike, +7 to parry and dodge, +3 to pull punch, +4 to roll with punch/fall/impact, +1 to entangle, +10 to damage. +2 to save vs psionics, +2 to save vs mind control, +2 to save vs possession, +2 to save vs illusions, +2 to save vs disease, +26% to save vs coma/death, +7 to save vs poison, +7 to save vs magic, +2 to save vs curses, and +5 to Perception Rolls.

Weapons of Note: Fidel has access to anything in the A.M.C., as well as a few favorites.

Body Armor: Ironwood Hunter armor.

Other Equipment: C-12 Heavy Assault Laser Rifle (4D6 M.D., 2D6 M.D. or 6D6 S.D.C.), vampire-hunting equipment, including crosses, wooden stakes, and several vials of holy water, gas mask, bedroll, rope, mess kit, rations, three canteens of water, an NG Prowler Hovercycle (top speed is 190 mph/304 km; 900 mile/1440 km range).

Cybernetics: None.

Gerra No'ta

Head Field Mechanic for the Arzno Mercenary Corps.

Gerra is a Trimadore, a relatively rare D-Bee species that has found its way to Rifts Earth. He was born in the New West and traveled with his parents as they drifted from place to place chasing work. After coming into his own, he headed to greener pastures at Arzno and got a job at A.W.M. His ability to think on his feet is uncanny, and his skill as a Techno-Wizard is coupled with vast mechanical knowledge and psionic abilities, making him an ideal field mechanic. Furthermore, Gerra has proven to be a cunning tactician in the use of magic, and an expert in the utilization of TW resources. He is the brilliant mind behind the "Imitator" body armor, the "Vamp Killer 2000," and many other unique inventions thrown into full production by A.W.M. His troops respect him for his abilities on and off the battlefield, and few are troubled by his unusually alien appearance.

Quick Stats – Gerra No'ta – Chief Sergeant. Race: Trimadore.

Alignment: Unprincipled. **Attributes:** I.Q. 17, M.E. 10, M.A. 11, P.S. 12, P.P. 12, P.E. 14, P.B. 7, Spd 10. **Height:** 7 feet, 7 inches (2.3 m). **Age:** 35. **Hit Points:** 29; **S.D.C.:** 51. **P.P.E.:** 105; **I.S.P.:** 79.

Experience Level: 5th level Techno-Wizard.

Skills of Note: Language: American (98%), Language: Techno-Can (80%), Literacy: American (73%), Literacy: Techno-Can (58%), Language: Spanish (80%), Radio: Basic (78%), Computer Operation (68%), Computer Programming (58%), Computer Repair (63%), Basic Electronics (68%), Field Armorer & Munitions Expert (63%), Jury Rig (68%), Mechanical Engineer (68%), Sensory Equipment (63%), Techno-

Wizard Device Construction (91%), Recycling (63%), Vehicle Armorer (63%), Weapons Engineer (58%). Mathematics: Basic (88%) and Advanced (68%), Pilot: Hover Craft (Ground, 78%), Pilot: Automobile (76%), Hand to Hand: Basic, W.P. Knife, W.P. Energy Pistol, W.P. Energy Rifle, and W.P. Heavy Mega-Damage Weapons.

Special Abilities: Like all Trimadore, Gerra has perfect vision and excellent hearing, a strong mechanical aptitude, and a superior sense of touch.

Psionics: Major psionic, requires a 12 to save vs psionics. Machine Ghost (12), Mind Block (4), Object Read (6), Speed Reading (2), Telemechanics (10), and Total Recall (2).

Magic Knowledge: Spell Strength of 13. Has access to the spells of all of the mages at the A.M.C. and A.W.M. for the purposes of creating TW devices.

Attacks Per Melee: 6; Hand to Hand: Basic.

Bonuses of Note: +2 to initiative, +1 to strike, +2 to parry and dodge, +4 to pull punch, and +4 to roll with impact, +1 to save vs possession, +1 to save vs poison, +2 to save vs magic, +1 to save vs disease, +7 to save vs Horror Factor, and +3 to Perception Rolls that involve magic or machines or their combination.

Weapons of Note: Gerra has access to anything available to the A.M.C. or in the A.W.M. catalog, including some modified and souped-up versions. **Customized TW "Supernova":** Mega-Damage: 1D4x10 per single bolt of red, swirling energy or 4D4x10 M.D. from a customized "supernova" single shot (counts as two melee attacks)! Rate of Fire: Single shot only. Range: 1,200 feet (366 m). Payload: 8 normal single shots, or two "Supernova" blasts per magic E-Clip. Gerra has modified the weapon to store four E-Clips at a time. Costs 25 P.P.E. or 50 I.S.P. to recharge one 1D4x10 blast and 100 P.P.E. or 200 I.S.P. for a 4D4x10 M.D. blast blast.

Other Equipment: TW Raging Bull customized for his size and shape (plus an extra 25 M.D.C.), a jet-black TW Sand Ranger Combat Truck tool kit, a wide variety of gems and precious stones, and everything you would expect to find in a well-equipped tool kit.

Cybernetics: None.

Samantha

Sergeant & resident Were-Beast (Jaguar)

Sgt. Samantha spends most of her time in her human form for the comfort of others. She is most comfortable, however, in Were-Jaguar form – half-human, half-jaguar – and always assumes that form when hunting or in combat. Sgt. Sam is a brilliant fighter and hunter, and is well-liked by the troops, who consider her "one of the guys." She has a deep hatred for vampires, zombies, animated dead, demons and most supernatural evil.

Even after all these years, the sergeant suffers from insecurities about being a Were-beast, and still feels as if she is an outsider. Despite her insecurities, she has become an indispensable member and leader of the A.M.C.

Quick Stats – Sgt. Samantha – Were-Jaguar

Alignment: Unprincipled. **Attributes:** I.Q. 9, M.E. 11, M.A. 13, P.S. 20, P.P. 21, P.E. 19, P.B. 13, Spd 28. **Age:** 33. **Hor-**

ror Factor: 12 in animal form; not applicable to the human form.

Hit Points: 54; **S.D.C.:** Not applicable. **P.P.E.:** 70; **I.S.P.:** 23.

Experience Level: 5th level Were-Jaguar.

Skills of Note: Acrobatics (90%), Camouflage (55%), Climbing (95%/85%), Detect Ambush (55%), Detect Concealment (50%), Hunting, Language: Spanish (98%), Language: American (98%), Language: Dragonese/Elven (82%), Language: Gobblely (82%), Land Navigation (72%), Lore: Demons & Monsters (45%), Lore: Magic (45%), Prowl (72%), Swimming (80%), Mathematics: Basic (80%), Track & Trap Animals (55%/65%), Tracking (50%), Wilderness Survival (70%), W.P. Knife and W.P. Targeting.

Were-Beast Abilities: Speak while in animal shape, leap 30 feet (9.1 m) high or lengthwise from a standing position, track by smell 60% (+10% to follow blood scent), night-vision 300 feet (91.5 m), keen color vision and hearing, and bio-regenerates 2D6 Hit Points an hour. Impervious to most weapons, except silver and magic. Shape-Changer: Can change shape at will, day or night. There is no limit to the number of times the creature can perform a metamorphosis or how long she can maintain that particular shape. The three possible forms are human, jaguar, and the natural shape of half-woman/half-jaguar. See **Rifts® World Book 1: Vampire Kingdoms™**, or **Rifts® Dark Conversions™** for more info on Were-beasts.

Psionics: Minor psychic, requires a 12 to save vs psionics. Mind Block (4), See the Invisible (4), and Sixth Sense (2).

Magic: Spell Strength of 12. Tongues (12), Chameleon (6), Astral Projection (10), Repel Animals (7), Heal Wounds (10), Metamorphosis: Animal (25), and Metamorphosis: Human (40).

Attacks Per Melee: 5 in natural or jaguar form, or only 3 in human form.

Bonuses: +1 to initiative, +5 to strike, +5 to parry and dodge, +1 to pull punch, +2 to roll with impact, +5 to damage, +2 to save vs psionics, +2 to save vs possession, +8% to save vs coma/death, impervious to poisons/toxins, +4 to save vs magic, and +6 to save vs Horror Factor. **Human:** Punch does 2D4 S.D.C. damage, a kick 2D6+3, and a bite does 1D6 damage. Damage bonus listed above applies to all of these S.D.C. attacks. **Jaguar-Woman or Jaguar:** Restrained punch does 3D6 S.D.C. (plus damage bonus listed above), full-strength punch does 1D6 M.D., and a power punch does 2D6 M.D. (takes two attacks). A claw strike does an extra 2D4 M.D., a normal bite does 1D6 M.D., and a power bite does 2D6 M.D. (takes two attacks).

Weapons of Note: Doesn't usually use a weapon in combat and doesn't own many, but she has half a dozen silver throwing knives to fight the undead. **Body Armor:** None. **Vehicle:** None, and other equipment is kept to a minimum.

Cybernetics: None. Not compatible.

Weapons & Equipment

Standard Issue to the A.M.C.

- L-20 Laser Pulse Rifle (**Rifts® Ultimate Edition**, page 270; mundane or TW-converted).
- NG-33 Northern Gun Laser Pistol (**Rifts® Ultimate Edition**, page 269-270; mundane or TW-converted).
- Metal Water Rifle (**Rifts® World Book 1: Vampire Kingdoms**, page 30) or TW Water Rifle (see equipment section).
- TW Light Armor (see equipment section; for those unable to use Techno-Wizardry, the stripped-down version is issued).
- Silver rounds for rail guns.
- Silver bullets for conventional weapons.
- Silver-plated or wooden daggers.
- Wooden stakes and mallets.
- Wooden cross necklaces.
- Cloves of garlic, holy water, and other items that damage or repel vampires.

Plus any of the following TW items, though probably limited to the elite troops, special ops, officers and special assignments involving vampire slaying. Also see items in **Rifts® Vampire Kingdoms**.

New Techno-Wizard Items

A note on TW use. The question of who can, and who can not use Techno-Wizardry is among the most-asked by **Rifts®** fans. If I may, let me give you the official word from the **Rifts® Book of Magic**.

“Anyone who can draw upon mystical forces or tap their own P.P.E., I.S.P. or even Chi can power and use Techno-Wizard devices. Likewise, those who are open to the supernatural or have large amounts of P.P.E., like children, may be able to power and use Techno-Wizard items (often without realizing how). With children, the ability to power and use TW items may disappear with age, or with enough practice, may be retained even though they may have a lower amount of P.P.E. as they get older.”

In addition, in **Rifts® Merc Ops** (page 138) the term “large amounts of P.P.E.” is further clarified as *10 or more P.P.E. points, or double that in I.S.P.*

This details it pretty well, I think, though I should note that there are some specific devices that may not follow these rules.

However, unless a particular item says something different in its description, the above are the official Palladium rules.

I just wanted to draw some attention to the last statement in the **Rifts® Book of Magic**, that with practice one may maintain the ability to operate Techno-Wizardry from youth into adulthood, even in the absence of magical or supernatural abilities. This is important for magic-using communities such as Tolkeen, Lazlo, the Magic Zone, and to a lesser extent, Arzno, whose citizens use TW in everyday life. Because your average Arznoan and Tolkeenite has spent his entire life turning on TW powered lamps and driving magically-fueled cars, such a person will be able to operate Techno-Wizardry even if lacking mystic training or paranormal abilities. Meaning, that as a child or teen grows into adulthood, instead of losing his P.P.E. he retains it (2D6+11 points on average), which can then be used to power and activate Techno-Wizard devices that don't require high levels of P.P.E. While use of TW is not nearly as common in Arzno as some places in North America, it is common enough that a large percentage of the population (more than half) can use such items without problem because they have a good reserve of P.P.E. as children, teens and adults.

A note on TW pricing: In most Rifts® books, the price listed with any item, TW or otherwise, is usually the Black Market price, as this is likely what a character will have to pay in order to get their hands on whatever they're buying. In the pages that follow, however, you will notice that there are typically three types of pricing given. The first is what the item would cost if bought from *Arzno Weapons Manufacturing (A.W.M.)* or a TW dealer in the city of *Arzno*. The second indication is what the device would cost from a smaller-time dealer *elsewhere* in North America. This price is generally 20-30% higher due to the fact that they purchased the item at wholesale and are selling it for a profit. The third is the *Black Market amount*, what the criminal organization and high-end dealers charge for the item, usually in places where TW items are uncommon or a rarity; this is the price you're used to seeing. Trafficking in magic, especially in the Domain of Man/CS territory, is dangerous work. Risk goes up, price goes up. Besides, it all boils down to availability vs demand, and there is always someone willing to pay high prices for magic items.

Varieties of Techno-Wizard items. There are hundreds of TW weapons, vehicles, armor enhancements, and bits of technology scattered across the various World Books and Sourcebooks for Rifts®. The Techno-Wizards in Arzno can and do duplicate and sell most of them on a regular basis. Aside from the standard items and conversions found in the **Rifts® RPG** and **Rifts® Ultimate Edition**, Techno-Wizard items common to North America and the Southwest are found in this **Arzno** book, **Rifts® World Book 14: New West™** and **Rifts® World Book 16: Federation of Magic™**. Vampire-fighting devices are detailed in **Rifts® World Book 1: Vampire Kingdoms™**, and many of these weapons are uniquely capable of combating the undead and are used by the common people of Arzno (and neighboring communities) as well as adventurers and mercs. **Note:** ALL these TW items (except for those in this book), along with rune weapons, Splugorth Bio-Wizard devices and other items of magic, are *ALL* found in the massive, 352 page, **Rifts® Book of Magic**. The rest of that book is filled with hundreds and hundreds of magic spells, making it a wonderful reference.

TW Anti-Vampire Weapons

TW Stake Driver

Stake, Decapitate, & Burn

A popular weapon with Arzno soldiers and heroes going to battle against the undead is the TW Stake Driver, an all-purpose vampire-slaying weapon that provides everything a fighter needs to destroy vampires in a matter of seconds. It looks like a large, armored forearm brace or a gauntlet with what appears to be a grenade launcher or large-barreled gun on the top. A retractable silver blade slides out from the front, and a small hose and nozzle mounted on either side run to a small canister mounted on the hip or back. The hose runs to a container filled with flamethrower fluid. A hand-held trigger device is extended from the bottom of the device when it is in use, or folded away when not needed.

The Stake Driver magically conjures a wooden stake and sends it shooting into the undead target, making it, in effect, a nail gun that fires large wooden stakes instead of nails. If a stake finds its mark into the heart of the vampire, the monster is paralyzed and the extendible silver short sword can be used to remove the vampire's head, and the flamethrower is used to burn the body.

The range on the weapon is very short, requiring the user to be close to his prey, but most combat with the undead is close quarters. For best results, the user physically reaches out and touches or gestures toward the vampire's chest as if throwing a punch, and simultaneously pushes the thumb trigger to launch the stake into the vampire's chest at point-blank or close range. This maximizes the likelihood of a successful hit and the chance the stake pierces the heart.

Creation Stats:

Initial P.P.E. Cost: 130

Spells Needed: Create Wood (10), Energy Bolt (5), Fireblast (8), and Telekinesis (8).

Physical Requirements: The forearm section of a suit of armor, the barrel of a grenade launcher, Big Bore, or other large projectile-firing weapon, silver short sword, and an acetylene torch, laser torch, or mini-flamethrower for the weapon itself. A large green quartz (known as a "plasma quartz") worth 1,500 credits is required for the creation and firing of the stakes, and two small rubies worth 1,000 credits each for the flamethrower portion.

Weapon Stats:

Weight: 6 lbs (2.7 kg).

Damage: Stake Driver: 3D6 Hit Points/S.D.C. No damage to most Mega-Damage creatures unless they are vulnerable to wood. Flamethrower: 3D6 M.D. Silver Short Sword: 1D6 Hit Point/S.D.C. damage (double damage to undead).

Rate of Fire: Single shot; each stake or blast fired counts as one melee attack.

Effective Range: Stake Driver: 15 feet (4.6 m), -1 to strike for each additional five feet (1.5 m) distance. Flamethrower: 50 feet (15.2 m). Sword: Touch/melee combat.

P.P.E. Cost to Charge and Recharge the Item: 5 P.P.E. or 10 I.S.P. gives the Stake Driver five more shots. Each blast from the Flamethrower costs 5 P.P.E. or 10 I.S.P.

Payload: 5 wooden stakes and one flamethrower blast. The short sword doesn't need a power source and does not run on P.P.E.

Bonuses: +1 to strike when closer than 15 feet (4.6 m) for all weapon systems.

Cost: 29,000 credits from A.W.M., 20% more from a small-time TW dealer, 2-3 times from the Black Market (58,000 to 87,000 credits). Generally only available throughout the Southwest and Mexico.



TW Water Pistol

The TW Water Pistol and other water weapons are identical to those found in *Rifts® World Book 1: Vampire Kingdoms*, but contain full stats and expanded descriptions so that Techno-Wizard player characters may have guidelines in constructing these classic items.

The TW Water Pistol is not a favorite weapon amongst most Arzno vampire hunters, due to its relatively low damage compared to the TW Water Rifle, or even a simple automatic pistol loaded with silver rounds. Warriors often keep one as a backup weapon, and the pistols are extremely popular with civilians; an estimated 75% of all citizens of the City-State of Arzno own at least one TW Water Pistol. Its one major advantage over a conventional firearm or a mundane water pistol is that it has a substantial payload, which can be very important when fighting the undead. The pistol's lighter weight, smaller size, concealability and affordable price make it popular.

The weapon is a converted revolver or automatic pistol, with a small water reservoir where the cylinder or the ammunition clip once were. The gun fires with seemingly-normal hammer or auto-cocking action, but expends short, contained blasts of water instead of bullets. Each type is semi-automatic, with a water blast issued at each pull of the trigger. This device, in some variation or another, is found at every Techno-Wizard shop in the New West and beyond. They are easy for a low-level TW to manufacture, and fetch a good price in the right market. Other than in matters of style and minor differences in construction, most models mirror the statistics below. Shooters with W.P. Handguns get the bonuses applicable to that Weapon Proficiency.

Creation Stats:

Initial P.P.E. Cost: 95

Spells Needed: Create Water (15), Energy Bolt (5), and Telekinisis (8).

Physical Requirements: Only a mere 40 credits' worth of recovered weapon parts, tubes, and basic mechanical parts. The dam-

aged, stripped shell of a revolver or automatic pistol more often than not provides the major components, though a weapon could be built from scratch.

Required gems include a large, high-quality aquamarine (at least 1,500 credits) located where the small water reservoir meets the chamber. Also a small blue sapphire mounted in silver on the striking surface of the hammer, which strikes a small zircon when the trigger is pulled (700 credits total).

Weapon Stats:

Weight: 1.9 lbs (0.9 kg).

Damage: 2D6 Hit Points to vampires and beings vulnerable to water. No damage to humans, D-Bees and most other creatures.

Rate of Fire: Single shot.

Effective Range: 200 feet (61.0 m).

P.P.E. Cost to Charge and Recharge the Item: 20 P.P.E. or 40 I.S.P.

Payload: Each activation arms the weapon with 40 blasts.

Cost: 5,000 credits in Arzno and the Colorado Baronies. 6,000-7,000 most elsewhere in the southwest, 9,000-11,000 credits from the Black Market. Prices skyrocket as one approaches the Mexican border, where vampires are a constant threat and Techno-Wizards weapon are scarce.



TW Water Rifle

The standard anti-vampire water weapon of the Arzno Mercenary Corps (A.M.C.) is a combination water shotgun and grenade launcher. Most similar weapons across the New West and Mexico have roughly the same capability and statistics, but may vary as different designers tweak the concept to their particular tastes. Cost will depend on availability and the demand.

The Water Rifle has the general look of a short, stocky assault rifle with a shotgun-type pump on the bottom. A small quartz, zircon, and blue sapphire line the top of the barrel, and a small, hard plastic sphere sits on top and to one side at the back of the weapon where it sloshes less than half-full of water. When empty, the shotgun pump is in the "out" position. A mental command and the pulling back of the pump against a feeling of increasing pressure causes the volume of water in the sphere to swell, to half-full. The weapon is loaded with P.P.E. and magically-created water, though it only seems like a few ounces. With each depression of the trigger, the pump jolts forward and back quickly like an auto-cocker, and the volume in the reservoir lessens as water is expelled from the barrel and immediately refills as the pump jumps back into place. Manually pulling the pump out and back again (as if cocking a shotgun) will fill the reservoir and instantly release a huge water blast, contained within a cohesive energy sphere, from the barrel. This enhanced blast is the equivalent of a small grenade, or two shots from the rifle.

When the device is out of P.P.E., the pump jumps forward again, the reservoir is dry, and the weapon is ready to be refilled with magic energy. The Arzno model of this common item, like most other manufacturers, uses W.P. Rifles for the primary weapon, or W.P. Heavy Military Weapons for the grenade blast.

Creation Stats:

Initial P.P.E. Cost: 135

Spells Needed: Create Water (15), Energy Field (10), and Telekinesis (8).

Physical Requirements: A plastic weapon requires only a mere 50 credits' worth of recovered weapon parts, hydraulics, hoses and basic mechanical parts. More combat-specific models (such as those used by the A.M.C.) are made of durable ceramic or metal and cost 120 credits.

Required gems include a large, high-quality aquamarine (at least 3,000 credits) located in the pump mechanism of the rifle. A small quartz, zircon, and blue sapphire line the top of the barrel (3,000 credits total).

Weapon Stats:

Weight: 4 lbs (1.8 kg), twice that if made of metal or ceramics.

Damage: 4D6 Hit Points to vampires per concentrated rifle blast, or 1D4x10+4 Hit Points to a 10 foot (3 m) diameter for a grenade blast (counts as two blasts).

Rate of Fire: Each rifle blast counts as one blast, but a grenade counts as two blasts; both use up one melee attack.

Effective Range: 600 feet (183 m) per rifle blast, 200 feet (61 m) per grenade/wide scatter blast.

P.P.E. Cost to Charge and Recharge the Item: 20 P.P.E. or 40 I.S.P.

Payload: Each activation arms the weapon with 40 blasts. Each grenade shot counts as two blasts.

Cost: 20,000 credits in and around Arzno and the Colorado Barones, 30,000 credits most elsewhere, and 40,000-60,000 credits from the Black Market. At least 50% of households in Arzno have one TW Water Rifle. Prices skyrocket as one approaches the Mexican border, where vampires are a constant threat and Techno-Wizard weapons are scarce.

TW Water Cannon

The heaviest water weapon used anywhere, it is accurate and comparable with most modern fire-fighting equipment. It can be set on a tripod (takes one melee round to set up) or mounted on a vehicle, and is sometimes used on the Sand Ranger Combat Truck. Mounting on a vehicle is useful when fighting packs of Wild Vampires out in the open of the desert. It is also suitable as a non-lethal alternative for crowd and riot control.

The device consists of a small water tank worn on the back or at the hip, connected to a large hose ending in a nozzle with a lever-valve that controls the stream of the water. This TW weapon

is considerably lighter than any possible non-magical equivalent because its water reservoir is comparatively tiny, using magic to create the water as needed. Pulling the valve on the nozzle fires a short stream of water that drenches its target in gallons of water. The force of this blast is substantial, requiring a P.S. of 20 or greater to fire it with any accuracy. Those not meeting this requirement are -4 to strike. The cannon can't be used to fire a continuous stream of water, as the device needs that brief moment between shots to magically recharge its reserves.

Statistics found here are common for similar items found throughout the New West, though specifics may vary from manufacturer to manufacturer. All will get roughly the same number of shots for the same P.P.E. expenditure, range and damage. Bonuses from the *W.P. Heavy M.D. Weapons* skills are applicable for the TW Water Cannon.

Creation Stats:

Initial P.P.E. Cost: 255

Spells Needed: Create Water (15), Power Bolt (20), Telekinesis (8), and Wind Rush (20).

Physical Requirements: Construction of a plastic weapon requires only 150 credits' worth of recovered weapon parts, hydraulics, hoses and basic mechanical parts. More combat-specific models (such as those used by the A.M.C.) are made of ceramic and metal costing roughly 350 credits.

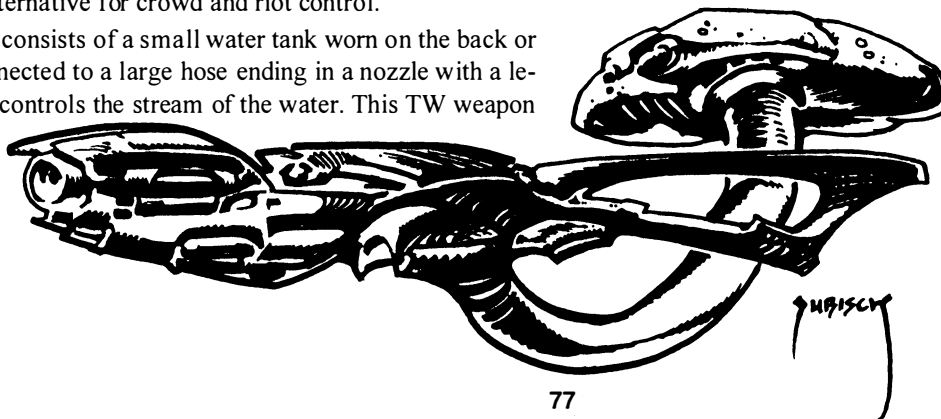
Required gems include a large, high-quality aquamarine (at least 4,000 credits) on the end of a silver coil that hangs into the water reservoir. A small diamond and two blue sapphires are wired into a small mechanical pump that connects the hose to the water tank and creates the pressure used to propel the water (5,000 credits total).

Weapon Stats:

Weight: 12.2 lbs (5.5 kg) in water and parts; 50% more if made of metal and ceramic components.

Damage: To vampires and other beings vulnerable to ordinary water, the drenching blast does 3D4x10 Hit Point damage, plus a 01-80% chance of a knockdown, resulting in the loss of initiative and one melee attack. If an individual is targeted over and over again with *consecutive attacks*, and the strike roll continues to beat the target's dodge roll, the victim has no initiative and can *not* retaliate.

Humans and most mortal opponents take 1D4 S.D.C./H.P. damage plus knockdown (01-80% chance for normal humans, 01-40% chance for Combat Cyborgs, Mining 'Borgs and opponents weighing 500-600 lbs/225 to 270 kg, and 01-20% for large or heavy Power Armor, giants and opponents weighing more than 600 lbs/270 kg; no chance against Glitter Boys anchored by their pylons or against vehicles or giant robots).



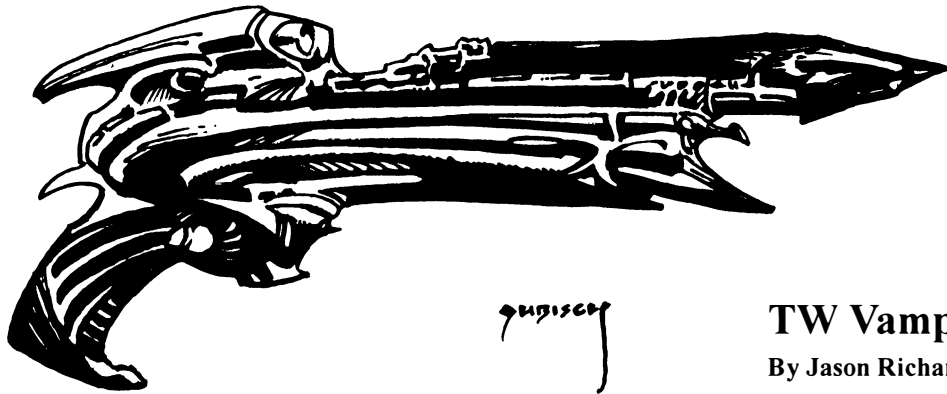
Rate of Fire: Single shot; each blast counts as one melee attack.

Effective Range: 600 feet (183 m).

P.P.E. Cost to Charge the Item: 20 P.P.E. or 40 I.S.P.

Payload: 20 blasts per charge/recharge.

Cost: 55,000 credits in and around Arzno and the Colorado Baronies, 65,000-70,000 most elsewhere, and 100,000 to 150,000 credits from the Black Market. Uncommon among civilians. Prices skyrocket as one approaches the Mexican border, where vampires are a constant threat and Techno-Wizard weapons are scarce.



TW Wood Rail Gun

The wood-firing rail gun is quickly becoming a standard vampire-slaying tool throughout the Southwest. The TW option makes the device far lighter and less expensive than a conventional rail gun armed to fire silver rounds and requiring heavy ammunition drums. The TW Wood Rail Gun replaces the electromagnetic firing system with a magical, telekinetic based system, and eliminates the ammo drum and feed, supplying ammo via mystical means (generates wooden spikes as needed).

Creation Stats:

Initial P.P.E. Cost: 160

Spells Needed: Create Wood (20), Power Bolt (20), and Telekinesis (8).

Physical Requirements: A working or broken rail gun (preferably light) for magical conversion, a large rose quartz crystal worth at least 1,000 credits for the firing mechanism, and a large green quartz crystal worth at least 1,500 credits for the creation of the wood stakes.

Weapon Stats:

Weight: As per the rail gun before conversion minus ammo drum or power generator. Generally around 80-100 lbs (36 to 45 kg).

Damage: Single shot does 1D6x10 Hit Point damage to vampires or 4D6 S.D.C./H.P. to ordinary mortals; no damage to Mega-Damage beings.

A burst of four wooden stakes inflicts 3D6x10 Hit Point damage to vampires, 3D4x10 S.D.C. damage to mortals, or the equivalent of one M.D. point to M.D.C. opponents.

Rate of Fire: Single shot or short bursts. Requires a P.S. of 20 or greater to effectively use this weapon, -3 to strike for those with a weaker P.S.

Effective Range: Despite what the gun used to fire, range is now 3000 feet (914 m).

P.P.E. Cost to Charge/Recharge: 20 P.P.E. or 40 I.S.P. will load the weapon with 80 stakes for a total of 20 bursts.

Payload: 20 bursts or 80 single shots.

Cost: 60,000 credits in Arzno and Colorado Baronies, 75,000-90,000 most elsewhere, and 140,000 to 180,000 on the Black Market. 05% of the households in Arzno own one. Prices skyrocket as one approaches the Mexican border where vampires are a constant threat and Techno-Wizards weapons are scarce. Outlawed in the Vampire Kingdoms.

TW Vamp-Killer 2000

By Jason Richards and Kevin Siembieda

For killing vampires, nothing beats the famous Arzno Vamp-Killer 2000 weapon kit. Wildly popular among the most flamboyant of vampire hunters, it features a particularly gruesome and intimidating primary weapon: a silver-bladed chainsaw. On the chainsaw body is mounted a grenade launcher, and a cross-covered spotlight to combat the undead. Sold in a handy, accessible carrying case.

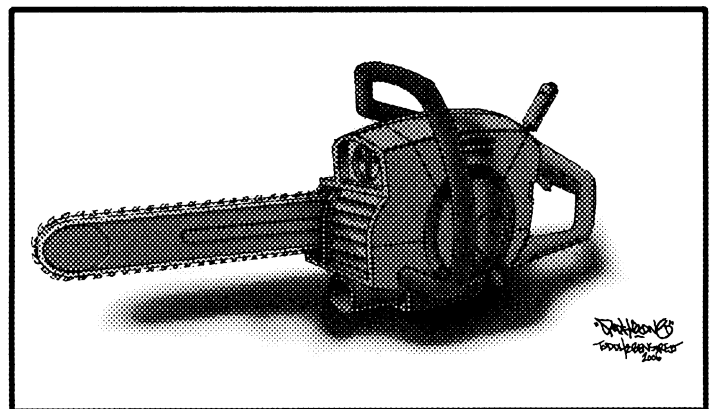
Creation Stats:

Initial P.P.E. Cost: 65

Spells Required for Construction: Call Lightning (15), Energy Bolt (5), and Wind Rush (25).

Physical Requirements: An electric or gas-powered chainsaw, a large lamp, a grenade launcher or suitable substitution, and a saw chain plated in silver. A large, clear quartz worth 1,200 credits is required for the electric motor, as well as 10 feet (3.0 m) of gold wire.

Weight: 30 pounds (13.5 kg).



Weapon Stats:

1) **Silver-Bladed TW Chainsaw:** The primary and most frightening system of the Vamp-Killer is its silver-bladed chainsaw capable of cutting vampires into tiny little pieces in the

most gruesome manner imaginable. A standard gasoline or electric chainsaw is converted to run on a TW electric motor and requires little P.P.E. to operate.

Range: Arm length, +2 feet (0.6 m).

Duration: 10 hours of continuous use per charge.

Damage: 5D6+6 Hit Point damage to vampires and ordinary S.D.C. material (and people).

P.P.E. Cost to Charge Item: 15 P.P.E. or 30 I.S.P. charges the chainsaw for ten hours of use!

2) Grenade Launcher: Mounted on the undercarriage of the chainsaw's motor is a small grenade launcher. The electric motor that powers the blade also builds up pneumatic pressure with which to fire grenades a reasonable range, though not as far as a rifle-mounted launcher. This means that the Vamp-Killer 2000 must be activated and the motor running in order to use the launcher. Fires hand grenades instead of rifle grenades, which means it can fire any type of TW or conventional hand grenades and flares.

Range: 200 feet (61 m).

Damage: Varies with type. Special *wood fragmentation grenades* do 1D4x10+2 Hit Point damage to all vampires in a 10 foot (3.0 m) radius of the blast, plus there is a 01-05% chance of wood shrapnel hitting the heart of any given vampire, rendering it immobilized as if staked! Can fire any type of TW or conventional hand grenades or flares. **Note:** 2D6 S.D.C. damage to mortal opponents.

Rate of Fire: One at a time. Grenades are hand-loaded, one at a time. Loading a grenade takes one melee action, and each blast counts as one melee attack.

Payload: Can hold a total of four.

3) Cross Spotlight: Not a weapon in the conventional sense, but a very effective tool in combating vampires. In addition to providing illumination, this heavy-duty spotlight, located at the top of the weapon, projects the shadow of a cross, terrifying and damaging the undead.

Range: 100 feet (30.5 m).

Damage: 3D6 Hit Points to vampires when shown directly on them, holds them at bay (cannot pass/cross the light) when positioned to block their path. Only a Secondary or Master Vampire will dare to leap through the light when put in his path.

Payload: Conventional battery or TW battery (the latter is effectively unlimited).

4) Supplemental Vampire Fighting Gear that Comes in the Kit: One 12 inch (0.3 m) wooden cross, six wooden stakes, one wooden mallet (does 1D4 damage as a blunt weapon against humanoids and vampires), one pocket mirror, one TW Storm Flare, one Globe of Daylight flare, and two TW Steam Grenades.

Cost: 65,000 credits from Arzno and the Colorado Baronies, 85,000 credits most elsewhere, and 135,000 to 200,000 from the Black Market.

25% of the households in Arzno own one! Prices skyrocket as one approaches the Mexican border, where vampires are a constant threat and Techno-Wizard weapons are scarce. Outlawed in the Vampire Kingdoms.



TW "Vampire Chaser" Steam Grenades

By Jason Richards and Kevin Siembieda

A vampire-fighting weapon designed by the Techno-Wizards at A.W.M. and commonly copied by wizards in the New West, the grenade does little damage and is used basically as a riot-control style tear gas against ordinary people (burns and blinds). Against vampires, it is used to flush them out of their hiding places and disperse large groups. It is a round grenade, most frequently painted blue, with one small aquamarine that serves as the trigger button. Once the trigger is pushed, there is a three-second delay before the canister begins to spew super-hot steam.

Creation Stats:

Initial P.P.E. Cost: 60

Spells Required for Construction: Create Water (15), Ignite Fire (6), and Fuel Flame (5).

Physical Requirements: One small aquamarine worth 140 credits, a conventional gas or smoke grenade, and a ball of silver half an inch in diameter (1.3 cm).

Weapon Stats:

Range: Thrown, 100 feet (30.5 m); Steam cloud covers a 20 foot (6.1 m) diameter.

Duration of Steam Cloud: One minute (4 melees).

Damage: 2D6 S.D.C. per melee round to ordinary mortal beings, but 5D6 Hit Point damage per melee round to vampires and causes great burning pain that blisters the vampires' skin and compels them to flee the painful steam.

P.P.E. Cost to Charge Item: The Steam Grenade can be picked up and reused by charging it with 25 P.P.E. or 50 I.S.P.; can be recharged at least 60 times before burning out.

Cost: 2,000-4,000 credits each; only 1,000 credits each in Arzno and along the border of Mexico, where they are most common; fair to good availability throughout North America. Recharges run around 500 credits each.



TW Flash-Bang Bombs

Used as a non-lethal tactical weapon and for riot control, these magical single-use devices are designed to blind and deafen opponents, rendering them quickly and completely combat ineffective. Even vampires are vulnerable to the weapon,

though effects are reduced against the undead. It is a favorite of bounty hunters and lawmen looking to capture or detain criminals instead of splattering them with Mega-Damage weaponry.

The device looks like two halogen light bulbs wound with copper wire, enclosed in a small glass jar with a screw-on lid at each end. With a twist at one end, the fuse is set and within moments (usually a three- to five-second fuse) the glass shatters with a flash and peal of thunder, blinding and deafening everyone within a 10 foot (6.1 m) radius.

Using a magical application such as this has its pros and cons. On one hand, the magic has a chance of affecting (to at least some degree) opponents in environmental body armor and supernatural creatures. On the other, everyone caught in the blast radius has to save vs magic (14 or higher), or they too are blind and deaf. This also means, even the Average Joe has a *chance* of saving and being unaffected. Two saving throws (14 or better) must be made: one to resist being blinded, the other to resist being deafened. The Blinding Flash does not affect robotic or cybernetic eyes, nor those watching through a video monitor (like in most robot vehicles), but will affect those in environmental body armor and power armor. Likewise, sound filtration systems such as those found in most cyborgs, robots and power armor will block or cancel out the booming sound. Those vulnerable to bright lights or those who have extra-sensitive hearing suffer double the penalties for 50% longer than the normal duration from the Blinding Flash and Thunderclap, respectively.

Creation Stats:

Initial P.P.E. Cost: 45

Spells Required for Construction: Blinding Flash (1), Call Lightning (15), Energy Bolt (5), and Thunderclap (4).

Physical Requirements: Two working light bulbs (100 watt minimum, or the device operates at half range and effect), a length of bare copper wire, and a sturdy, clear jar or container made of glass, Plexiglas, or similar material. The only gems required are four clear quartz crystals worth 100 credits each.

Weapon Stats:

Blinded: -10 to strike, parry, dodge, disarm, and similar combat moves, no initiative, and have a 01-50% chance of falling for every 10 feet (3.0 m) they move.

Deafened: Can't hear anything except a ringing in their ears. Victims feel dizzy and off balance; -6 on initiative, -4 to strike, parry, and dodge and similar combat moves, and have a 01-50% chance of falling down every action they take that involves any moving at all.

Note: All penalties are cumulative (add 'em together) when a victim is both blind and deaf. Those who *save* only lose one melee action/attack for being momentarily startled.

Vampires and supernatural beings or creatures of magic who fall victim to this attack suffer only half the penalties and recover in half the time.

The device uses a static charge (Call Lightning) to generate the power for the weapon, and therefore may be detected prior to its explosion by the cautious observer. There is a very slight hum in the second or two before detonation, and anyone in the blast radius with exposed skin (or hair, fur, etc.) will feel the static buildup in the one melee action immediately prior to the device going off. This *may* allow those who are familiar with the weapon and expecting its use to attempt to dodge (covering

one's eyes, diving for cover both count as a dodge) a Flash-Bang Bomb attack or booby-trap.

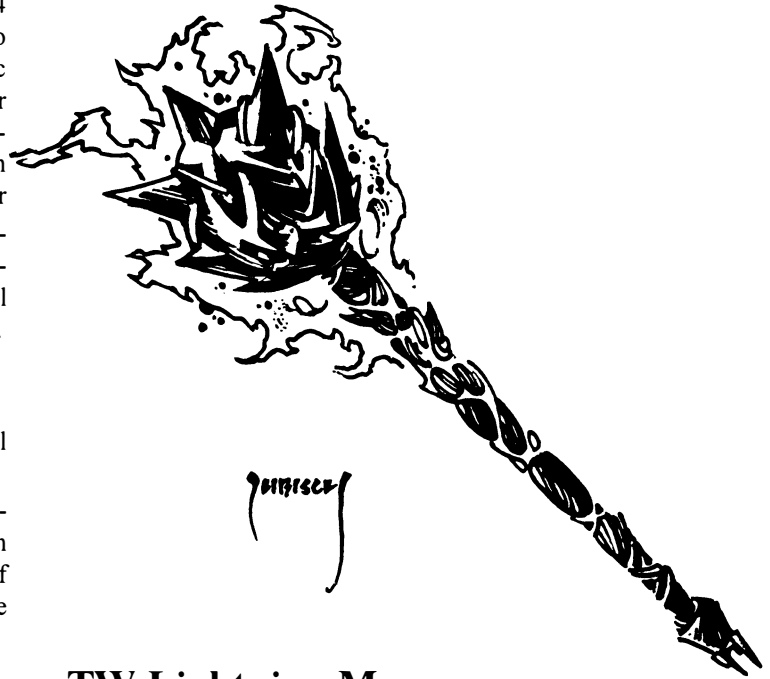
Duration of Penalties: 1D6+1 melee rounds for full penalties, but then reduce penalties by half for the next 1D6+4 melee rounds as the victim's senses begin to recover.

Range: Affects a 20 foot (6.1 m) area. Can be thrown roughly 100 feet (30.5 m) on average. The Thunderclap can be heard a mile away, though it only affects the immediate radius.

Saving Throw: 14 for each effect. Everyone within the diameter of the blast must roll twice to save vs the two magical effects.

P.P.E. Cost to Charge Item: 5 P.P.E. for a single use, after which the device is destroyed.

Cost: 600 credits each in Arzno, 1000 credits from most others, and 1200-1800 credits from the Black Market.



TW Lightning Mace

By Jason Richards and Kevin Siembieda

A mace (homemade or commercial) made of M.D.C. metal with a small amethyst embedded in the top of the head. The striking surface has a dozen holes drilled through it, through which twines four feet (1.2 m) of heavy-duty, bare copper wire, with the ends terminating at the crystal. The City of Arzno, the Colorado Baronies, and Techno-Wizards throughout the Western Wilderness offer the addition of silver spikes for an additional 150 credits per spike. This weapon is becoming extremely popular with renegade Dog Boys, Native American Warriors, Cyber-Knights, and Crazies.

Creation Stats:

Initial P.P.E. Cost: 80

Spells Required for Construction: Call Lightning (15), Electric Arc (8), and Energy Field (10).

Physical Requirements: A mace or suitable metal or M.D.C. alloy club, a small amethyst worth 60 credits, and about four feet (1.2 m) of copper wire.

Weapon Stats:

Range: A melee weapon, two feet (0.6 m) long on average. Can fire electric blasts that have a range of 100 feet (30.5 m).

Duration: Two melee rounds (30 seconds) per activation/charging.

Damage: 2D4 S.D.C. as an ordinary (not activated) blunt weapon, or 4D4 Hit Points to vampires if the mace has silver spikes.

When activated, the TW mace crackles with electricity and does 4D6 M.D. from electrical blast. Furthermore, opponents are jolted by the electrical field and take 1D6 M.D. even from a defensive move like a successful parry.

Lightning bolt blasts do 3D6 M.D. up to 100 feet (30.5 m) away.

Rate of Fire: Each blast or attempt to strike a physical blow counts as one melee attack.

Bonuses: +1 to strike with the lightning blast.

Payload: Each 12 P.P.E. or 24 I.S.P. charges the weapon for 30 seconds (two melee rounds). Each blast uses one melee attack.

P.P.E. Cost to Charge Item: 12 P.P.E. or 24 I.S.P.

Cost: 40,000 credits in Arzno, or 50,000-60,000 credits from most others, 80,000-120,000 from the Black Market.

TW Active Shield

The Active Shield is a purely defensive magical device. It is most often used when overrun by opponents, when immobilized, or to defend the injured. Worn as a belt or harness over any body armor, the Active Shield creates a protective bubble around the wearer 8 feet (2.4 m) in diameter. The bubble can be turned on manually and/or set to activate automatically when the wearer is rendered unconscious.

Once created, the bubble does not move. The user and anybody within its protected area may move around inside, but the field itself remains stationary. One issue in combat is that the field projects over a 4 foot (1.2 m) radius from the device. This means if not careful, other combatants might get trapped inside and possibly surrounded by the enemy. Those inside the protective shield may not fire weapons at a target outside the force field without striking and damaging it, however spells and/or psionics can be cast beyond the bubble. Another issue is that two devices may not be used in close proximity to each other. If the radius of the protective energy fields of two devices overlap, they will both short out and require another 10 P.P.E. to activate. **Note:** May be turned "off" at any time by hitting a button on the belt.

Creation Stats:

Initial P.P.E. Cost: 100

Spells Needed: Deflect (10), Energy Field (10), Magic Shield (6), and Watchguard (10).

Physical Requirements: A fine quality, 5 carat purple garnet, and a ½ carat orange diamond linked in parallel with gold wire provides the defensive reaction when the wearer is incapacitated. A colorless tourmaline of at least 8 carats is wired in series with the other gems for the protective field. The device itself may be constructed out of anything that projects energy, from a cannibalized laser pistol to a directional radio transmitter. If a Naruni or other force field generator can be attained and converted, double the duration and M.D.C. protection provided by the device. Cost is usually around 2000-5000 depending on the parts used.

Weapon Stats:

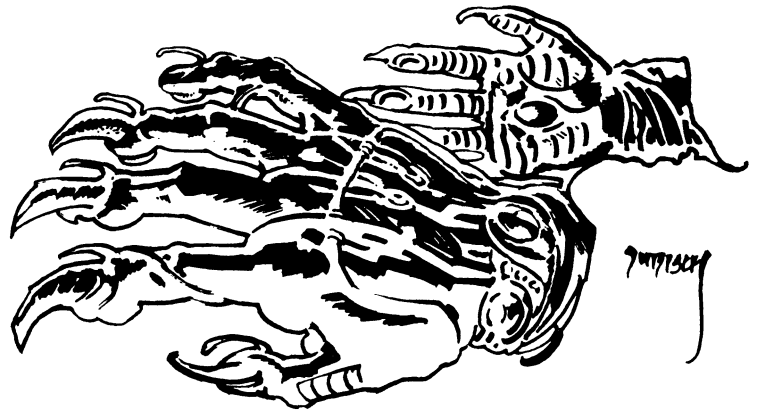
Weight: 2 lbs (0.9 kg).

M.D.C.: 100

Duration of Charge: 5 minutes or until M.D.C. is depleted.

P.P.E. Cost to Charge and Recharge the Item: 10 P.P.E.

Cost: 50,000 credits in Arzno, 70,000 from the Colorado Baronies, 100,000 from most others, 150,000 credits from the Black Market.



TW Climbing Claws

Designed to help their user scale all types of surfaces, even those normally unclimbable such as smooth stone or glass. Models vary radically, from simple gloves with hooks in the fingers, to plunger-style suction cups to traditional Eastern claws. Each incorporates a smoky quartz into the handgrip of the device, with copper wiring running to contacts on the surface.

Alternately, the device *may* be available as a *TW bionic enhancement*. Arzno is one of the few places that regularly has them available for sale. The TW Climbing Claws, when installed as a bionic component, are converted retractable finger blades and/or clawed feet or similar devices. The end effect is the same for both the handheld and bionic versions; only the construction cost and the final price vary.

Creation Stats:

Initial P.P.E. Cost: 35 P.P.E. is required for a handheld device, or 85 P.P.E. for the bionic version.

Spells Needed: Globe of Daylight (2) and Climb (3) for either model, plus Aura of Power (4) for the bionic system.

Physical Requirements: Leather gloves or gauntlet, and one smoky quartz worth 70 credits, plus a small pink quartz worth at least 100 credits for the bionic system. The bionic version requires a conventional set of bionic claws to be modified. In both cases, the blades are generally plated in silver to serve as a magical energy conductor as well as adding the ability to hurt the undead.

Weapon Stats:

Duration of Charge: 5 minutes per activation.

Damage: Varies. Climbing "claws" will do 1D4 S.D.C. in addition to the character's punch damage. Suction-cup, magnetic, or other devices do not grant any special bonus to damage. Bionic claws do 3D4 S.D.C./Hit Point damage *or* an additional 2D4 M.D. if they were Mega-Damage materials to begin with.

Effect: Temporarily gives the user climbing ability equal to an

insect – 98% for rough surfaces considered climbable, 68% for smooth surfaces usually considered to be unclimbable.

P.P.E. Cost to Charge and Recharge the Item: 4 P.P.E. or 8 I.S.P.

Cost: 5,500 credits from Arzno, 15,000 credits most elsewhere, and 30,000-50,000 credits from the Black Market; x10 for a bionic equivalent from any of these sources.



TW Concealment Cloak

By Jason Richards & Kevin Siembieda

This TW innovation allows a few small items to be hidden within the sleeves, pockets and folds of clothing. To all appearances, the item is a plain hooded cloak (or long coat, cape, dress, or other long garment) that covers its wearer from head to toe. The TW modifications are on the inside of the cloak and are invisible to the casual observer. There are four amethyst crystals and a network of flexible wire woven into the fabric. One amethyst is located in each sleeve and two in the chest or neck area. Magic energy is channeled into the wiring and fabric to conceal items placed inside it. The wearer can attempt to hide one small item in each sleeve and two other items (total) in the inner pockets or folds anywhere else on the garment.

An item protected by the enchantment of the TW Concealment Cloak is overlooked through casual inspection and even a half-hearted frisking/patting down. More importantly, any item that may have an energy supply (E-Clip, battery, magic reserve, etc.) and/or is made of metal is undetectable by X-ray machines and scanners designed to register metal or energy! However, a

close and careful visual inspection or thorough physical patting down will find the item concealed within. **Note:** Each object concealed cannot be larger than a typical energy pistol or weigh more than 6 lbs (2.7 kg).

Creation Stats:

Initial P.P.E. Cost: 90

Spells Required for Construction: Globe of Daylight (2), Concealment (6), Manipulate Objects (10), and Befuddle (6).

Physical Requirements: A long cloak, coat, or similar garment, four amethysts worth at least 100 credits each, and roughly 10 feet (3.0 m) of copper wire.

P.P.E. Cost to Charge Item: 2 P.P.E. or 4 I.S.P. per object concealed.

Devices Stats:

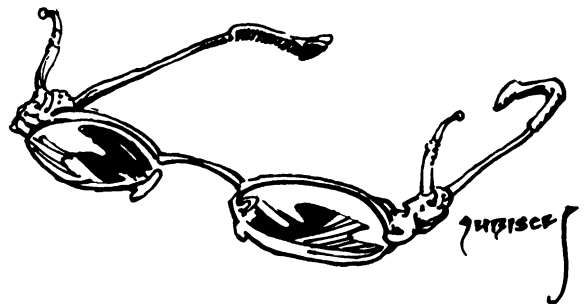
Range: Within the sleeves, pockets and folds of the cloak.

Duration: 15 minutes per activation.

Saving Throw vs Detection: Nobody will see the object(s) unless they are looking for it or searching the character, and even then a save vs magic must be rolled to find anything. Casual or careless looking requires a save vs magic of 19 or higher to notice one concealed item (others remain undiscovered unless the individual continues to search for more). A thorough search requires a roll of 13 or higher to save, and will uncover all items if successful, and scrutiny will uncover all concealed items with a roll of 8 or higher. Perception Roll bonuses can be applied when searching for magic items.

Energy Requirements: 4 P.P.E. or 8 I.S.P. per object.

Cost: 75,000 credits at Arzno, 170,000-250,000 from most others, 350,000 to 500,000 from the Black Market. Rare outside of Arzno! Only a handful of TW communities even know how to make it, Arzno is one such community (Tolkeen was another), but the work is so demanding and time intensive that even Techno-Wizards who know its secret seldom make the cloak. The Colorado Baronies do not know the secret.



TW Reading Glasses

A pair of glasses with small antennae protruding from tiny gizmos attached to each temple (earpiece) of the frames, near the lenses. When activated and worn like normal glasses, the user can read most languages he sees. More precisely, the tiny TW device interprets the words from the page of a book, street sign, etc. and projects them onto the lenses of the glasses in a pre-determined language (presumably one that the wearer can read). Thus, the user of this device must be literate in some language. The spectacles do not grant the ability to speak or understand spoken languages. **Note:** Certain alien languages may not be readable, and the user's Literacy skill must be 50% or better to use this item.

Initial P.P.E. Cost: 120

Spells Required for Construction: Energy Bolt (5), Eyes of Thoth (8), and Instill Knowledge (15).

Physical Requirements: Two small topaz crystals worth a total of 200 credits, two small silver antennae, and a pair of glasses with lenses.

Duration: One hour per activation.

P.P.E. Cost to Charge Item: 10 P.P.E. or 20 I.S.P.

Cost: 60,000 credits in Arzno, 80,000-100,000 elsewhere, and 200,000-300,000 credits from the Black Market (a rare item for them). This is another rare TW item invented and currently sold exclusively at Arzno and by A.W.M.



TW Security Scanner

The standard device looks much like a handheld metal detector wand found in 20th Century airports. When the glowing rod is waved over the person, clothing or package to be scanned, it will detect objects hidden/concealed by magic spells like Concealment and Invisibility. In fact, the TW Security Scanner dispels enchantment to reveal the hidden item to plain sight. This allows security personnel to scan for all sorts of magic items, TW devices, rune weapons, scrolls, charms, talismans, Indian Fetishes, etc. as well as conventional weapons and contraband hidden by magic spells or the TW Concealment Cloak.

As an additional feature, when the rod is held before the open eyes of the subject, he or she is forced to answer truthfully as many as three questions, or risk setting off an alarm. Typical

questions for the security scanner are: “What is your name?” “What is your purpose here?” “Do you have any dangerous or prohibited items in your possession?” Any three questions may be used, but must be hard-wired into the device by the Techno-Wizard creating it and cannot be changed. Lies will activate an alarm and security will take the person aside for questioning and an extensive search of his possessions, clothing and body.

A magic search with the wand takes four melee actions and each question asked takes one melee action. All said and done, the whole process generally takes two melee rounds unless difficulties are encountered. This time does not include a conventional search, which can add another minute or more to the process.

A larger version of the TW Security Scanner may be incorporated into a conventional *security portal* like those found at airports and courthouses to scan for explosives and weapons. In this integrated model, the person being searched simply steps into the arch as the operator looks on. After a brief glow from the lights embedded in the passageway, any magically-concealed items are revealed. The larger scanning device is far more efficient, generally requiring only two to three melee actions to run the whole procedure, or roughly half a melee round.

Initial P.P.E. Cost: 60

Spells Required for Construction: Detect Concealment (6), Lantern Light (1), See the Invisible (4), and Words of Truth (15). The portal version also requires Energy Field (10).

Physical Requirements: For the wand model, a large amber stone is built into the handle of a flashlight or similar handheld light, along with three small garnets linked together with gold wire, and a bulb made of two clear quartz crystals linked by a silver filament. The portal version uses the same basic materials except that it is built into a metal arch or doorway and uses three times the physical crystal requirements.

Range: 2 feet (0.6 m).

Duration: The wand generally requires two melee rounds (30 seconds), while the portal takes roughly half a melee round.

P.P.E. Cost to Charge Item: 5 P.P.E. or 10 I.S.P. per used for the wand model, or 10 P.P.E. or 20 I.S.P. for the portal.

Cost: 35,000 credits in Arzno, 50,000 credits from other sources, 90,000-130,000 from the Black Market. This is another rare TW item invented and currently sold exclusively at Arzno and by A.W.M.

TW Tactical Team Targeting System

The TTT System is an innovation in Techno-Wizardry that blends modern technological optic systems with “smart” magic that makes for a lethal combination when used by small, tactical, TW capable military or mercenary forces. The device serves as an advanced targeting scope, but also allows a soldier to see what his teammates are targeting.

The device itself can come in a number of different styles, but it is usually built into an armored helmet, or into a separate, mask-like glass face shield that resembles a modern riot helmet or welding mask. A second piece of equipment is a weapon scope that projects an invisible beam of magic energy toward its target like a laser sight. The two are connected by a length of fiber-optic wire that sends information back and forth from one to the other.

When the device mounted on the weapon is activated and the visor is in place, the wearer can see the projection of the magical laser-like beam. Only through the built-in optics can the pencil-thin beam of light be seen. Further, when the beam crosses a living being, the target seems to glow when viewed through the optical systems of the TTT. This allows for the easy targeting acquisition.

What makes the system truly unique is the fact that several TTT Systems can be interlinked, allowing each member of a small team to know what targets are being selected by which of his or her comrades. Any one member of a team using the system can see each member's laser sight, as well as see targets "lit up" by each when using his own HUD visor. This increases efficiency in combat, allowing teammates to select unique targets not being engaged (rather than multiple people firing on the same target), or to easily assist a comrade in trouble by simply attacking the same target glowing a given color.

One drawback to the use of the system is that its effectiveness is maximized when using units of six or fewer people. Each TTT unit has its own color designation, used for its targeting sight as well as the "glow" of its selected target. At its current level of development, the spell that lights the targets and provides the targeting beam can only be made to shine in six discernable colors: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple. This means that using a seventh soldier in a team results in the duplication of a color.

Painting a target with the TTT System uses up one melee action.

Initial P.P.E. Cost: 330

Spells Required for Construction: Distant Voice (10), Lantern Light (1), Light Target (6), Power Bolt (20), and Second Sight (20).

Physical Requirements: A targeting sight, laser pointer, pen laser, or other laser-emitting device (inferior hardware may cause diminished results), several feet of fiber-optic cord, and a helmet, mask, or multi-optic band. Gems required include a one-carat alexandrite stone linked to a large, clear quartz with golden wire for the visor, and a clear quartz lens for the laser sight. Total materials cost an average of 1,000 credits per visor and laser sight.

Range: Maximum range for the TW targeting system is 2,000 feet (610 m), regardless of the sight or optic system's usual capabilities.

Duration: Once a target is painted, the glow will last for as long as that target is marked by the light and viewed through the mystic optics.

P.P.E. Cost to Charge Item: 6 P.P.E. to activate for 15 minutes, or 12 I.S.P.

Bonuses: Magical Laser targeting adds a +2 to strike on an Aimed Shot.

Cost: 10,300 credits per TTT System from Arzno, 21,000 credits from most other TW sources, 30,000-50,000 credits from the Black Market. This technology has been difficult for smaller-time Techno-Wizards to knock off, and costs at least double the Arzno price. Not generally available outside of Arzno.



TW Translator

The TW Translator is essential for Techno-Wizards and adventurers who travel throughout Rifts Earth (or the Megaverse), as it allows the user to understand and communicate in a number of pre-programmed languages. The device is made from a walkie-talkie or small radio transmitter and receiver, with one large quartz and three small garnets in the center of each. The translator can be handheld or attached to a strap around the neck. The receiver is built into an earpiece, usually a large set of headphones. A foreign language picked up by the device is translated and the user hears the foreign tongue in his own language through the headset. When he speaks, the radio-like transmitter captures and translates his words into the foreign language and transmits them via sound projection from the translator or via radio waves to the person who was just speaking. Virtually any language can be translated in this fashion, but only one at a time.

Initial P.P.E. Cost: 220, plus an additional 15 per additional language added to the device.

Spells Required for Construction: Energy Bolt (5), Tongues (12), and five Instill Knowledge spells (15 each).

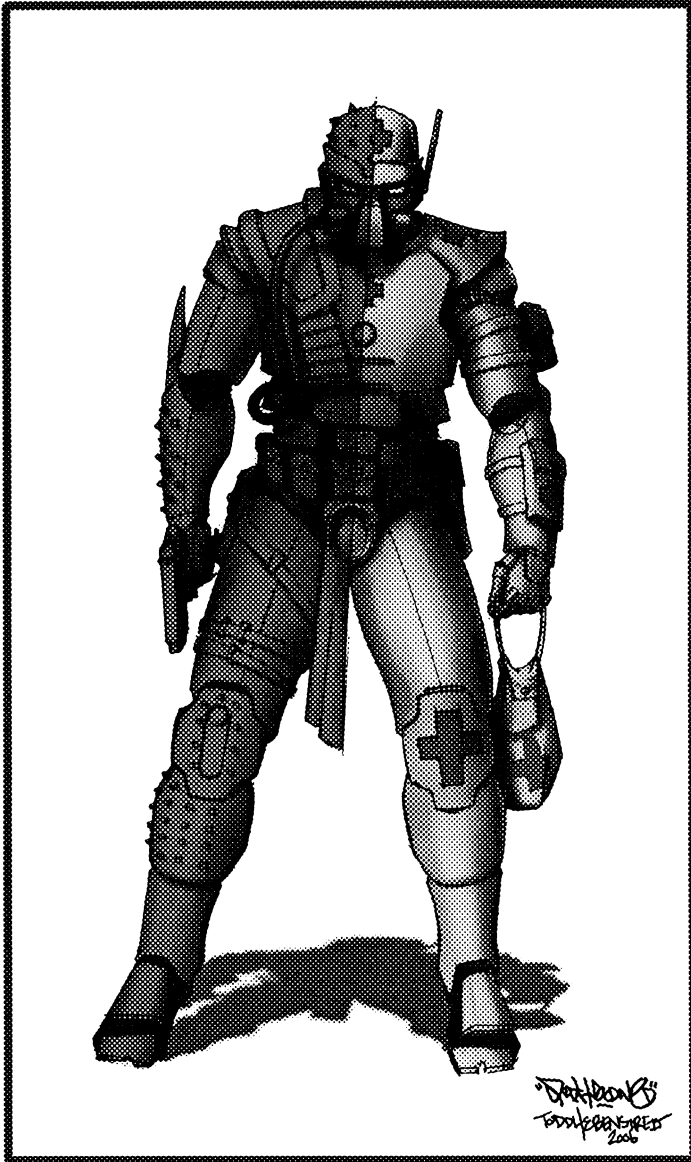
Physical Requirements: Two large quartz crystals worth roughly 120 credits each, six garnets worth 50 each, a set of headphones, a radio or walkie-talkie, and several yards/meters of copper, silver, and gold wiring.

Duration: 20 minutes per activation.

P.P.E. Cost to Charge Item: 12 P.P.E. or 24 I.S.P.

Cost: 35,000 credits in Arzno, 50,000 credits from most others, 65,000-90,000 credits from the Black Market.

TW Armor



Light TW Body Armor

Light TW Body Armor is standard issue for Arzno Mercenary Corps support personnel, pilots, medics, and other soldiers who don't generally participate in the front lines of combat, but still need Mega-Damage protection. The focus of this particular suit of armor is protection, with economy. It lacks the environmental protection, but is lightweight and affordable, perfect for home protection, as a temporary replacement, or even as a second suit of armor for emergencies. Its light magical force field, notably inferior to higher-end models, adds an increased level of protection for minimum cost, and brings it onto par with most armored suits produced by Northern Gun, Bandito Arms, and other dealers. Furthermore, the ability to renew the force field continually gives the cautious wearer all the protection he or she will ever need, as long as they have enough P.P.E. or I.S.P. to keep it in operation. A.M.C. combat models come in desert camouflage, tan and black. Civilian models are available in a variety of colors and patterns.

Model: Arzno TWA-900 Light Armor.

Size: Human size, from roughly 5 to 7 feet in height (1.5 to 2.1 m).

Weight: 10 lbs (4.5 kg).

Mobility: Good mobility; no penalty to climb, -5% to prowl, swim, or perform acrobatics and similar physical skills.

M.D.C. by Location:

Head – 35

Arms – 15 each

Legs – 15 each

*Force Field Emitter – 8

*Globe of Daylight Generator (1) – 5

Main Body – 35 (plus renewable force field)

Magic Force Field – 30

*A single asterisk denotes a very small and difficult target to hit, requiring a Called Shot at -4 to strike.

Market Price: 30,000 at Arzno Weapons Manufacturing, 40,000-45,000 credits from others, 60,000-90,000 credits on the Black Market. At least 50% of all households in Arzno have one such suit.

Techno-Wizard Features: The following features are standard on the military grade Light EBA, and additional features may be added for additional cost.

1. Magic Force Field: The armor has the ability to supplement its light frame with a mystic force field. To help keep the cost of the armor down, the strength of the force field is notably less than in other A.W.M. products. The small force field emitter is located on the back of the armor, between the shoulders.

Spell Effect: Armor of Ithan.

Range: Self only.

M.D.C.: 30

Activation Cost: 10 P.P.E. or 20 I.S.P.

Duration: 5 minutes (20 melee rounds) or until M.D.C. is depleted, whichever comes first. Can be reactivated/recharged completely for another 10 P.P.E. or 20 I.S.P. after only one melee round.

2. Globe of Daylight: Used to ward off the undead or simply to provide a light in the darkness. The light is emitted from a small globe located in the chest or shoulder.

Spell Effect: Globe of Daylight.

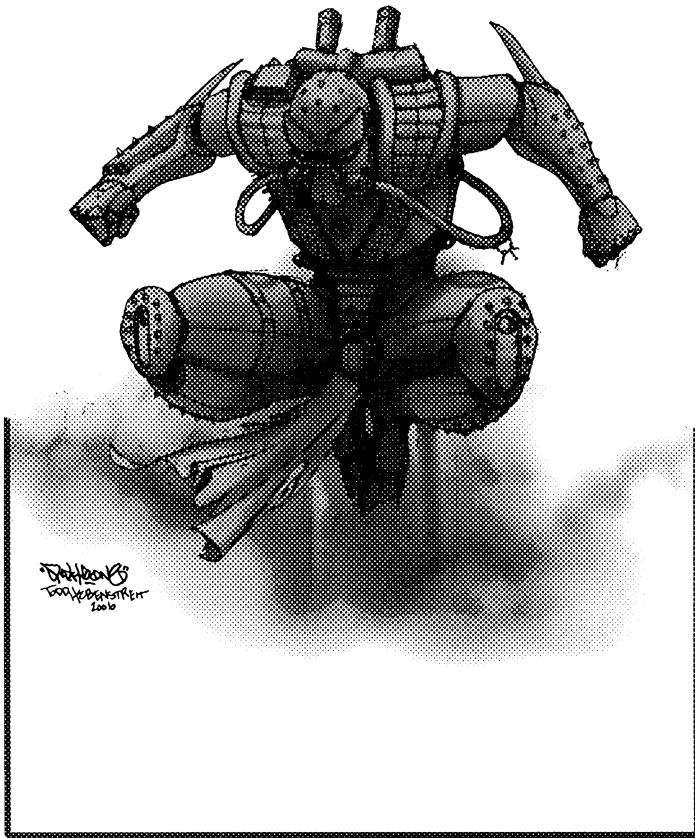
Range: Self; 10 foot (3 m) radius.

Activation Cost: 3 P.P.E. or 6 I.S.P.

Duration: 5 minutes (20 melee rounds).

Special Features: The military-grade version of the armor has dozens of small, silver spikes on the forearms, shoulders, knees, shins, and helmet. The spikes are made of Mega-Damage metal, but are coated in silver and can therefore do damage against vampires and many other supernatural beings; does an additional 1D6 S.D.C. points of damage to undead when stuck by them when used in hand to hand combat.

Weapon Systems: None.



TW Incursion Armor

Incursion armor is designed to help troops secretly penetrate enemy lines unseen and unheard for the purpose of espionage, sabotage, black ops, and other secret operations in hostile territory. Its TW features focus on mobility, stealth, flight, invisibility, and silence.

The armor comes standard in forest and dark desert camouflage, tan, black and dark grey, all with a dull finish that doesn't reflect light. The trademark Arzno silver spikes are allowed to dull and tarnish on the armor so that they don't glint from the shadows. Even the face shield is frosted. Aside from the spikes jutting out from the shoulders, elbows, knees, and forearms, the Incursion armor is sleek and streamlined, the Mega-Damage plates carefully designed not to knock or click against each other when the merc walks, crawls, or runs. M.D.C. protection is moderate, a necessary tradeoff to keep the stealth capabilities.

The Incursion armor is available for purchase by the public, and at least a third of all households have one. The high price keeps it out of more hands. To supplement the M.D.C. of the armor, an Armor of Ithan generator provides light force field protection.

Model: Arzno TWA-1500 Incursion EBA; borders on Power Armor.

Size: Human size, from roughly 5 to 7 feet in height (1.5 to 2.1 m).

Weight: 12 lbs (5.4 kg).

Mobility: Excellent mobility; no skill penalties.

M.D.C. by Location:

Head – 50

Arms – 25 each

Legs – 30 each

*Force Field Emitter – 8

*Flight Pack – 25

Main Body – 42

Magic Force Field – 60

*A single asterisk denotes a very small and difficult target to hit, requiring a Called Shot at -4 to strike.

Market Price: 195,000 at Arzno Weapons Manufacturing, exclusive Arzno design, 500,000 credits from the Black Market whenever they can get their hands on one.

Special Features: The armor has a number of silver spikes in strategic locations on the suit, most notably on the shoulders, knees, and elbows. Used as a simple weapon against the undead, they add an additional 1D6 S.D.C. points of damage in hand to hand combat. The spikes are Mega-Damage structures coated in silver and can therefore do damage against vampires and many other supernatural beings.

Techno-Wizard Features: Standard for the Incursion EBA.

1. Magic Force Field: The armor has the ability to supplement its light frame with a mystic force field for extra protection. The small force field emitter is located on the front of the armor, at the mid-section.

Spell Effect: Armor of Ithan.

Range: Self only.

M.D.C.: 60

Activation Cost: 15 P.P.E. or 30 I.S.P.

Duration: 10 minutes or until depleted, whichever comes first. Force Fields can be recharged/reactivated after one melee round with additional P.P.E. or I.S.P.

2. Flight Pack: Built into the back of the armor is a TW Flight Pack. This small device is a miniaturized jet pack for rapid deployment and easy access to enemy entrenchments, camps, towers, etc., in the field. The apparatus is completely silent, offering a substantial advantage over conventional jet packs. The device itself houses what appear to be two large, gold rods wrapped in copper wire and hooked in series with two small P.P.E. batteries that regulate the flow of the magical energy powering the machine. The Flight Pack is guided by a hand control that is wired to the internal working of the armor and stored via a retractable cord in the forearm.

The Flight Pack enables the wearer to fly at speeds up to 75 mph (120 km), with a maximum altitude of 5,000 feet (1524 m). Maximum speed can be achieved in a matter of a few seconds (one melee action/attack). In flight, the user is +2 to dodge.

Spell Effect: Fly as the Eagle.

Activation Cost: 25 P.P.E. or 50 I.S.P.

Duration: One hour per activation.

3. Silent Movement: The armor is able to capture the sound waves caused by it and around it and completely nullify them. This is accomplished, in part, through the silver spikes in various locations on the armor. The key spikes function as powered antennae to track the harmonics of ambient noise and emit inverse wave patterns, effectively canceling out any noise made by the armor and gear. The field extends a few feet around the wearer, so footsteps, leaves crunching, etc.,

are silenced. When operating in silent mode, a person standing next to the merc wearing Incursion armor could scream at the top of his lungs and still not be heard – perfect for surgical strikes and assassination. The one disadvantage of the silent feature is that alarms, radio transmissions, and speech are cancelled out as well. That means a practitioner of magic cannot use the silent mode and cast magic nor can he stand too close to a comrade who has the null field activated. Teammates in “silent strike” mode of operation use sign language, hand signals and body language to communicate. It also means the wearer may be surprised by a silent attacker and his teammates will not hear him scream or his cries for help unless he disengages the silent mode (counts as one melee action/attack).

Spell Effect: Globe of Silence.

Range: Completely nullifies all noise within a five foot (1.5 m) diameter with the armored wearer being at the center.

Activation Cost: 20 P.P.E. or 40 I.S.P.

Duration: 5 minutes per activation.

4. Camouflage: The end effect is equivalent to the spell Chameleon, found in the **Rifts® RPG** or **Rifts® Book of Magic**; blends in with surroundings as long as the character remains motionless or moves slowly (Spd 6 or less).

Spell Effect: Chameleon.

Range: Self only.

Activation Cost: 7 P.P.E. or 14 I.S.P.

Duration: 20 minutes per activation.

Weapon Systems: No energy or powered weapon systems are available on the armor without sacrificing one of the other TW features.

The armor does come standard with the aforementioned silver spikes, as well as a pair of retractable silver-plated short swords that extend from forearm housings and a dagger-like silver blade that protrudes from the elbow. Each inflicts 2D4 S.D.C. damage (double damage to vampires and other beings vulnerable to silver). W.P. Short Sword bonuses are applicable.

TW Exterminator Armor

This formidable armor is standard issue for the Arzno Mercenary Corps heavy weapons divisions, and favored by many of the officers. Its TW enhancements grant an increase in strength to allow the wearer to use weapons normally reserved for ‘Borgs and power armor troops, such as rail guns, missile launchers, large M.D. swords, water cannons, etc. The activation of this feature breathes life into servos and hydraulics located below the arms and shoulders of the armored suit as the mystical energy that flows through it empowers and animates the Techno-Wizardry components.

The model comes standard with silver-plated spikes designed for intimidation and combating vampires and other supernatural creatures. The armor itself comes in forest and desert camouflage, gold, crimson, light and medium blue, and light grey with light color accents.

Model: Arzno TWA-1600 Exterminator EBA; borderline power armor.

Size: Typically human size, but custom jobs are available for a substantial increase in price.

Weight: 18 lbs (8.0 kg).

Enhanced P.S.: Even without engaging Supernatural Strength, the suit increases the wearer’s normal P.S., adding 1D4+5 points and making the P.S. equivalent to that of a cyborg with *Augmented Strength*, which should make using rail guns and carrying heavy gear easy.

Mobility: Fair mobility; -20% to climb, prowl, swim, or perform acrobatics and similar physical skills.

M.D.C. by Location:

Head – 75

Arms – 40 each

Legs – 50 each

Main Body – 100

*Force Field Emitter – 10

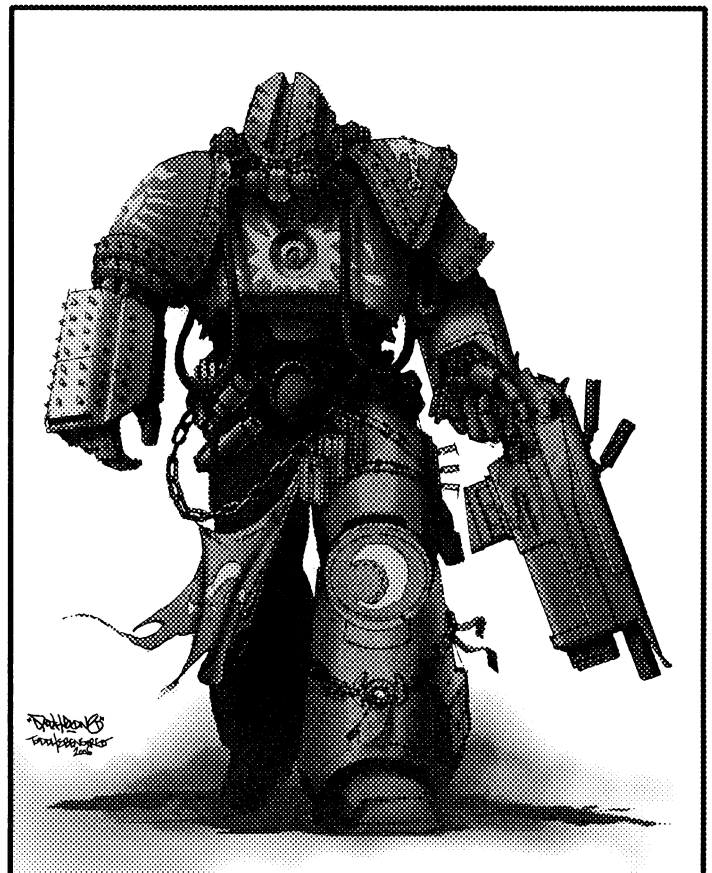
Magic Force Field – 60

*A single asterisk denotes a very small and difficult target to hit, requiring a Called Shot at -4 to strike.

Market Price: 185,000 at Arzno Weapons Manufacturing, or up to 20% more at competing Techno-Wizards throughout the New West, where knock-offs are common. 400,000 credits on the Black Market in places where TW devices are highly illegal.

Special Features: The armor has many silver spikes on the forearm plates and along the shoulders. Used as a simple weapon against the undead, they add an additional 1D6 S.D.C. points of damage in hand to hand combat. The spikes are Mega-Damage structures coated in silver and can therefore do damage against vampires and many other supernatural beings.

Techno-Wizard Features: The following features are standard on the Exterminator EBA, but up to two additional features may



be added for additional cost. See the **Rifts® RPG** for some common features that can be added to armor.

1. Magic Force Field: Extra M.D.C. protection from the small force field emitter located on the back of the armor, between the shoulders.

Spell Effect: Armor of Ithan.

Range: Self only.

M.D.C.: 60

Activation Cost: 15 P.P.E. or 30 I.S.P.

Duration: 10 minutes or until depleted, whichever comes first. Recharge/reactivate as needed.

2. Superhuman Strength: A voice command and the expenditure of P.P.E. gives the wearer a Supernatural P.S. of 24!

Spell Effect: Superhuman Strength.

Range: Self only.

Effects: P.S. increases to 30, P.E. to 24, and both become Supernatural. The character can carry 1,500 pounds (675 kg) and lift twice that amount.

Activation Cost: 10 P.P.E. or 20 I.S.P.

Duration: 5 minutes.

Weapon Systems: None, but when Supernatural Strength is engaged, the character inflicts Mega-Damage with his bare hands: A restrained punch does 5D6+15 S.D.C., a regular strength punch does 3D6 M.D., and a power punch does 6D6 M.D. (the latter counts as two attacks). Remember, the warrior is also likely to be armed with one or more heavy weapons, extra ammo and other gear.

Ironwood Armor

Mages on Rifts Earth often have to make the difficult choice between casting their magic at full potency, or wearing restrictive, metal or composite, Mega-Damage armor that reduces their ability to properly channel P.P.E. and thus diminishes their abilities. This has led to the unique creation of Ironwood Armor, available only from the Techno-Wizards at Arzno.

Ironwood Armor is very expensive and what's more, is not easily repaired without going back to the original maker. On the upside, this wooden armor does not restrict a mage's ability to cast spells in any way. This tradeoff is favorable enough that spell casters have been flocking to it ever since it was put on the market a few years ago.

The Ironwood process is very simple. Wooden armor is crafted by an artisan or armorer. Wood or a combination of wood, leather and other materials have been used in the past, including Samurai armor, various people of the South Pacific and our own Native Americans, so the use of wood for armor is not as unlikely as it may sound. Once the armor itself is molded and built from ordinary wood, often with intricate designs, shapes, woven materials, lacquer, carvings and painted symbols and designs, it is magically transformed into Mega-Damage material by the Earth Warlock spell of *Ironwood*. The armor itself is not magic in any way, nor does it possess Techno-Wizard features or magic. The transformation simply changes the armor's natural S.D.C. wood into M.D.C. material, all that's needed is a gifted armor maker and a high level Earth Warlock with the Ironwood spell. It is so simple it's amazing nobody thought of it sooner.

Fact of the matter is, there are so many modern and TW alternatives that wood armor was never mass produced before. Perception also has a lot to do with it. Until beautiful, sleek armor began coming out of Arzno, wood armor in the past was bulky, clumsy and ugly.

Wood armor is a new craft that has a number of artisans, woodworkers and Earth Warlocks in Arzno scrambling to figure out the secrets and get into the business for themselves. Making good quality, flexible and comfortable wood armor is very much an art, and a time consuming one at that. Currently, the most notable makers of Ironwood armor are the brothers, Roger and Randall Rick. Both older gentlemen now, one a retired Naturalist and the other an Earth Warlock (see the Ironwood Armory, #55 on the Arzno map). Not only are they the first to open such a business in Arzno, but their skills of wood craftsmanship are unsurpassed.

Although there are dozens on the market, there could be hundreds of different styles and appearances of wood armor. However, while they may look different, all fall into one of the same two basic models sold in Arzno: Mage Armor and Vampire Hunter Armor.

Ironwood Mage Armor

This wooden plate armor affords a mage M.D.C. protection while not inhibiting the wearer's physical mobility or the ability to cast magic spells. In generally, resembles ancient European, Oriental, or Juicer plate armor and can be found extensively in and around Arzno. Most are custom fitted to the purchaser, providing for optimum protection and comfort. The superior fit can reduce prowl penalties to half of the normal level. Mage Armor is often accessorized with belts, straps, studded leather, animal bone, claws or teeth, as well as colorful hooded cloaks, capes, loincloths, banners, strips of cloth and feathers. A mage can reflect his or her personal style in a totally unique suit of armor.

Ironwood armor is non-environmental so Ley Line Walkers continue to wear gas masks, air filters and other facial coverings. The inclusion of environmental systems would require encasing the wearer in high-tech materials and making the armor sealed and airtight, with a power supply, air circulatory system, etc., all of which add to the weight, cost and cumbersome feel of the armor. As it is, the armor feels natural and comfortable.

Model: Arzno TWA-1000M Ironwood Mage Armor.

Size: Human size, from roughly 5 to 7 feet in height (1.5 to 2.1 m).

Weight: 20 lbs (9 kg); wood is heavy.

Mobility: Average mobility; -10% to climb, prowl, swim, or perform acrobatics and similar physical skills.

M.D.C. by Location:

Head – 30 or by a separate helmet.

Arms – 20 each

Legs – 28 each

Main Body – 60

Market Price: 75,000-85,000 for a basic suit. Highly-stylized and uniquely crafted armor can cost double or triple the price.

Special Features: Most notably, the armor does not interfere with a mage's ability to cast spells.

Weapon Systems: None.

Ironwood Vampire Hunter Armor

The second common type of Ironwood armor is built specifically for the vampire hunters of the New West. In form it is fundamentally the same as the armor designed for mages, but since it is for warriors, not mages, it is a bit heavier, offers better M.D.C. protection and comes equipped with wooden barbs and spikes that turn the wearer into a walking weapon against the undead. The armor utilizes some modern materials to provide a little extra protection and padding, and the armor is never fully environmental.

Model: Arzno TWA-1000H Ironwood Hunter Armor.

Size: Human size, from roughly 5 to 7 feet in height (1.5 to 2.1 m).

Weight: 25 lbs (11.3 kg).

Mobility: Average mobility; -10% to climb, -15% to prowl, swim, or perform acrobatics and similar physical skills.

M.D.C. by Location:

Head – 40

Arms – 25 each

Legs – 35 each

Main Body – 75

Market Price: 85,000-95,000 for a basic suit. Highly-stylized and uniquely crafted armor can cost double or triple the price.

Special Features: Does not interfere with a mage's ability to cast spells. Also see Weapon Systems.

Weapon Systems:

- 1. Wood Construction.** Being made of wood, an elbow, knee strike, backhand punch, head butt, etc. all do an *extra 1D6 Hit Point damage* (in addition to normal punch/kick damage) to the undead and any being vulnerable to wood.
- 2. Retractable Forearm Blade.** A standard feature is to have an Ironwood short sword or a silver blade that can slide out of the housing in combat with the undead. Both blades inflict 2D6 Hit Point damage to vampires and others vulnerable to said material. Some vampire hunters have one blade wood and the other silver.
- 3. Elbow Spike or Blade.** An M.D.C. wood spike or short, dagger-like blade extends from the elbow and inflicts 2D6 Hit Point damage to the undead.
- 4. Spikes.** 3-6 spikes usually protrude from the shoulder plate, and sometimes the knees and forearms. The spikes inflict 4D6 S.D.C. damage from a body block and 3D6 S.D.C. from a punch or a kick. Damage is double Hit Points against vampires and other creatures vulnerable to wood.

Note: These are all in addition to handheld weapons such as silver plated swords, Vibro-Blades, wood and/or silver knives, wood throwing sticks (1D6 S.D.C. against mortals, 2D6 against vampires), wooden stakes, crossbow, bow and arrows, TW grenades, TW flares, and other TW vampire slaying weapons and conventional M.D. weapons and gear.

TW “Imitator” Armor Series

By Jason Richards & Kevin Siembieda

One of Arzno Weapons Manufacturing's top-selling product lines is the Imitator series of full environmental, *TW power armor*. Popular among Arzno mercenaries, other mercs, lawmen, gunfighters, vampire slayers and many men at arms and adventurers operating in the area, provided they can afford one.

There are many basic “styles” of Imitator armor, each having the basic look and styling of an animal. The four basic packages are offered with models ready-to-buy, but can also be customized to the purchaser's particular wants – *canines, felines, bears, birds of prey* and *demonic* face plates and imagery are the most popular. For example, a notable bounty hunter known as *Vic “The Coyote” Carlson* commissioned a unique suit of armor stylized as (you guessed it) a *coyote*, and paid a bit extra to ensure that his particular coyote stylization was exclusively his. The same can be said for Karla “the Rattler” Jackson, a sheriff known for her quick draw who opted for a rattlesnake stylization, and for the wealthy cattle baron K.D. Ramirez who had special “Tri-Top” Imitator armor commissioned for his bodyguards and hired muscle.

Customized armor is expensive, but still popular. One of the basic body styles of the mass market editions (described in the pages that follow) is used as the foundation of the armor. It is mainly the external appearance and weapons built into the suit and carried by the individual that makes each suit unique. Customized appearance costs an additional 250,000 credits. Add on top of that any special *built-in* weapon additions (similar to how Combat Cyborgs are customized with different forearm weapons that could be a Vibro-Blade and laser, or ion blaster, or laser, plus a back mounted rail gun, etc.). **Note:** As many as two conventional M.D. weapons may be built into each forearm, and one in only one of the shoulders, one in each leg, and one mounted on the back of ground units (none if there is a flight system). Most have a couple of arm weapons. (Silver blades and Vibro-Blades plus an energy weapon are most common, and one in the back or tied to a back mounted ammo drum and power supply like a rail gun, are most common weapon combinations.) Otherwise, optics, sensors, radar, cooling system, communications, and other features are limited to those *standard* to all common suits of power armor, nothing extra.

A buyer may also acquire different TW enhancements, usually averaging 50,000 credits for each level of the spell being installed (so 50,000 credits for a first level spell, 250,000 credits for a fifth level spell, etc.). Only spells level 1-6 are generally available; most stick to spells level 1-4 due to cost. Limited to a maximum of four TW enhancements per one suit of armor.

Mass-produced Imitator Power Armor are limited to the following models, each with its own set of unique TW enhancements. The speedy, leaping, **Jackrabbit** (the base model for light, quick ground armor), the sturdy, fast running and reliable **Lonewolf** (the base model for medium infantry ground armor), the heavily armored and super-strong **Raging Bull** (used as the base for bears, rhinos, and similar big, bulky armor), the high-flying **Thunderbird** (the base model for flying power ar-

mor) and the lifesaving **Guardian Angel** (aerial power armor, rescue and medical armor).

The Importance of the P.P.E. Battery

All living beings have P.P.E. *Most adult humans and D-Bees* have a minimal P.P.E. reserve of 1-6 points, maybe 2D6. That amount is usually greater (3D6+10 P.P.E.) in *teens* (ages 13-20; +10 P.P.E. in Arzno teens) and 6D6+12 in *children*. However, children (under the age of 13) are not sent into combat. *Teens* (ages 16-20) may be a merc, soldier or adventurer – and remember, the average *Arzno citizen*, born and raised in the city-state where TW items are commonplace, will have, on average, 18-28 P.P.E. points even as an adult – but even with the greater amount of P.P.E. it is not enough to activate the TW features of the armor more than once, twice or a handful of times. *Psychics* will have 1-6 P.P.E. but a fair to large amount of I.S.P., however it costs double the I.S.P. to use TW items, limiting their use as well. That's why each suit of TW power armor has a **TW P.P.E. Battery**.

Note: *Techno-Wizards* and other *practitioners of magic* can wear TW power armors and use their formidable amounts of personal P.P.E. to augment the amount stored in the battery. HOWEVER, with the exception of about one third of the Techno-Wizards, most practitioners of magic (as in 97%) will not wear these environmental armors because, **a)** they cannot cast spells while inside the armor; **b)** they are not warriors, and without spell casting they feel uncomfortable, stressed and much *less* capable inside TW power armor; and **c)** many feel claustrophobic and disoriented in power armor (reduce all bonuses, skill performance and number of attacks per melee by *half*) and absolutely refuse to wear any kind of heavy armor or power armor. Strangely enough, dragons, other creatures of magic and supernatural beings will NOT wear TW armor for similar reasons, and/or because they absolutely refuse to rely on anything created by mere mortals.

TW P.P.E. Battery: All TW Imitator power armor suits come standard with a heavy-duty P.P.E. Battery that contains a 60, 80 or a whopping 200 P.P.E. This P.P.E. reserve can only be used to activate and recharge the various TW features built into the suit, not spell casting or anything else. As noted above, without this mystic energy reserve, ordinary power armor pilots, warriors and heroes could *not* use the suits with any measure of effectiveness, unable to use the special powers more than once to a few times.

The P.P.E. Battery is relatively small and concealed, usually located between the shoulder blades in the small of the back. Destroying all of the M.D.C. of the main body will also destroy the P.P.E. Battery. The armored shell contains five diamonds (at least two carats each) imbedded in a copper bar and wrapped in gold and silver wire, which then run throughout the armor to power the TW systems.

P.P.E. Battery Reserve: 200 points.

Recharging the P.P.E. Battery: Once P.P.E. in the battery is used up, the owner of the power armor needs to recharge it. No P.P.E. means he cannot access the magical TW powers of the armor. Recharging is easy, but can be time consuming (taking the warrior out of combat) or expensive (purchasing P.P.E. from a mage).

Method #1: Find a ley line and rest on the line. The TW battery is designed to absorb the ambient energy of the ley line, however it is a long process with only 5 P.P.E. restored per hour on the ley line (double the P.P.E. amount per hour at a ley line nexus). This can also be dangerous as ley lines attract creatures of magic and supernatural beings, and a Rift could open at a nexus point. **Note:** Fighting on a ley line provides a constant source of 5 P.P.E. per melee round, but only five, it does not build up if not used that melee.

Method #2: Find a practitioner of magic willing to channel some of his P.P.E. from his personal reserve into the P.P.E. Battery. The problem here is that only a mage friend may be willing to do this for free, and in a combat situation, he may not be able to give up his own P.P.E. without impairing himself or jeopardizing his life, the lives others or the mission. All other practitioners of magic will charge money for the service, anywhere from 30-50 credits per P.P.E. point if the mage is kind and generous, to 100-600 credits per P.P.E. point if greedy or mean.

Otherwise the character is forced to rely on alternative sources of P.P.E. until the battery can be recharged, or limp along without the most potent abilities of his TW power armor.

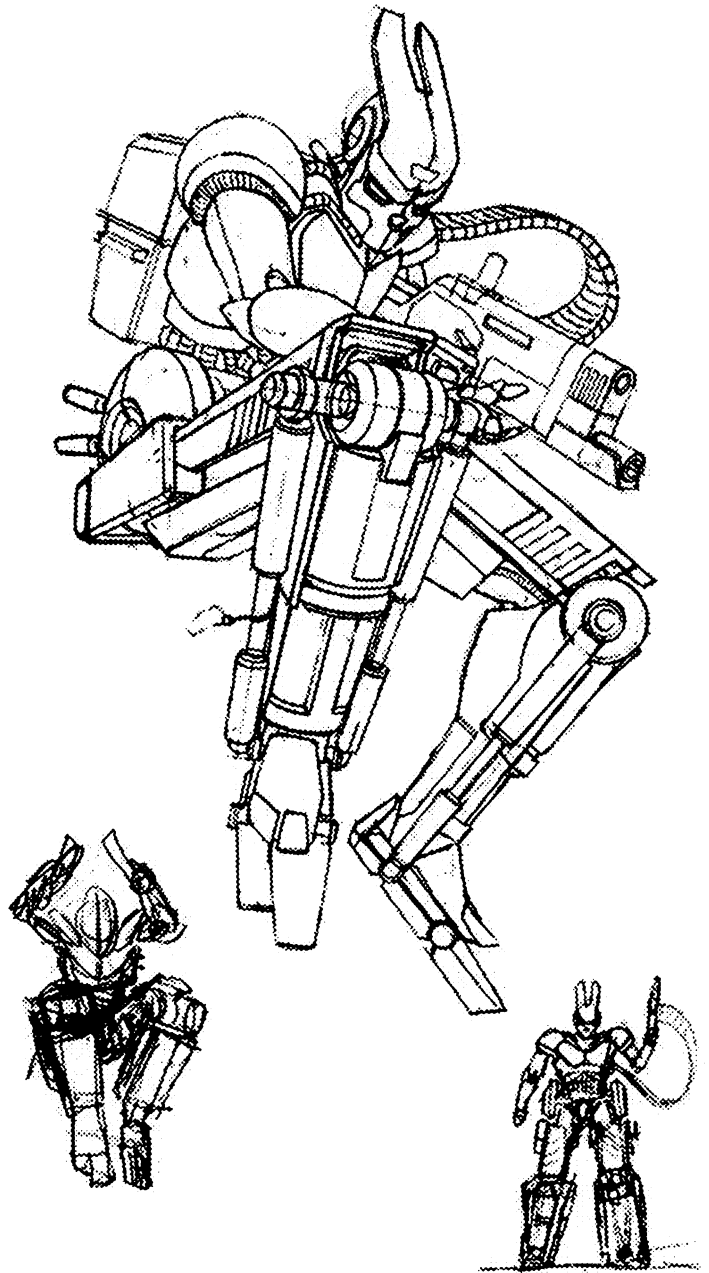
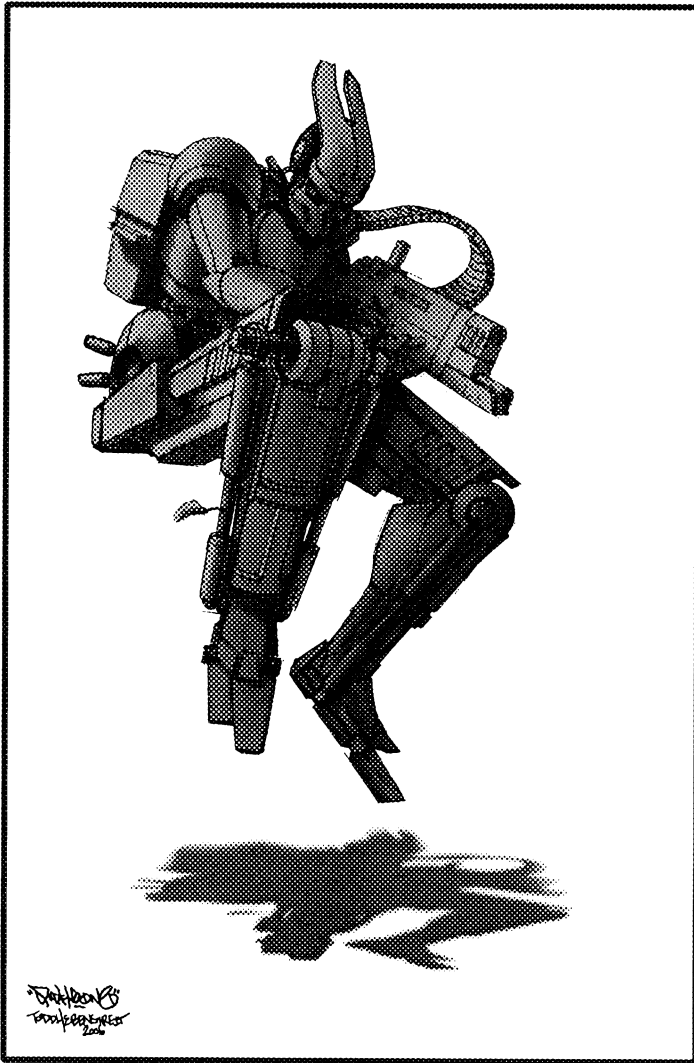
Alternative Sources of P.P.E.

In case of emergencies or sheer desperation, any of the following can be implemented. Note that tapping one's own *Personal P.P.E. Reserve* and *Sacrificing Speed* are NEVER used until the P.P.E. Battery is running dangerously low (20% or less), or has run out and the character is down to using his own P.P.E. reserve. And *Life Source Conversion* is never used until the character is completely out of all other resources, including his own physical reserve.

Personal P.P.E. Reserve: All living beings have P.P.E., and the pilot can draw on his own P.P.E. to power/charge/activate any TW feature. However, most men at arms will have a minimal personal P.P.E. reserve.

Life Source P.P.E. Conversion: The character may also use Life Source magic to transform his own life energy into P.P.E. without additional cost to cast Life Source conversion. Sacrificing two S.D.C. equals one P.P.E. point. Giving up one Hit Point = one P.P.E. point. This feature is vital to pilots who do not have a great deal of personal P.P.E. and use up the P.P.E. stored in the TW battery.

Sacrifice the Need for Speed for P.P.E.: The two flying power armors, the Thunderbird and the Guardian Angel, can also draw on the armor's internal energy to supplement the available P.P.E. to power and use the various TW features. When this is done the P.P.E. cost of activation is half the listed P.P.E., but there is a different price to pay. Each draw on the internal energy system reduces the armor's running and flying *speed* by 5%. Lost speed takes 30 minutes to recover; one hour if Spd is reduced below half. Speed cannot be reduced below 10%.



TW Jackrabbit Power Armor

The Jackrabbit Imitator is one of A.W.M.'s most popular and impressive creations. Inspired in part by the Triax Terrain Hopper, the Jackrabbit is lightning quick, mobile and capable of leaping and loping to cover ground fast without jet assisted leaps. Its speed (matched by no conventional exoskeleton on Rifts Earth) and uncanny ability to make the impossible happen only add to its "wildcard" status, especially to Crazies, Power Armor Pilots, mercs and adventurers who like living on the edge or wild side.

The Jackrabbit Imitator plays on four trademarks of this common desert and prairie animal. First, the superior speed and agility of the nimble hare. The jackrabbit is one of the fastest small creatures in the West, able to outrun a mountain lion or even a wolf on a good day. All the while bobbing, weaving, dodging and leaping, making it all the harder to hit.

Second, its ability to run/leap to cover ground quickly.

Third, the critter is known for its "jackrabbit start," allowing it to move instantly at nearly full speed.

Fourth, the superstitious belief that the rabbit is lucky, particularly the "lucky rabbit's foot."

The TW Jackrabbit Imitator exhibits all these qualities, including good luck. Actually, the amazing leaps, dodges, and strikes are all part of the overall design and a built-in TW over-

drive system that pushes the limits of the armor by augmenting traditional power armor systems with P.P.E. The latter eliminates the threat of stalling or burning out the armor and makes it an agile and difficult target to hit. However, many wearers swear the suit is, indeed, "lucky" and at least one third of the buyers make the purchase because of the "luck factor." Could there be a magical side effect that imparts luck? The Techno-Wizard designers insist *no*, but many users claim yes.

Model: Arzno TWA-1230JR Jackrabbit Power Armor.

Crew: One.

M.D.C. by Location:

- Head – 110
- Arms (2) – 28 each
- Legs (2) – 80 each
- Rail Gun – 30
- Main Body – 135

Statistical Data:

Size: Already a specialty item; size is totally customizable. Add 30% to cost if over 8 feet (2.4 m) tall.

Weight: 110 lbs (49.5 kg).

Physical Strength: +6 to the P.S. of the pilot and is equal to Bionic/Augmented P.S.

Power System: Nuclear or TW generator.

P.P.E. Battery: 200 points to activate the TW features without having to draw upon the pilot's own P.P.E. reserve. Once depleted, the battery can be recharged by a Techno-Wizard, ley line or the magical feature may be activated by the operator's own P.P.E. or I.S.P.

Market Price: 1.2 million credits at Arzno. Exclusively sold by Arzno, but 2.5 million to 3.2 million credits when the Black Market gets its hands on one.

Power Armor Features:

Running (Normal): 40 mph (64 km) in a normal, human style of running upright. The act of running tires the pilot, but at 20% of the normal fatigue rate.

Jackrabbit Run: The pilot activates "Jackrabbit mode" via voice command or the press of a code on a key pad concealed in the left forearm. This engages a loping, zigzag pattern with random long leaps, sudden sharp turns, and frequent dodging. Maximum speed is 65 mph (104 km), and that can be increased by 30% (85 mph/136 km) when the light rail gun is stowed and the operator runs (lopes) on all fours!

Bonuses: +1 on initiative, +3 to automatic dodge (roll to dodge as usual but the act of dodging does not use up a melee attack/action; +7 to automatic dodge when running on all fours, the low profile is harder to hit), +2 to roll with impact, +10% to Gymnastics skill percentiles (if the pilot has it), and can go from zero to full speed in 3 seconds (uses up one melee attack/action), and stop on a dime. All are in addition to the usual Power Armor combat bonuses for Basic or Elite level skills.

Leaping: Powerful, reinforced leg hydraulics enables the Jackrabbit armor to leap 20 feet (6.1 m) high and 40 feet (12.2 m) across. Increase height and distance by 30% with a Jackrabbit running start.

Flying: Not possible.

Swimming: Normal Spd and -5% on skill performance. Can survive underwater depths of up to 400 feet (122 m).

Techno-Wizard Features:

1. TW Superhuman Speed: Expending 10 P.P.E. activates magically enhanced Superhuman Speed, increasing the maximum speed of the Jackrabbit Run mode to 130 mph (208 km), or 170 mph (272 km) running on all fours! An additional +3 to automatic dodge, and +2 to roll with impact, and double leaping height and distance! The magical effect negates any additional fatigue effect from the heightened speed and exertion. **Note**: Superhuman Speed applies only to Jackrabbit mode.

Spell Effect: Superhuman Speed (10), Energy Field (10) and Escape (8).

Range: Self only.

Activation Cost: 10 P.P.E. or 20 I.S.P.

Duration: 5 minutes per activation.

Weapon Systems:

1. Short-Range Rail Gun ("Rabbit Gun"): Belt-fed, lightweight, snub-nosed rail gun with ammo-can on the back. May fire silver or conventional rounds. Can be hooked to the back of the shoulder or hip when running on all fours.

Weight: Gun: 20 lbs (9 kg), Ammo-Drum: 50 lbs (22.5 kg).

Mega-Damage: 1D6 M.D. for a 10 round burst. Silver rounds do 1D6x10 S.D.C. per burst to humanoids, 2D6x10 Hit Points to vampires and other creatures vulnerable to silver.

Range: 2000 feet (610 m).

Rate of Fire: Each burst counts as one melee attack.

Payload: 1200 rounds (120 bursts).

2. Hand to Hand Combat: Depends on level of training, see *Robot (and Power Armor) Combat – Basic and Elite Ground Based Power Armor* stats, on page 351 and 352 of **Rifts® Ultimate Edition**, respectively. Plus, the following bonuses:

2D4 M.D. for kick attacks (most types).

2D6+2 M.D. from a Karate kick.

4D8 M.D. for Leap Kick (counts as two melee attacks), plus there is a 01-60% chance of knocking human-sized opponents in body armor (up to 8 feet/2.4 m tall) off their feet, causing them to lose initiative and two melee attacks, 01-30% chance of same if they are cyborgs, power armor, robots or superhuman and weigh more than 250 lbs (112.5 kg).

All other stats are as per Power Armor Combat Basic or Elite.

3. Optional Forearm Weapon (1) for the right or left arm.

Typically one of the following:

Silver Short Sword: 1D6 S.D.C., double damage to undead.

Laser: 2D6 M.D. per single blast, 2000 foot (610 m) range, unlimited payload, because it is tied to the armor's power supply.

Ion Blaster: 4D6 M.D. per single blast, 1000 foot (305 m) range, unlimited payload, because it is tied to the armor's power supply.

Costs an extra 15,000-25,000 credits. **Note**: The Jackrabbit seldom has any other built-in weapons. Reduce speed by 10% for each additional weapon should more than one be added.

4. Handheld weapons of choice. The pilot can use any conventional or M.D. weapons and gear he may desire.

TW Lonewolf Power Armor

The Lonewolf Imitator is one of A.W.M.'s most popular suits of TW power armor and is basically an all-purpose infantry unit. It has good speed, strength and mobility, with solid armor protection. Best of all, the Lonewolf is tough, reliable, and customizable. This model is popular among Wilderness Scouts, Merc Soldiers, Power Armor Pilots, grunts, and warriors of all kinds. **Note**: Basic body styling is similar to the Thunderbird, minus the wings and protruding chest structure. The helmet of the Lonewolf comes in two styles, a wolf-like shape and a pug-version that is reminiscent of the lion headdress sometimes worn by ancient Greek and Roman warriors, with the mouth open and teeth bared (the power armor pilot looks through a tinted plate in the opened mouth).

Model: Arzno TWA-1240LW Lonewolf Power Armor.

Crew: One.

M.D.C. by Location:

Head – 90
Arms (2) – 38 each
Legs (2) – 75 each
Rail Gun – 35
Main Body – 200

Statistical Data:

Size: Already a specialty item; size is totally customizable. Add 30% to cost if over 8 feet (2.4 m) tall.

Weight: 155 lbs (69.8 kg).

Physical Strength: Robotic P.S. of 24.

Power System: Nuclear or TW generator.

P.P.E. Battery: 200 points to activate the TW features.

Market Price: 1.5 million credits at Arzno. Exclusively sold by Arzno, but 2.8 million to 5 million credits when the Black Market gets its hands on one, more if loaded down with weapons.

Power Armor Features:

1. Enhanced Speed: Running: 75 mph (120 km) in a normal, human-style of running upright. The act of running tires the pilot, but at 20% of the normal fatigue rate.

Bonuses: +1 on initiative, +1 to strike, parry, and dodge, +1 to disarm, and +2 to pull punch. Can go from zero to full speed in 6 seconds (uses up two melee actions), and stop on a dime. All are in addition to the usual Power Armor Combat bonuses for Basic or Elite level skills.

Leaping: The powerful robot legs can leap 16 feet (4.9 m) high and 22 feet (6.7 m) across. Increase height and distance by 20% with a running start.

Flying: Not possible.

Swimming: Double the operator's normal swimming speed and can survive underwater depths of up to 500 feet (152 m).

Techno-Wizard Features:

1. TW See Invisible: Expending 4 P.P.E. activates the magical ability to See the Invisible.

Spell Effect: See the Invisible (4).

Range: Self only; visual range as per the optic systems of the suit (at least 2000 feet/610 m).

Activation Cost: 4 P.P.E. or 8 I.S.P.

Duration: 6 minutes per activation.

2. TW Force Shield: Creates a pale white circular field of energy from the right or left forearm (pick one) that can be used like a weightless, medium-sized shield.

Spell Effect: Magic Shield (6).

Range: Self only.

Activation Cost: 6 P.P.E. or 12 I.S.P.

Duration: 12 minutes per activation.

3. Mystic Assault: The Lonewolf can fire off a volley of mystic attacks that include an energy bolt from the eyes, increased Mega-Damage from punches, and an electrical blast from his hands. Each energy blast or punch counts as one melee attack.

Spell Effect: Energy Bolt (5), Electric Arc (8) and Fist of Fury (10).

Range: Touch or up to 150 feet (45.7 m) for energy blasts.

Damage: Punches inflict 2D6+4 M.D. (restrained punch does 3D6 S.D.C.), Energy Bolt does 4D6 S.D.C., and Electric Bolts do 2D6 M.D.

Activation Cost: 13 P.P.E. or 26 I.S.P.

Duration: 5 melee rounds (a minute and 15 seconds).

Weapon Systems:

1. Medium Rail Gun (“Vamp-D Gun” short for “de-destroyer”): Belt-fed, snub-nosed, light rail gun with ammo canister on the back. Designed to fire silver or conventional M.D. rounds. (May be substituted with a TW Water Cannon or TW Wood Rail Gun.) Can be hooked to the back, behind a shoulder or on the hip when not in use.

Weight: Gun: 40 lbs (18 kg), Ammo Drum: 100 lbs (45 kg).

Mega-Damage: 4D6 M.D. for a 20 round burst of Mega-Damage ammo. Silver rounds do 2D4x10 S.D.C. per burst to humanoids, 3D6x10 Hit Points to vampires and other creatures vulnerable to silver.

Range: 2200 feet (670.5 m).

Rate of Fire: Each burst counts as one melee attack.

Payload: 2000 rounds (100 bursts).

2. Wolf's Bite Forearm Blade (2; one for each arm). Typically one of the following:

Silver Short Sword: 2D4 S.D.C., double damage to undead.

Vibro-Sword: 2D4 M.D.

3. Hand to Hand Combat: Depends on level of training, see *Robot (and Power Armor) Combat – Basic and Elite Ground Based Power Armor* stats, on page 351 and 352 of **Rifts® Ultimate Edition**, respectively.

4. Handheld weapons of choice. The pilot can use any conventional or M.D. weapons and gear he may desire.

TW Raging Bull Power Armor

The Raging Bull, also known as “the Minotaur” armor, is popular among those looking for heavy armor protection and brute strength. Its basic functionality and heavy-hitting, in-your-face approach appeals to a wide array of customers, from soldiers and mercs to hired muscle. Its heavy armor protection in addition to its magical features makes it an all-around winner for heavy combat.

The Raging Bull looks most like the animal it emulates, with a bovine head complete with horns and a ring through the nose, atop a broad, thick body. As animal-like as it is, it isn't easy to forget that the suit is a Techno-Wizard marvel, as hydraulics and hoses can be seen about the upper body, supporting the thick shoulders and running down the arms of the armor. The eyes glow an eerie red when magical energy is sent through the armor to power its special TW features.

Model: Arzno TWA-1250RB Raging Bull Power Armor.

Crew: One.

M.D.C. by Location:

Horns (2) – 10 each

Head – 95

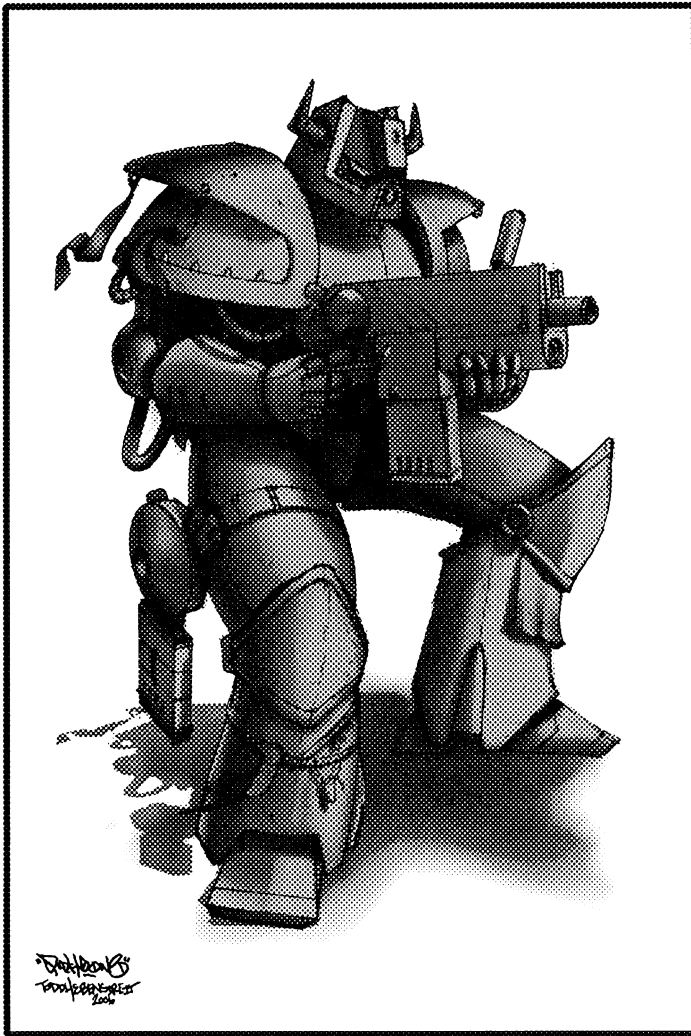
Shoulder Plates (2) – 110 each

Arms (2) – 55 each

Legs (2) – 120 each

Heavy Rail Gun – 100

Main Body – 385



Statistical Data:

Size: Already a specialty item; size is totally customizable. Add 50% to cost if over 8 feet (2.4 m) tall.

Weight: 430 lbs (193.5 kg).

Mobility Penalties: Poor mobility; -20% to climb, prowl, swim, or perform acrobatics and similar physical skills.

Physical Strength: Robotic P.S. of 30.

Power System: Nuclear or TW generator.

P.P.E. Battery: 200 points to activate the TW features.

Market Price: 2 million credits at Arzno. Exclusively sold by Arzno, but 4 to 5 million credits when the Black Market gets its hands on one, more if loaded down with weapons.

Power Armor Features:

Running: 50 mph (80 km) in a normal, human style of running upright. The act of running tires the pilot, but at 20% of the normal fatigue rate.

Bonuses: +1 to strike and parry, and +2 to pull punch. Can go from zero to full speed in 6 seconds (uses up two melee actions), and stop on a dime. All bonuses are in addition to the usual Power Armor Combat bonuses for Basic or Elite level skills.

Leaping: The powerful robot legs can leap 8 feet (2.4 m) high and 15 feet (4.6 m) across. Increase height and distance of jumps by 20% with a running start.

Flying: Not possible.

Swimming: Double the operator's normal swimming speed and can survive underwater depths of up to 1200 feet (366 m).

Techno-Wizard Features:

1. TW Superhuman Strength & Endurance: A voice command and the expenditure of the appropriate amount of P.P.E. (or I.S.P.) turns the hulking power armor into a magical construct with *Supernatural P.S. and Endurance*.

Spell Effect: Superhuman Strength (10).

Range: Self only.

Effects: Robotic P.S. becomes Supernatural. See Hand to Hand Combat under Weapon Systems for M.D. numbers. The character does not fatigue during this time, thanks to Supernatural P.E., and can carry 1,500 pounds (675 kg) and lift twice that amount.

Activation Cost: 10 P.P.E. or 20 I.S.P.

Duration: 5 minutes (20 melee rounds).

2. TW Raging Bull: Activation of this magic effect supercharges the power armor and its pilot inside, turning man and machine into an enraged fighting dervish or "raging bull." Strength again becomes Supernatural, speed is increased by 50%, and the character enjoys the following combat bonuses (in addition to his usual Power Armor Combat: Basic or Elite skill bonuses).

Bonuses: +60 M.D.C. to armor (damage comes off this first, then the true M.D.C. of the armor), +2 attacks per melee round, +2 on initiative, +2 to strike, +1 to parry, does not fatigue, pain is not felt, +1 on all saving throws for the duration, and is impervious to mind control, Horror Factor, possession, drugs, and psionic and magic illusions.

Penalties: The character is consumed with bloodlust and combat. He fights like a bull, never bothering to dodge unless the incoming attack is obviously a devastating one (60 or more M.D.C.), is barely aware of anything but fighting, and when one opponent is defeated, he goes immediately to the next one. Fallen comrades, innocent bystanders, mission objectives and all else is forgotten, only fighting, revenge and winning are important. Furthermore, the bullish warrior fights without mercy, regardless of alignment, and *may* take actions he or she regrets later. If all apparent enemies are defeated before the rage subsides, the warrior will smash and hit machinery, dead bodies, etc., until the magic effect runs its course. Anyone, including friends, who try to calm or restrain the raging individual will be attacked as if they are a new enemy. **Note:** When the enchantment ends, the character suddenly feels tired and weak, and fights with half his usual bonuses, attacks, Spd and skill ability for 1D4 minutes.

Spell Effect: Armor of Ithan (10), Compulsion (20, self) and Magical-Adrenal Rush (45).

Range: Self only.

Activation Cost: 25 P.P.E. or 50 I.S.P. Once activated, it can not be cancelled! The magic abilities and induced rage must run its course. Once the effect wears off, it may not be reactivated for at least five minutes.

Duration: One minute (4 melees).

Weapon Systems:

1. Heavy Rail Gun ("Big Puppy"): Belt-fed, snub-nosed, heavy rail gun with ammo-canister on the back. Designed to

fire silver or conventional M.D. rounds. (May be substituted with a TW Water Cannon or TW Wood Rail Gun.) Can be hooked to the back, behind a shoulder or on the hip when not in use.

Weight: Gun: 55 lbs (24.7 kg), Ammo Drum: 200 lbs (90 kg).

Mega-Damage: 1D4x10 M.D. for a 20 round burst of Mega-Damage ammo. Silver rounds do 3D4x10 S.D.C. per burst to humanoids, 4D6x10 Hit Points to vampires and other creatures vulnerable to silver.

Range: 3000 feet (914 m).

Rate of Fire: Each burst counts as one melee attack.

Payload: 2000 rounds (100 bursts).

2. Hand to Hand Combat: Depends on level of training, see *Robot (and Power Armor) Combat – Basic and Elite Ground Based Power Armor* stats, on page 351 and 352 of **Rifts® Ultimate Edition**, respectively. Plus, the following bonuses:

Robot P.S. of 30 inflicts 1D6 M.D. from a punch, kick or head butt, 2D6 M.D. from a power punch.

When magically increased to *Supernatural P.S. of 30*, punch damage is 3D6 M.D. on a full strength punch, kick or head butt, 6D6 M.D. on a power punch.

All other stats are as per Power Armor Combat Basic or Elite.

3. Handheld weapons of choice. The pilot can use any conventional or M.D. weapons and gear he may desire, although the TW Lightning Mace or a large Vibro-Axe (3D6 M.D.) are commonly suggested or sold with the armor, mainly because both fit the mythical “Minotaur” image.

TW Thunderbird Power Armor

The Thunderbird is the basic aerial power armor in the Imitator series. It was inspired by the Coalition States’ SAMAS and other flying power armor like the NG Red Hawk, NG Samson and Flying Titan. The flying armor offers low altitude strike capabilities, quick response and basic air support. In tribute to its namesake, the revered *Ondi Thunderbirds*, it can rain down lightning from the heavens to smite its enemies. Long-range weapons, speedy flight and superior optics round out the armor’s features.

The Thunderbird armor is highly stylized, with a variety of tech to bird of prey-like helmets and a number of paint styles. The armor’s standard color is sky blue fading into a bright, electric white at the edges and as accents. Not only does this enhance the impressive visual presented by the Thunderbird, it also provides excellent camouflage against a cloudless desert sky. Its four wings are like those of the SAMAS or Flying Titan, but many customers have them painted as if they had feathers.

TW enhancements for the Thunderbird give it a state-of-the-art TW Flight Pack, advanced optical systems, and magical artillery to make the thunder gods jealous. It all adds up to an equivalent light power armor capable of doing vast amounts of damage to targets out in the open, even if it trades off a little bit of the up-close combat advantages. The Thunderbird’s ability to manipulate atmospheric forces and blast targets with lightning-like electrical blasts makes it an asset on any open battlefield.

The power armor is favored by Robot Pilots, Operators, Military Specialists, flying aces, mercs and soldiers who enjoy speed, flying and fast-paced action.

Model: Arzno TWA-1260TB Thunderbird Power Armor.

Crew: One.

M.D.C. by Location:

*Head – 75

Arms (2) – 35 each

Legs (2) – 65 each

*Wings (4) – 40 each

*Searchlight (1) – 5

Heavy Laser Rifle – 50

Main Body – 220

*Items marked by a single asterisk are small, obscured and/or difficult to strike unless a “Called Shot” is made, and even then the shooter is -4 to strike. Destroying one wing reduces the bonus to dodge by -1 and reduces speed by 10%. Destroying two wings reduces dodge bonuses to zero and speed by 50%. Destroying three wings makes the power armor limp along at a mere 10% of its usual speed and altitude, and all remaining combat bonuses, other than those from W.P. skills, are reduced to only +1.

Statistical Data:

Size: Already a specialty item; size is totally customizable. Add 50% to cost if over 8 feet (2.4 m) tall.

Weight: 430 lbs (193.5 kg).

Mobility Penalties: Excellent aerial mobility, but -5% to climb, -15% to swim or perform gymnastics.

Physical Strength: Robotic P.S. of 24.

Power System: TW generator only!

P.P.E. Battery: 200 points to activate the TW features.

Market Price: 2.5 million credits, created and sold exclusively by Arzno, but 5 to 7 million credits when the Black Market gets its hands on one, more if loaded down with extra weapons.

Power Armor Features:

Running: 50 mph (80 km) in a normal, human-style of running upright. The act of running tires the pilot, but at 20% of the normal fatigue rate.

Bonuses: +1 on initiative, +1 to strike, +2 to dodge when airborne, +1 to disarm, and +1 to pull punch. Can go from zero to full speed in 6 seconds (uses up two melee actions), and stop on a dime. All bonuses are in addition to the usual Power Armor Combat bonuses for Basic or Elite level skills.

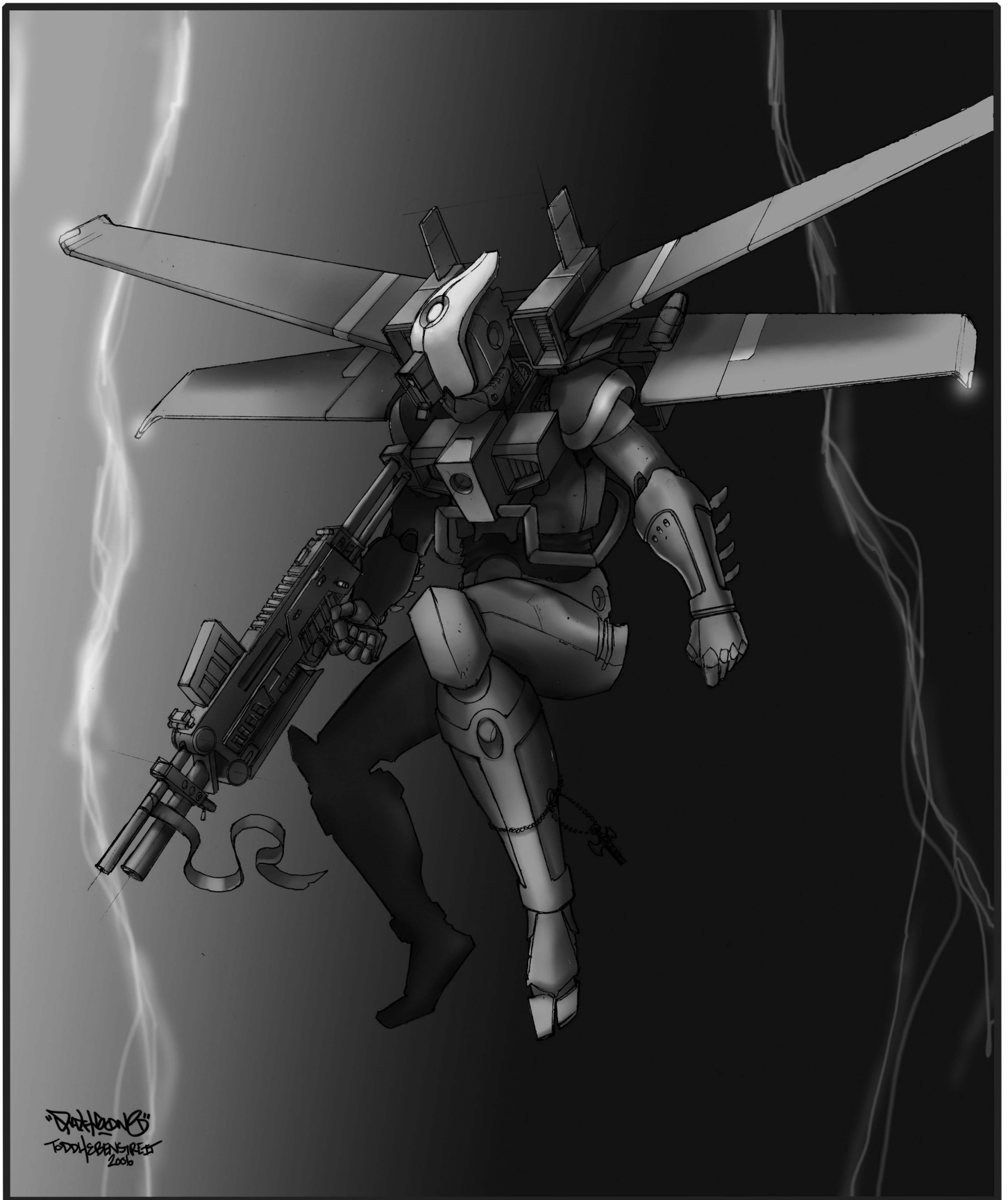
Leaping: The powerful robot legs can leap 10 feet (3 m) high and 15 feet (4.6 m) across without engaging the flight system. Increase height and distance of jumps by 10% with a running start.

Flying: See TW Wing Pack for details.

Swimming: Double the operator’s normal swimming speed and can survive underwater depths of up to 1200 feet (366 m).

Techno-Wizard Features:

1. TW Wing Pack: This larger, advanced Wing Pack is bigger and more powerful than that the flight systems of the Guardian Angel and other Arzno armors. Like other TW systems, the Thunderbird’s Wing Pack uses magical manipulation of



air currents and defies the laws of gravity to achieve flight. When activated, two five-foot (1.5 m) pairs of wings unfold and lock into place. The device itself houses two large, gold rods wrapped in copper wire and hooked in series with two small P.P.E. batteries that regulate the flow of the magical

energy powering the machine. The Wing Pack responds to voice commands and eye movement, responding to what the pilot says and where he looks. If that system fails there is a hand control wired to the internal working of the armor and stored via a retractable cord in the forearm.

The Flight Pack allows the wearer to fly at speeds up to 240 mph (380 km), with a maximum altitude of 10,000 feet (3,050 m). Maximum speed can be achieved in a matter of a few seconds (one attack). Unlike conventional propulsion systems, the T-Bird has the advantage of silent flight; no engine noise, only the rush of wind and gunfire.

Spell Effect: Energy Field (10) and Fly as the Eagle (25).

Activation Cost: 15 P.P.E. or 30 I.S.P.

Duration: One hour per activation.

2. TW Eagle Eye Optics: Used both as an advanced targeting system and for reconnaissance, the magic optics package on the T-Bird enables the pilot to see a sign or identify a raven up to three miles (4.8 km) away with crystal clarity. He can also see in total darkness (Nightvision) and See the Invisible up to 2000 feet (610 m).

Not only that, but a telescoping targeting function enables the pilot to zoom normal vision up to 30x magnification like a telescopic sight, but without the actual mechanical optics. The telescopic vision can “lock” onto a specific target and stay with it even if it is moving, providing a +3 bonus to strike on an *Aimed* or *Called Shot* and +1 on a burst or other type of shooting. To “lock on” the target cannot be moving faster than 100 mph (160 km). **Note:** The disadvantage of such tight focus *locked* on a single target is that the T-Bird functions with tunnel vision and can NOT see what is happening anywhere else, even right in front of its own nose, until the locked target is disengaged and normal vision returned. While locked on target, the T-Bird is a sitting duck: no initiative, no combat bonuses to strike, parry and dodge, and is effectively *blind* to incoming attacks (-10 to parry or dodge incoming missiles, gunfire, and point-blank or physical attacks).

Spell Effects: Eyes of the Wolf (25), See the Invisible (4), and Light Target (6).

Activation Cost: 10 P.P.E. or 20 I.S.P. will power the entire system for the duration. Any of the systems may be used in any combination throughout the activation time, trading one for another as often as the user desires, or utilizing more than one optical enhancement at a time at no additional cost.

Duration: 10 minutes per activation.

3. TW Thunder Bolt: A sort of magical, long-range artillery attack called down by the wearer of the armor. The device allows the user to manipulate atmospheric conditions to generate true lightning bolts cast down upon enemies out in the open.

A disadvantage to this system over more conventional point-and-shoot weapons is it requires open spaces with skies overhead and *can NOT be used indoors* or in places where a target has adequate protection overhead.

Lightning Attack:

Spell Effect: Call Lightning (15) and Electric Arc (8).

Activation Cost: 10 P.P.E. or 20 I.S.P.

Duration: Instant.

Damage: 1D6x10 M.D. or 2D6x10 M.D., but the latter counts as two melee attacks and costs extra P.P.E.

Range: Line of sight; up to 6000 feet (1829 m) away in a straight line, altitude does not count.

Activation Cost: Each blast costs only 8 P.P.E. or 16 I.S.P. to do 1D6x10 damage (double the P.P.E./I.S.P. cost to do double damage). **Note:** Half that P.P.E. or I.S.P. cost *if* the pilot is willing to drain some of the armor’s internal energy and see his speed reduced by 5% per each blast. Lost speed takes 30 minutes to recover; two hours if Spd is reduced below half. Cannot be reduced below 10%.

Electric Arc Attack: In the alternative, the pilot can fire a 2D6 M.D. Electric Arc up to 300 feet (91.5 m) at a P.P.E. cost of one point (or 2 I.S.P.). In both cases a certain amount of energy is drawn from the power armor’s TW generator.

Weapon Systems:

1. “Thunderblast” Laser Rifle & Grenade Launcher (1): A high-powered, heavy-duty laser rifle cabled into the T-Bird’s magic power supply. That gives the laser unlimited fire-power. The grenade launcher is a close-range weapon. (May be substituted with a TW Water Cannon or any kind of rail gun or other type of energy rifle.) The weapon can be stowed by hooking it in one of the wings (cannot fire from the wing position).

Weight: Gun: 15 lbs (6.7 kg).

Mega-Damage: Laser: 4D6 M.D. Grenade launcher: 2D6 M.D. to a blast radius of 12 feet (3.6 m).

Range: 3000 feet (914 m). Grenade launcher: 1200 feet (365 m).

Rate of Fire: Each laser blast counts as one melee attack.

Payload: Laser: Effectively unlimited. Grenade Magazine: 16.

2. Wing Rockets: Five mini-missiles can be mounted on each wing (20 total) and launched by voice command or by hidden firing studs in the forearm.

Primary Purpose: Anti-Aircraft/Armored Vehicle.

Mega-Damage: Varies with missile type; typically Armor Piercing (1D4x10 M.D.) or Plasma (1D6x10 M.D.), but may be High Explosive (5D6 M.D.) or special silver fragmentation missiles for fighting vampires (does 5D6 S.D.C. to everyone within a 15 foot/4.6 m radius, double damage to vampires; 600 credits per silver frag missile).

Maximum Effective Range: One mile (1.6 km).

Rate of Fire: May be fired one missile at a time or in volleys of two, three, or four. A volley counts as one melee attack regardless of the number of missiles in the volley.

Payload: Total of 20 mini-missiles.

3. Energy Rifles and other normal weapons, grenades, etc., may also be used by the pilot of a TW Thunderbird power armor. The less bulky armor allows for a side arm, rifle, belts, straps, harness, and pouches. The only limitation is that a belt and especially containers are subject to flying off when traveling at speeds beyond 100 mph (160 km).

4. Forearm Blades (8): Four small, dagger-like blades can be extended from the side of each forearm like fins. They are used against opponents with a backhand strike or a quick, forward slicing action. They may also be used to rake an opponent as the T-Bird flies past him, arms positioned forward, Superman-style. Damage inflicted depends on whether the blades are M.D. Vibro-Blades or S.D.C. silver blades.

Mega-Damage Vibro-Blades: 3D4 M.D. per attack.

S.D.C. Silver Plated Blades: 3D4 S.D.C. to ordinary mortal opponents, 4D6+4 S.D.C./Hit Point damage to the undead and other creatures vulnerable to silver.

- 5. Searchlight (1):** Built into the chest is a searchlight; range is 1200 feet (366 m); can angle 30 degrees in any direction.
- 6. Hand to Hand Combat:** Rather than use a weapon, the pilot can engage in Mega-Damage hand to hand combat. Damage and bonuses as per Power Armor Combat training; Basic or Elite.

TW Guardian Angel Power Armor

Guardian Angel Imitator armor is one of the Arzno Techno-Wizards' greatest and strangest creations. It was designed for rescue and extraction of the wounded, but has also been adopted by champions of light, vampire hunters (including some of Reid's Rangers), demon slayers, and priests, as well as Body Fixers.

In the A.M.C., this armor is typically worn by chaplains and field medics, who use it to bring peace to those who have fallen in combat. Medics use the TW power armor's magical healing capabilities to augment their own learned medical skills or psionic healing abilities. The Guardian Angel's role on the battlefield is almost exclusively one of rescue and medical support, and they can be seen flying across the battlefield to administer medical aid and carrying the wounded from the fray. The power armor's Awe Factor helps to comfort patients and inspire them to fight to live. Furthermore, the striking power armor cannot be mistaken on the battlefield. This warns the undead and demons to keep their distance and tells honorable enemies that a doctor is administering help.

Physically, Guardian Angel power armor looks to be a cross between the *Light TW Body Armor* and the *Thunderbird* minus the wings. To fly, magic energy wings sprout from the back, giving the armor a unique and, many would say, divine appearance. Coloration of the armor is light blue, light gray, white, metallic gold or metallic silver with white, red or blue accents and trim. A large red cross outlined in white is emblazoned across the chest, with smaller red crosses painted on the knees, shoulder plates, and helmet. (The helmet looks the same as the Light TW body armor, not the T-Bird.)

Model: Arzno TWA-1270GA Guardian Angel Power Armor.

Crew: One.

M.D.C. by Location:

- Head – 60
- Arms (2) – 25 each
- Legs (2) – 40 each
- Magic Wings (2) – 100 each
- Magic Force Field – 80
- Main Body – 170

Statistical Data:

Size: Already a specialty item; size is totally customizable. Add 50% to cost if over 8 feet (2.4 m) tall.

Weight: 220 lbs (99 kg).

Mobility Penalties: Very good mobility, but -5% to climb, swim, prowl and similar physical skills.

Physical Strength: Robotic P.S. of 22.

Power System: TW generator only!

P.P.E. Battery: 200 points.

Market Price: 3 million credits at Arzno. Exclusively sold by Arzno, but 6-9 million credits when the Black Market can get its hands on one.

Power Armor Features:

Running: 40 mph (64 km) in a normal, human style of running upright. The act of running tires the pilot, but at 20% of the normal fatigue rate.

Bonuses: +2 to dodge when airborne, +1 to pull punch, and +2 to roll with impact. Can go from zero to full speed in 6 seconds (uses up two melee actions), and stop on a dime. All bonuses are in addition to the usual Power Armor Combat bonuses for Basic or Elite level skills.

Leaping: The powerful robot legs can leap 10 feet (3 m) high and 15 feet (4.6 m) across without engaging the flight system. Increase height and distance of jumps by 10% with a running start.

Flying: See TW Angelic Wings for details.

Swimming: Double the operator's normal swimming speed and can survive underwater depths of up to 1200 feet (366 m).

Techno-Wizard Features:

- 1. TW Healing Touch:** Arguably the most important of the Guardian Angel's Techno-Wizard features is its healing abilities. Internal gold and silver wiring runs from the central P.P.E. power source on the back of the armor to end in small gold plates exposed on the fingertips of the armor's medieval-like gauntlets. By laying hands on a wounded person and activating the TW feature, the wearer of the Guardian Angel heals wounds and injury even through environmental armor. The ability can heal 3D6+10 S.D.C. and 2D6+6 Hit Points (or 1D6 M.D.C. of healing to natural Mega-Damage creatures), as well as clean and sterilize wounds, and neutralize the effects of poison and drugs (stops the damage and erases their effects but does not restore lost H.P. or S.D.C.).

Spell Effect: Cleanse (6), Greater Healing (25), and Negate Poison (5).

Range: Other by touch.

Duration: Instant.

P.P.E. to Activate: 6 P.P.E. or 12 I.S.P. per healing touch.

- 2. TW Combating the Forces of Evil:** When this set of abilities is activated, the pilot of the Guardian Angel can Sense Evil within a 100 foot (301.5 m) radius around him, turn (drive away) 3D6+12 animated dead, or drive away 2D6+6 Wild Vampires or hold at bay 1D6+1 Secondary Vampires (they can't come within 30 feet/9.1 m). To turn the dead or hold off vampires, the character raises his hand, palm turned outward as if to signal stop, the hand softly glows as he shouts "stop" or "turn back" or "begone."

When sensing evil, he can tell that evil (one, few or many) is in the area and can also sense if any (one, few, or many) are vampires or if a great evil (Greater Demon, Demon Lord, Alien Intelligence, etc.) is among them. However, he cannot pinpoint the source of the evil, only that evil is present.

Spell Effect: Globe of Daylight (2) Sense Evil (2), and Turn Dead (6).

Range: Self.

Duration: 8 minutes per activation.

P.P.E. to Activate: 6 P.P.E. or 12 I.S.P.

3. TW Angelic Wings: This is the TW feature that gives the armor its name, magical ectoplasmic wings that radiate with pale blue light and appear out of nowhere. When the wings come out the entire figure glows a faint blue and increases the wearer's perceived impressiveness, plus invokes a feeling of calm and trust upon those in need (affects all within 60 feet/18.3 m). Allies feel comforted by the presence of the Guardian Angel, and enemies who are *awestruck* are not likely to attack the wearer or any wounded to whom he or she is attending. Awestruck enemies who press an attack suffer the following penalties when striking at the *Guardian Angel*: No initiative, -1 attack per melee round and bonuses to strike are half normal. These penalties remain in effect until the Guardian Angel attacks them, even in self-defense, thus breaking the enchantment. Those who save are unimpressed and may attack without penalty. Penalties do not apply when attacking anyone else but the Guardian Angel.

Two small reservoirs, one on each shoulder blade, emit and form the ectoplasm into the magical constructs.

Spell Effects: Winged Flight (35), Float in Air (5), Fly as the Eagle (25), and Charismatic Aura (10).

Flying Speed: 50 mph (80 km), may also hover stationary.

Awe Factor: 14 or 16 when the wings are visible; 10 without them.

Range: The wings only affect the wearer. The Charismatic Aura/Awe Factor exuded by the armor has a range of 60 feet (18.3 m).

Saving Throw: 14 to save vs Awe by most enemies, 16 or higher to save for those in need of healing or rescue, who believe in angels or are glad to see the character.

Duration: 20 minutes per activation.

P.P.E. to Activate: 12 P.P.E. or 24 I.S.P.

4. TW Magic Force Field: A magical protective field surrounds the armor of the Guardian Angel to provide additional protection to it and anyone held in its arms (as many as two people). While the field is up damage should first be subtracted from it. When the M.D.C. of the field is depleted, subtract damage from the armor. A new field can be raised one melee round (15 seconds) after the last one vanishes.

Spell Effect: Armor of Ithan (10) and Energy Field (10).

M.D.C.: 80

Range: Self and those held in the Angel's arms.

Duration: 10 minutes per activation, or until the M.D.C. is depleted, whichever occurs first.

P.P.E. to Activate: 12 P.P.E. or 24 I.S.P.

Weapon Systems: None are built in nor come standard. Any weaponry are handheld TW weapons. Weapons and gear may be carried in a backpack, slung over the shoulder, hooked to waist belts, etc., without getting in the way of the magic wings.

TW Aircraft of Arzno

Always on the leading edge of Techno-Wizard advancement, the vast distances and natural impediments that separate Arzno from other cities have led Arzno Weapons Manufacturing to spend a great deal of effort developing reliable air transportation powered by Techno-Wizardry. The technologies have been first applied in the military realm through its partnership with the A.M.C.

TW Grinning Gunship

An experiment in heavy TW weaponry, the TWV-4100 "Grinning Gunship" (so named for the toothy grin painted on the cockpit) is a combat helicopter, purchased by the A.M.C. from the Black Market in an attempt to expand its rapid-response capability. For the time being, it is a unique device in Arzno, but could easily be duplicated by any Techno-Wizard with access to the hardware. The A.M.C. has a half dozen in its current forces.

The chopper is already a Mega-Damage structure available from Golden Age Weaponsmiths, but its protection is light and requires extensive work to make it suitable for modern Rifts® combat. Even with the upgrade, the damage that the chopper could withstand is minimal. To compensate, it has been fitted with a magic force field. The expensive liquid fuel system has been replaced with a TW power system to eliminate the reliance on hard-to-find fossil fuel.

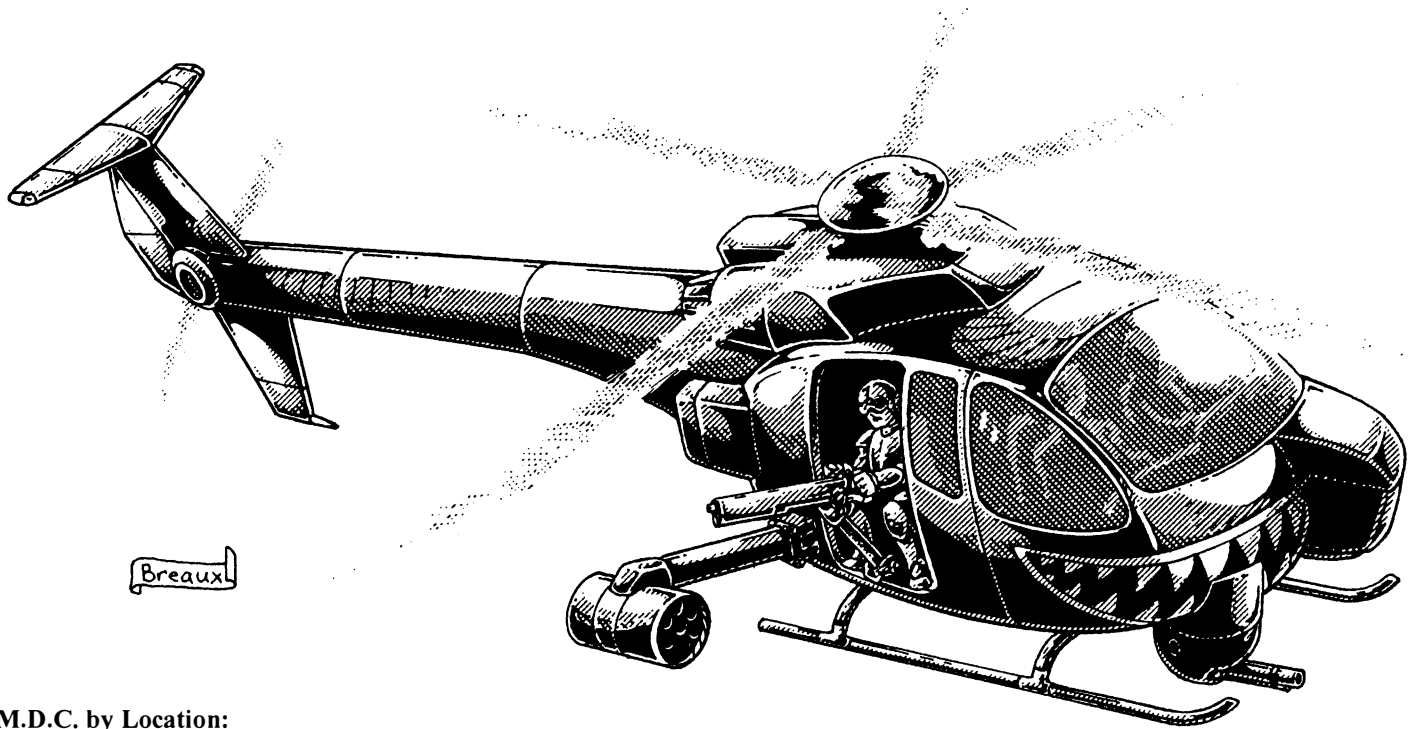
The main weapon mount of the helicopter consists of a front-mounted heavy rail gun and a weapon arm with 48 mini-missiles capable of firing volleys of up to 8 missiles at a time. Both weapons are intended as anti-infantry and anti-power armor weapons, but are suitable for use against other aircraft, tanks and ground structures as well. The helicopter also has a large spotlight for seek and destroy, rescue, or anti-vampire missions.

Two large, fixed skids serve as landing platforms. The canopy is light Mega-Damage Plexiglas and the pilot is enclosed in a small, streamlined pod. Steering is accomplished with a fighter-jet style joystick, a lever on the dash, and two pedals worked by the feet. The joystick controls movement forward and backwards by tilting the aircraft's nose. The pedals rotate the tail left and right, and the lever on the dash helps control altitude. With the proper training and enough practice, the helicopter can move in any direction or even hover in midair as any other helicopter. In addition to the conventional mechanisms, control boxes for the operation of TW components can be seen amongst mundane dials, switches, and levers. The machine is a true hybrid, a cacophony of traditional and extraordinary control systems.

Model: Arzno TWV-4100 Gunship.

Vehicle Type: Helicopter.

Crew: 2 or 3; one pilot, one copilot/gunner/communications, one optional door gunner. Can carry an additional 4-5 soldiers or 2 power armor troopers.



M.D.C. by Location:

**Main Rotor – 60 (15 each blade)

**Rear Rotor – 20 (10 each blade)

Front Ball Turret – 50

Mini-Missile Launcher Arm – 40

*Front Spotlight – 15

Landing Skids (2) – 10 each

Magic Force Field – 200

***Main Body – 110

* Every item marked by a single asterisk is a small and/or difficult target to strike. An attacker must make a “Called Shot” to hit and even then is -3 to strike.

**Destroying the rear rotor or one of the main blades will cause the helicopter to fly at half speed, wobble, and be -6 to dodge, -3 to strike, and -50% on piloting rolls. Smart pilots will land as soon as possible. Destroying the main rotor will knock the bird out of the sky! Roll under piloting skill at a penalty of -40% for a successful crash landing (the helicopter is wrecked but the crew and passengers take only 2D6 S.D.C. damage from the impact).

***Destroying the main body knocks the aircraft out of the sky and turns it into smoldering wreckage.

Speed: 80 mph (128 km), or double on a ley line.

Statistical Data:

Dimensions: 60 feet (18.3 m) long, 10 feet (3.0 m) wide, and 17 feet (5.2 m) tall. Rotor blades are 25 feet (7.6 m) long each, so spin in a 50 foot (15.2 m) circle.

Weight: 10 tons fully loaded.

Cargo: Primarily a combat and transport vehicle, the Gunship isn't well suited for hauling anything more than a few soldiers and their gear. A weapon rack can hold a dozen energy rifles and a few dozen E-Clips or other small items, and a pair of small storage closets can hold three suits of armor each. Storage drawers under the pilot and copilot seats hold a grand total of 4 cubic feet (0.1 cubic meters) each.

If no troops are carried, the chopper can carry about a ton of materials in the space typically reserved for soldiers and gunners. Total available space would be a bay 8 feet (2.4 m) wide, 10 feet (3.0 m) tall, and 20 feet (6.1 m) long.

Power Systems: Varies. A TW generator will power the vehicle for 20 years, twice that if used infrequently. A TW battery with 200 P.P.E. offers limited power (roughly 16 hours of fly time), or the vehicle can be set up to function for two hours every time the pilot (or someone) pumps 25 P.P.E. (or 50 I.S.P.) into it.

Built-in P.P.E. Battery (Standard): A built-in reserve holds 100 P.P.E., enough for an additional 8 hours of flight time, but it is specifically intended to power the special TW Features. The vehicle and TW features may also run directly off the operator's own P.P.E. or I.S.P.

Cost: Basic unit requiring P.P.E. every time it is used: 2.4 million credits in Arzno; powered by an additional P.P.E. Battery: 2.8 million; powered by a TW generator (with built-in P.P.E. Battery): 4.9 million. Sells for two or three times that amount on the Black Market.

Weapon Systems:

1. Multi-Purpose Rail Gun: Fired by the pilot, this rail gun is used for strafing enemy troops or fixed positions. A conventional rail gun can be loaded with standard or silver rounds, or a TW rail gun that fires wooden rounds or a water cannon may be substituted.

Primary Purpose: Anti-Power Armor/Aircraft & Air to Ground.

Damage: Conventional rounds do 1D6x10 M.D. from a 40 round burst (no damage to the undead), while silver rounds do 4D6 M.D. but 2D4x10 Hit Points to vampires. Wooden rounds do 1D4 M.D. but 3D4x10 Hit Points to vampires.

Range: 4,000 feet (1,219 m).

Rate of Fire: Each burst counts as one melee attack; can only fire bursts.

Payload: 4000 round drum feed for a total of 100 bursts. Reloading takes the proper equipment and an Operator or Robot Pilot and 1D6+5 minutes (half the time from a trained field crew).

2. Mini-Missile Launcher: Operated by the co-pilot.

Primary Purpose: Anti-Infantry, Anti-Power Armor & Air to Ground.

Damage: As per missile, typically fragmentation (4D6 M.D. to a 12 foot/3.6 m radius).

Rate of Fire: Volleys of 2, 4, or 8.

Payload: 48 mini-missiles.

3. Optional Door Gunner: The side door may be opened and an additional gunner stationed there, tied in with a harness. Typical weaponry is a heavy energy rifle, light rail gun, or TW Water Cannon.

Techno-Wizard Features:

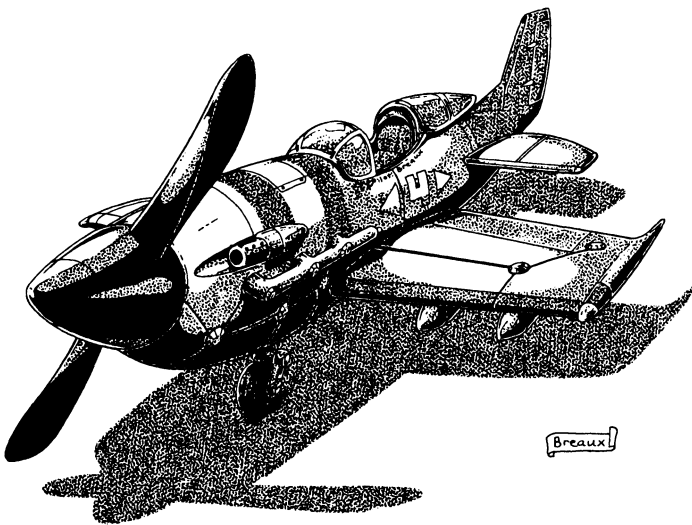
Currently only the magic force field and TW generator are standard on the vehicle, reduce cost by two million without the TW generator.

1. Magical Force Field: To supplement its relatively thin armor, a magic force field has been built into the helicopter. This adds damage capacity, and helps to keep down repair expenses. Unfortunately, the mystic shield prevents those inside the chopper from shooting out as well.

M.D.C.: 200

P.P.E. to Activate: 20 P.P.E. or 40 I.S.P.

Duration: 10 minutes per activation or until M.D.C. is depleted, whichever comes first.



TW “Kamikaze” Fighter

The TWV-4500 Kamikaze Personal Fighter is an infantry support and escort aircraft. These aircraft can be lethal against other small flyers as well as ground structures such as depots and bunkers, but their anti-infantry ability is limited, and far surpassed in that role by the Whirlybird and Grinning Gunship helicopters. If put into mass production, A.W.M. designers have suggested some redesigns that would alter the weapon systems and performance specs to favor bombing runs as opposed to strafing attacks versus enemy infantry.

The plane is built from scrap found in pre-Rifts airfields, modern flying vehicles and anything else available. To create the general design, the Techno-Wizards at Arzno Weapons Manufacturing took a modern fighter, cut the now unnecessary engines off, replaced the wings with smaller ones, and updated the weaponry. The end result is a one-man cockpit with wings attached and a propeller in front. Weaponry includes either 4 mini-missiles or 2 short-range missiles on each of the two wings and a large TK machine-gun in the nose.

The controls are the same as any basic airplane, with a joystick for maneuvering, lever for throttle, and pedals for the flaps. The small size of the plane allows for great maneuverability and speed. It is the power system that is different, and the fact that natural aerodynamics takes a back seat to magical propulsion.

Plans for a second-generation Kamikaze (the 4500B) have been made, but none have been produced. The basic difference would be an enhanced missile or bomb carrying capacity, plus doubling the top speed. The A.M.C. is evaluating their needs and may consider purchasing half a dozen of the improved aircraft.

Model: Arzno TWV-4500A Fighter.

Vehicle Type: Airplane.

Crew: One pilot.

M.D.C. by Location:

Tail Section – 40

Wings (2) – 50 each

Pilot’s Compartment – 40

*Propeller – 15

*Landing Gear (3) – 8 each

**Main Body – 100

* Every item marked by a single asterisk is a small and/or difficult target to strike. An attacker must make a “Called Shot” to hit and even then is -3 to strike.

**Destroying the main body knocks the aircraft out of the sky and turns it into smoldering wreckage.

Speed: 250 mph (400 km), or 500 mph (800 km) on a ley line. Minimum speed is about 60 mph (96 km) without losing altitude.

Statistical Data:

Dimensions: 18 feet (5.4 m) long, 4 feet (1.2 m) wide, 4 feet (1.2 m) tall, and a wingspan of 18 feet (5.4 m).

Weight: 1,500 lbs (675 kg).

Cargo: Virtually none; a small backpack under the seat.

Power Systems: Varies. A TW generator will power the vehicle for 20 years, twice that if used infrequently. A TW battery with 200 P.P.E. offers limited power (roughly 16 hours of fly time), or the vehicle can be set up to function for two hours every time the pilot (or someone) pumps 25 P.P.E. (or 50 I.S.P.) into it.

Built-in P.P.E. Battery (Standard): A built-in reserve holds 100 P.P.E., enough for an additional 8 hours of flight time, but it is specifically intended to power the special TW Features. The vehicle and TW features may also run directly off the operator’s own P.P.E. or I.S.P.

Cost: Basic unit requiring P.P.E. every time it is used: 2.6 million credits in Arzno; powered by an additional P.P.E. Battery: 3

million; powered by a TW generator (with built-in P.P.E. Battery): 5.1 million. Sells for two or three times that amount on the Black Market. **Note:** The 4500B “bomber” would cost an extra million for its missile and bomb carry capabilities plus the cost of ordnance.

Weapon Systems: Stats for the 4500B model are in parentheses.

1. Medium TK Machine-gun: Used primarily for strafing.

Primary Purpose: Anti-Aircraft and Air to Ground.

Damage: 1D4x10 M.D. per burst (2 Lasers: 2D6 M.D. per single shot, 4D6 M.D. per dual blast).

Range: 2000 feet (610 m).

Rate of Fire: Each burst counts as one melee attack.

Payload: Effectively unlimited with a TW generator, 30 bursts with a battery, and an additional burst can be magically created by the pilot spending 7 P.P.E. or 14 I.S.P.

2. Missile Launcher: The Kamikaze has a missile-firing system which is capable of using conventional or TW mini-missiles or short-range missiles. (The 4500B has a greater payload and volley capacity).

Primary Purpose: Anti-Aircraft & Air to Ground.

Damage: As per missile style; typically Fragmentation: 5D6 M.D. or High Explosive: 5D6 M.D. (The 4500B will launch Armor Piercing: 1D4x10 M.D. or Plasma: 1D6x10 M.D.)

Rate of Fire: 2 or 4 at a time in a single volley. (In the 4500B, 2, 4 or the entire payload may be launched in a single volley.)

Payload: 8 mini-missiles or 4 short-range missiles. (14 mini-missiles, or 6 short-range missiles.)

3. Additional Systems: TW-VTOL (vertical take-off and landing) system has been created using Levitation as part of the combination of creation spells. This option is activated with the expenditure of 6 P.P.E. from the pilot to raise the aircraft to a maximum height of 100 feet (30.5 m) for takeoff, or ease the craft to the ground from a maximum of 100 feet (30.5 m) up. Landings are tricky, but by using the flaps and easing the aircraft in at speeds under 50 mph (80 km), it is manageable for an experienced pilot. VTOL landings are -15% on the piloting roll.

(**Note:** The 4500B will also have the capacity to “drop” unguided explosives that are dropped from the belly of the airplane in clusters of 2, 4, 8, 16 or all 24 bombs. Each bomb does 1D4x10 M.D. to a 20 foot/6.1 m diameter of destruction. Carrying bombs attached to the underbelly reduces maximum speed by 30%.)

TW “Whirlybird” Personal Helicopter

The “Whirlybird” has become all the rage amongst the Techno-Wizards in Arzno, as its unique and fun design appeals greatly to a Techno-Wizard’s style. Initially built primarily with parts cannibalized from salvaged aircraft and modern vehicles, these small helicopters are now being mass produced by A.W.M. They are ideal for getting around quickly in the desert. The Whirlybird is also light and small enough to land on rooftops or in the middle of the street. Its versatility is unmatched, making it suitable for reconnaissance, personal travel, and even combat.

The helicopter’s cockpit is like a large glass egg, giving the pilot excellent visibility on all sides. The tail extends six feet (1.8 m) behind the cockpit with a small rotor affixed to the end. Three large blades, six feet (1.8 m) long each, sit on top of the cockpit. Three small wheels serve as the landing gear and don’t retract.

The Whirlybird, like other TW aircraft produced in Arzno, is a blend of technology and magical enhancements. While flight is achieved through mostly-scientific means, its capabilities are enhanced by the inclusion of Techno-Wizardry. The power system is also totally magical in nature, using P.P.E. to power the vehicle. Steering is accomplished with a fighter-jet style joystick, a lever on the dash, and two pedals worked by the feet. The Whirlybird can move in any direction or even hover.

Model: Arzno TWV-4000 Personal Helicopter.

Vehicle Type: Helicopter.

Crew: One pilot.

M.D.C. by Location:

**Main Rotor – 28 (7 per blade)

**Rear Rotor – 15 (5 per blade)

Weapon System (1-2 optional) – 25 each

*Front Spotlight – 10

Landing Wheels (3) – 5 each

***Main Body – 115

* Every item marked by a single asterisk is a small and/or difficult target to strike. An attacker must make a “Called Shot” to hit and even then is -4 to strike.

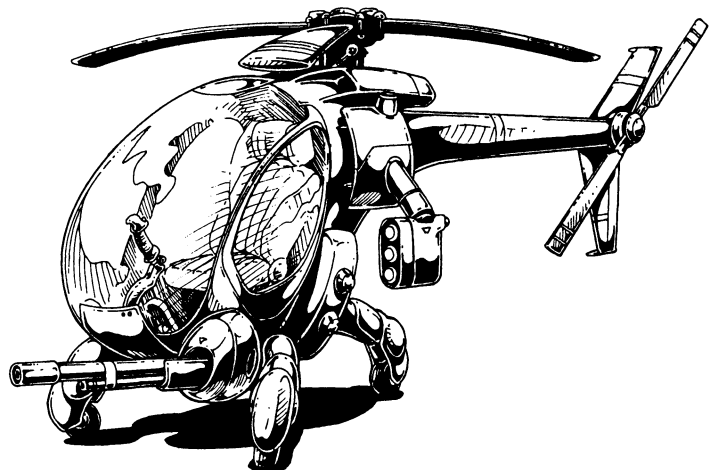
**Destroying the rear rotor or one of the main blades will cause the helicopter to fly at half speed, wobble, and be -6 to dodge, -3 to strike, and -50% on piloting rolls. Smart pilots will land as soon as possible. Destroying the main rotor will knock the bird out of the sky! Roll under piloting skill at a penalty of -40% for a successful crash landing (the helicopter is wrecked but the crew and passengers take only 2D6 S.D.C. damage from the impact).

***Destroying the main body knocks the aircraft out of the sky and turns it into smoldering wreckage.

Speed: 100 mph (161 km), or double on a ley line.

Statistical Data:

Dimensions: 10 feet (3.0 m) long, 4 feet (1.2 m) wide, and 8 feet (2.4 m) tall. Rotor blades are 6 feet (1.8 m) long each, so spin in a 12 feet (3.7 m) diameter.



Weight: 800 pounds (363 kg).

Cargo: 10 cubic feet (0.3 cubic meters).

Power Systems: Varies. A TW generator will power the vehicle for 20 years, twice that if used infrequently. A TW battery with 200 P.P.E. offers limited power (roughly 16 hours of fly time), or the vehicle can be set up to function for two hours every time the pilot (or someone) pumps 25 P.P.E. (or 50 I.S.P.) into it.

Built-in P.P.E. Battery (Standard): A built-in reserve holds 100 P.P.E., enough for an additional 8 hours of flight time, but it is specifically intended to power the special TW Features. The vehicle and TW features may also run directly off the operator's own P.P.E. or I.S.P.

Cost: Basic unit requiring P.P.E. every time it is used: 460,000 credits in Arzno; powered by an additional P.P.E. Battery: 850,000; powered by a TW generator (with built-in P.P.E. Battery): 2.8 million (a similar model from Stormspire sells for 3.6 million). Sells for two or three times that amount on the Black Market.

Special Features: This vehicle is often used solely for transport or reconnaissance and does not need any advanced systems. However, this versatile craft is a fully capable military machine and can be outfitted with any two of the following systems:

1. Light Multi-Purpose Rail Gun (1): The rail gun is used for strafing enemy troops or fixed positions. A conventional rail gun can be loaded with standard or silver rounds, or a TW rail gun that fires wooden rounds or a TW Water Cannon may be substituted (but they can't fire conventional rounds). The weapon system is usually mounted on the undercarriage of the Whirlybird, or directly beneath the pilot.

Primary Purpose: Anti-Armor and Air to Ground Attacks.

Damage: Conventional rounds do 5D6 M.D. per burst of 30 rounds, while silver rounds do 2D6 M.D. or 1D4x10 Hit Points to vampires. Wooden rounds do 1D4 M.D. or 2D4x10 Hit Points to vampires.

Range: 3,000 feet (914 m).

Rate of Fire: Each burst counts as a melee attack; can only fire bursts.

Payload: 900 rounds of conventional or silver ammo for a total of 30 bursts.

Cost: 150,000 credits for a conventional light rail gun.

2. Light Double-Barreled Laser (1): A conventional laser system wired to a TW power supply.

Primary Purpose: Anti-Personnel, Air to Ground and Defense.

Damage: Single Laser blast: 2D6 M.D. or a simultaneous dual blast at the same target: 4D6 M.D. blast.

Range: 2,000 feet (610 m).

Rate of Fire: Each single or double blast counts as one melee attack.

Payload: Effectively unlimited if wired to a TW generator, 50 if hooked to a TW battery only (each 2D6 M.D. blast draining one P.P.E. point from it). This energy may be supplemented with the P.P.E. of the pilot, as usual.

Cost: 200,000 credits.

3. Missile Launcher: Used as a weapon against enemy infantry or fortified positions, this small missile launcher is mounted on a weapon arm with a versatile launch system capable of firing mini-missiles or short-range missiles.

Primary Purpose: Assault, Anti-Aircraft and Defense.

Damage: As per missile; may use conventional warheads or TW types.

Rate of Fire: Up to the entire payload may be fired in one volley.

Payload: 6 mini-missiles or 3 short-range missiles.

Cost: 300,000 credits.

4. TW Fire Blaster: This TW weapon fires bolts of magical plasma from forward-fixed cannons mounted beside or underneath the cockpit.

Primary Purpose: Assault and Defense.

Damage: 6D6 M.D.

Range: 1,600 feet (488 m).

Rate of Fire: Each blast counts as one melee attack.

Payload: Effectively unlimited if wired to a TW generator, 15 if hooked to a TW battery only (each blast drains 5 P.P.E. from the main battery). This energy may be supplemented with the P.P.E. of the pilot, as usual.

Cost: 500,000 credits in Arzno.

5. Undead Scorcher: This weapon resembles a heavy rifle or rail gun with a thick barrel, and fires a beam of light that is a stream of *daylight* (a la the Globe of Daylight spell).

Primary Purpose: Vampire Slayer.

Damage: 5D6 Hit Points per blast to vampires; none to humans or most other mortal beings or S.D.C. objects.

Range: 600 feet (183 m).

Rate of Fire: Each blast counts as one melee attack.

Payload: Effectively unlimited if wired to a TW generator, 12 if hooked to a TW battery only (each blast drains 4 P.P.E. from the main battery). This energy may be supplemented with the P.P.E. of the pilot, as usual. **Note:** So far this weapon has not been successfully turned into a man portable rifle.

Cost: 600,000 credits in Arzno.

6. Communications Package: This P.P.E.-driven communications package has a mundane backup power system as well. This package is used to outfit the Whirlybird to act as a mobile communications hub on the battlefield, perform long-range reconnaissance, or eavesdrop on enemy transmissions from the clouds. Through the combination of magic and technology, the following results are achieved:

- 20 scrambled frequencies.
- Radio and video transmitters and receivers, range of 500 miles (800 km).
- Audio and video recording capability.
- Video camera with 100x zoom.
- Still camera capable of taking 1200 digital pictures.
- A communications decoder; add +20% to Cryptography skill (through Tongues spell).
- Medium-range radar, range of 10 miles (16 km), capable of tracking 20 targets simultaneously.

Cost: 280,000 credits in Arzno.

7. TW Carpet of Adhesion Skids: This feature replaces the landing wheels with flat landing feet that enable the Whirlybird to adhere securely to a surface, be it the top of a vehicle or a landing pad. It also serves as an anti-theft device,

sticking to its landing surface until the owner flips a hidden switch or magically removes the adhesion.

A *stunt landing* requires an extraordinary pilot to attempt. This involves sticking to the side of larger vehicles, buildings, side of a bridge, or any large structure that can hold its weight. Such a maneuver requires piloting the helicopter at nearly 90 degrees, and such a stunt earns the pilot a -35% penalty if the object is stationary or a -50% if it is a large moving body. A failed roll means that the Whirlybird doesn't stick and crashes into the object, then falls to the ground, almost certainly wrecking the helicopter.

- 8. Enhanced Carrying Capacity:** At the sacrifice of a weapon system and through some redistribution of equipment, the Whirlybird can carry one passenger or an additional 50 cubic feet (1.4 cubic meters) of cargo. Reduce top speed by 20% due to less-than-ideal weight distribution.

TW Ground Vehicles

TW Sandstorm Hover Craft

Used for every manner of task, from reconnaissance to assault, to transportation, to exploration, the Sandstorm Hover

Craft has become an important part of Arzno's arsenal and export sales. A surprise perk, the massive sandstorm these babies kick up on the open desert is a major advantage due to the fact that it helps hide their numbers. They also function perfectly in swamps and riding over water. Sales have skyrocketed in the Pecos Empire around the Rio Grande and Gulf of Mexico. The vehicle is basically an open-frame platform with three large, pivoting fans on the bottom for movement. Little protection is provided, hence the magical force field offered standard.

Model: Arzno TWV-2100 Hover Craft.

Vehicle Type: Hover Craft.

Crew: 1 pilot, 1 co-pilot/gunner, up to 2 passengers (may double as additional gunners).

M.D.C. by Location:

*Movement Fans (3) - 20 each

*Front-Mounted Shotgun - 10

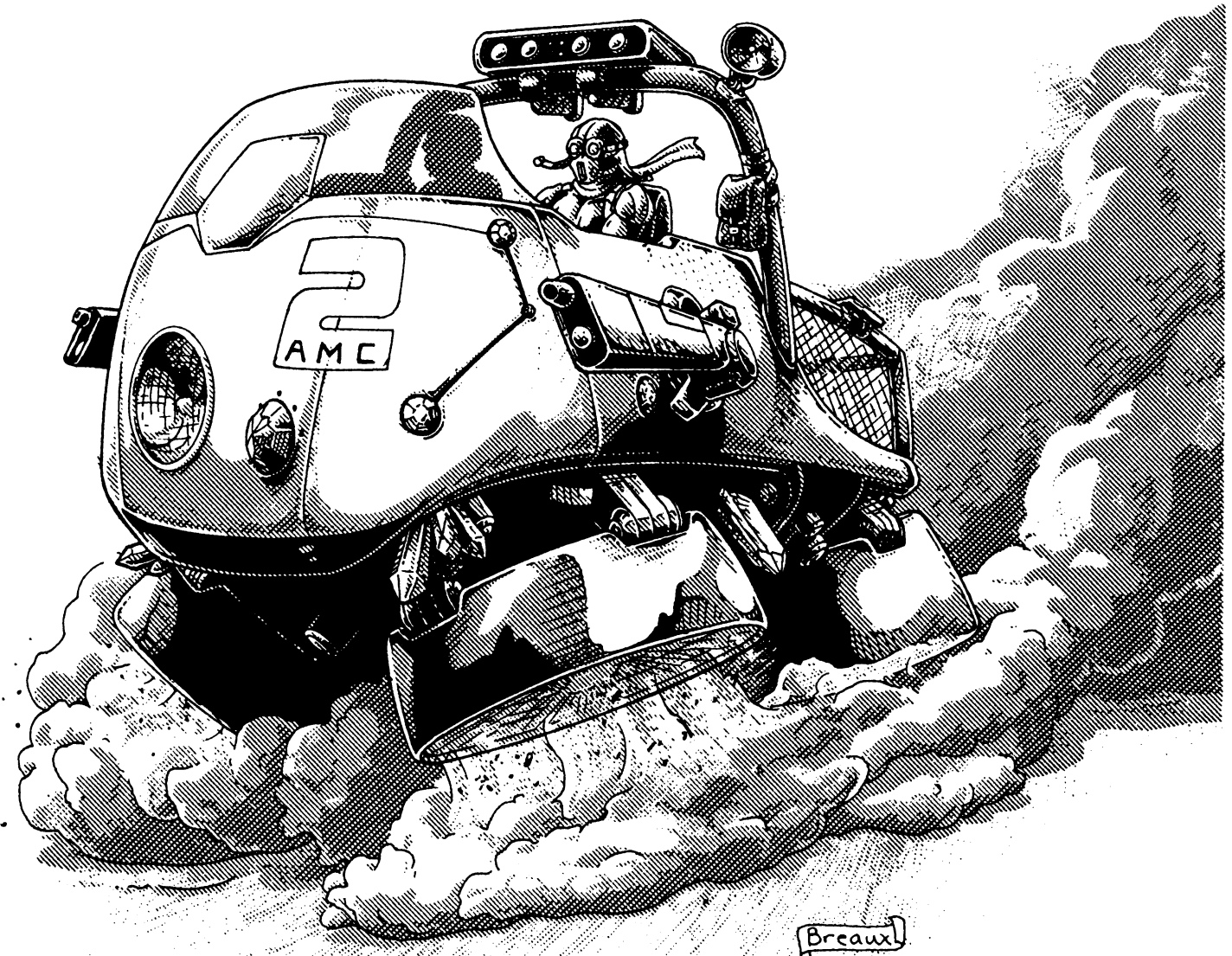
*Side-Mounted Weapons (2; optional) - 10 each

*Headlight - 5

*Top-Mounted Mini-Missile Launcher - 20

Magic Force Field - 80

**Main Body - 140



* Every item marked by a single asterisk is a small and/or difficult target to strike. An attacker must make a "Called Shot" to hit and even then is -3 to strike.

** Depleting the main body destroys the vehicle, making it useless.

Speed: 110 mph (176 km) max. Cruising speed is closer to 60 mph (97 km). Maximum elevation above the surface is 3 feet (0.9 m), but can perform jumps and free falls similar to hovercycles.

Statistical Data:

Dimensions: 12 feet (3.6 m) long, 8 feet (2.4 m) wide, and 6 feet (1.8 m) tall.

Weight: 2 tons.

Cargo: 10 cubic feet (0.3 cubic meters) storage space, plus whatever can be stowed on the deck.

Power Systems: Varies. A TW generator will power the vehicle for 20 years, twice that if used infrequently. A TW battery with 200 P.P.E. offers limited power (roughly 20 hours of constant use), or the vehicle can be set up to function for one hour every time the pilot (or someone) pumps 10 P.P.E. (or 20 I.S.P.) into it.

Built-in P.P.E. Battery (Standard): A built-in reserve holds 100 P.P.E., enough for an additional 10 hours of drive time, but it is specifically intended to power the special TW Features. The vehicle and TW features may also run directly off the operator's own P.P.E. or I.S.P.

Cost: Basic unit requiring P.P.E. every time it is used: 850,000 credits in Arzno; powered by an additional P.P.E. Battery: 1.2 million; powered by a TW generator (with built-in P.P.E. Battery): 3.6 million. Sells for two or three times that amount on the Black Market.

Weapon Systems: The standard weapon systems on the Sandstorm Hover Craft are geared toward use by the Arzno Mercenary Corps in its fight against bandits, vampires, and other threats found throughout the New West. As such, its systems are designed to be highly versatile. Sandstorms are sometimes used by raucous thrill-seekers and hunters hell-bent on chasing down and blasting dinosaurs and other large animals through the plains.

1. Mounted Shotgun: Capable of firing explosive Mega-Damage or silver rounds, this double-barreled weapon is useful for fighting vampires as well as the many undesirables found in the wilderness. A Big Bore shotgun, TW Water Cannon or conventional laser can be substituted, if desired. The weapon is large and heavy, and is mounted on a swivel at the co-pilot/gunner's station and can fire forward, or up to 90 degrees right, with a 30 degree vertical arc of fire.

Primary Purpose: Assault and Defense.

Damage: Explosive rounds do 3D6 M.D. per single blast or 6D6 M.D. per double-barreled blast. Silver rounds do 4D6 Hit Point damage per single blast or 1D4x10 Hit Points per double blast to vampires.

Rate of Fire: Each blast counts as one melee attack for the gunner.

Effective Range: Shotgun: 300 feet (91.5 m), longer range for other types of weapons (2000 feet/610 m for a laser).

Payload: 6 individual shots, or 3 double blasts.

2. Mini-Missile Launcher: The launcher is located on top of the vehicle, mounted on the roll bar. Designed for use against a wide variety of enemy troops, missiles are easily exchanged for whatever is the best suited for a particular mission. Wood or silver fragmentation missiles or conventional warheads are used against other targets.

Primary Purpose: Anti-Personnel/Anti-Vampire.

Damage: Varies with missile type.

Rate of Fire: One at a time, or volley of 2 or 4.

Payload: 8 mini-missiles.

3. Headlight: While not normally considered a weapon, a light that casts the shadow of a cross is a vital tool for vampire hunters, in addition to its more practical uses. This high-powered headlight can be rigged to cast the shadow of a cross that terrifies and damages vampires.

Primary Purpose: Anti-Vampire.

Secondary Purpose: Illumination.

Damage: None as a light for illumination, but with the cross pattern it does 4D6 Hit Points to vampires struck by the light and image.

Range: 300 feet (91.5 m).

Payload: Effectively unlimited.

4. Dust Cloud/Sandstorm: The dust and sand the hover jets kick up will cloak whoever is behind the Sandstorm Hover Craft. Creates a 100 foot (30.5 m) long and 30 foot (9.1 m) wide, 50 foot (15.2 m) tall plume of dust and sand. Those in the cloud cannot be seen from outside but they are themselves driving blind (-60% piloting penalty when relying on sight alone and -10 to strike, parry, dodge, etc.). For those inside the sandstorms, ALL driving must be done via instrumentation (-20% penalties on the piloting skill) or with a great deal of luck.

5. Other Weapon Systems: The buyer can opt for up to two small weapon systems, one on each side, operated by additional gunners. Typical additions include shotgun, rail gun, light to medium laser, TW water cannon and/or another cross and light.

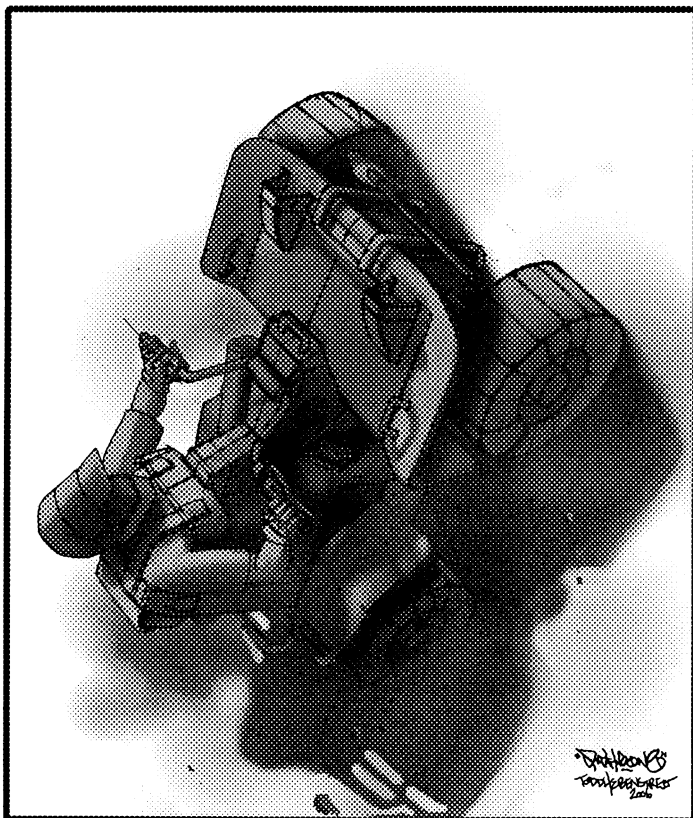
Techno-Wizard Features:

1. Magic Force Field: Due to its open frame, the Sandstorm Hover Craft comes standard with a mystical force field. Activating the force field precludes the use of any weapons in the possession of passengers as well as built-in vehicular weapon systems. Purchasing the vehicle without the force field reduces the cost by one million credits.

M.D.C.: 80

P.P.E. to Activate: 10 P.P.E. or 20 I.S.P.

Duration: 10 minutes per activation or until depleted, whichever comes first.



TW “Cliff Rider” Personal ATV

Not even the sheer walls of the Grand Canyon can stop an innovative Techno-Wizard from getting around. While many take to the air when faced with the great obstacles presented by Mother Nature, the wizards at Arzno Weapons Manufacturing decided to meet the obstacle head-on with the Cliff Rider. This is a personal ATV that is a mystically-powered 4-wheeler outfitted for use amongst the canyons and crags of the New West. It can tackle the toughest terrain, traversing the long flats of stony desert and dramatic drops and climbs in elevation with equal ease. The vehicle can even take its all-terrain title to the extreme by climbing *straight up the wall* of a canyon, cliff or building, and even ride upside down along the ceilings of buildings, caves and tunnels, or the underside of bridges! Of course, such bold maneuvers require a daredevil in the saddle, making the Cliff Rider especially popular among Arzno City Rats, Crazies, Juicers, Bandits, Bounty Hunters, Operators, Robot Pilots, Wired Gunslingers and Wilderness Scouts, but can be driven by any character and O.C.C. with an extreme perspective of fun.

The Cliff Rider is extremely popular both as a military and civilian vehicle. The A.M.C. deploy them heavily for exploration, reconnaissance, and basic transportation, and use them as pack mules when going into the field on relatively short jaunts. The civilian model is very popular with the ranchers of the area for use in herding cattle or exotic livestock, and many citizens just enjoy them as common transportation and recreational vehicles that can go anywhere but underwater.

Model: Arzno TWV-2000 ATV.

Vehicle Type: All-Terrain Vehicle; uses Pilot: Motorcycle.

Crew: One pilot; one passenger can ride behind the driver, but is uncomfortable on long trips.

M.D.C. by Location:

*Headlights (2) – 2 each

Tires (4) – 10 each

**Main Body – 85

* Every item marked by a single asterisk is a small and/or difficult target to strike. An attacker must make a “Called Shot” to hit and even then is -3 to strike.

** Depleting the main body destroys the vehicle, making it useless.

Speed: 65 mph (104 km) top speed on the ground; about 40-45 mph (64-72 km) going up cliff facings, canyon walls and the sides or ceilings of buildings.

Statistical Data:

Height: 4 feet, 2 inches (1.3 m).

Width: 4 feet (1.2 m).

Length: 6 feet, 3 inches (1.9 m).

Weight: 550 pounds (248 kg).

Cargo: Can carry 1,000 pounds (450 kg) in riders and gear, with storage space on a rack in the back, or tied elsewhere on the vehicle. The Cliff Rider can tow an additional 1,000 pounds (450 kg).

Power System: Varies. A TW generator will power the vehicle for 20 years, twice that if used infrequently. A TW battery with 200 P.P.E. offers limited power (roughly 16 hours of constant use), or the vehicle can be set up to function for two hours every time the pilot (or someone) pumps 25 P.P.E. (or 50 I.S.P.) into it.

Built-in P.P.E. Battery (Standard): A built-in reserve holds 100 P.P.E., enough for an additional eight hours of drive time, but it is specifically intended to power the special TW Features. The vehicle and TW features may also run directly off the operator’s own P.P.E. or I.S.P.

Cost: Basic unit requiring P.P.E. every time it is used: 350,000 credits in Arzno; powered by an additional P.P.E. Battery: 750,000 credits; powered by a TW generator (with built-in P.P.E. Battery): 3.5 million. Sells for two or three times that amount on the Black Market.

Bonuses: Even when the Cliff Rider feature is not engaged, the ATV gets extremely good traction and holds to the road well, reducing piloting skill penalties for stunt driving by half.

Weapon Systems: None standard, but a light weapon could be mounted forward on the vehicle for additional cost.

Techno-Wizard Features: Only its P.P.E. power supply and trademark wall-climbing ability are standard. The military and wealthy buyers sometimes add the *TW Force Field* to the ATV (provides 80 M.D.C. and protects drive and vehicle) for an extra one million credits.

1. Cliff Rider: The capability to drive up and down steep angles, sheer walls, and even on inverted surfaces like ceilings or under a bridge. As long as the surface/structure can bear the weight of the vehicle, rider, and stored gear, the magically-empowered tires will not lose their grip. **Note:** Although the ATV can drive on such surfaces, gravity still comes into play. This means that the rider and any cargo being carried by the Cliff Rider must be properly strapped down to avoid falling off when in precarious positions. To this purpose, the vehicle has tie-downs for cargo as well as a

seatbelt, shoulder straps, and stirrups to hold the driver in place. Any passengers must be tied down in some other manner, as there are no built-in supports for a passenger.

P.P.E. to Activate: 15 P.P.E. or 30 I.S.P. for one hour of wall climbing capable drive time.

TW “Rover” Dune Buggy

Another light TW vehicle produced by A.W.M. is the open-frame dune buggy, known as the “Rover.” Loved by speed freaks and thrill junkies all over the New West, the Rover is light, agile, and fast. The dune buggy does lack significant armor plating, making it less effective than it otherwise could be in straight vehicle combat, and the vehicle occupants must wear M.D. body armor if they want any real protection from enemy fire. The developers decided to keep it light to maximize its strengths, since adding heavy armor plating only made it slow and sluggish. The buggy has found its home at the Arzno Mercenary Corps, providing nimble support to the bulkier and slower “Sand Ranger” Combat Truck and other large vehicles.

The Rover is also the easiest A.W.M. vehicle to operate. It has a steering wheel, and three pedals: forward, backward, and brake. The harder one mashes on any of the pedals, the more abruptly the desired result is achieved. Experienced drivers can take the Rover dune buggy into the loose desert soil and perform amazing maneuvers and stunts by mashing pedals and spinning the wheel wildly, making hairpin turns, spinning 360’s, and even rolling the Rover only to land right-side up and take off again. However, the controls are such that even the most basically trained driver (of an automobile, truck, and other basic ground piloting skills) can operate it with relative proficiency.

Model: Arzno TWV-2500 Dune Buggy.

Vehicle Type: Automobile, or may use any basic ground vehicle skill at -5% to operate the dune buggy due to its simple controls.

Crew: One pilot and three passengers (one sitting “shotgun,” and two facing the rear).

M.D.C. by Location:

*Spotlights (2) – 5 each

*Forward Gun – 25

Tires (4) – 10 each

**Main Body – 135

* Every item marked by a single asterisk is a small and/or difficult target to strike. An attacker must make a “Called Shot” to hit and even then is -3 to strike.

** Depleting the main body destroys the vehicle, making it useless.

Speed: 120 mph (192 km) top speed on just about any level surface including sand, snow, and paved roads. Accelerates and brakes within incredibly short distances.

Statistical Data:

Height: 5 feet, 9 inches (1.8 m).

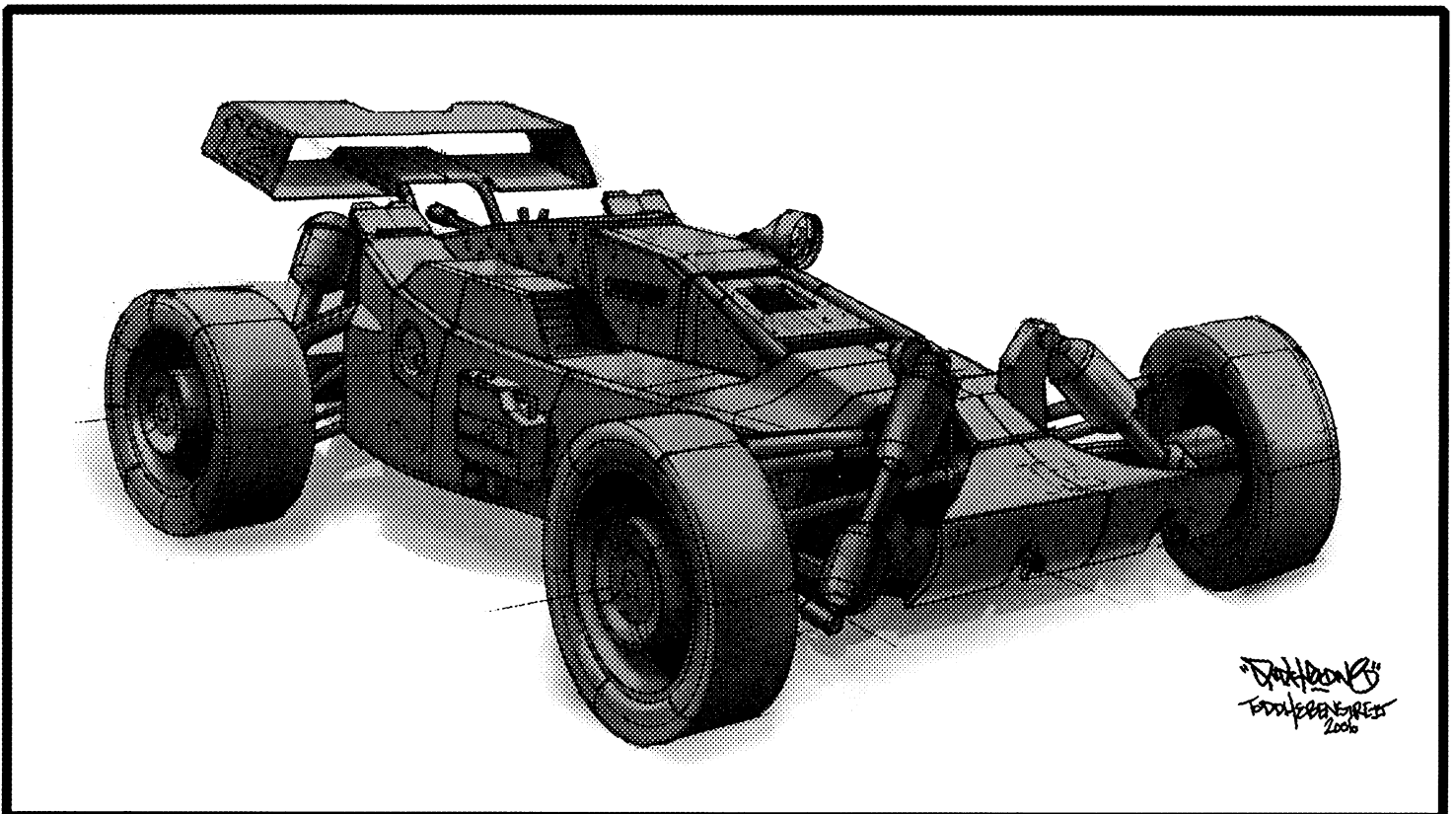
Width: 8 feet (2.4 m).

Length: 12 feet (3.7 m).

Weight: 1150 pounds (518 kg).

Cargo: Can carry the pilot, the three passengers, and enough basic equipment for each. Space is limited to cargo boxes built underneath the seats, and is not meant for heavy-duty hauling. Everything about the vehicle was built with minimizing excess weight in mind.

Power System: Varies. A TW generator will power the vehicle for 20 years, twice that if used infrequently. A TW battery with



200 P.P.E. offers limited power (roughly 40 hours of constant use), or the vehicle can be set up to function four hours every time the pilot (or someone) pumps 5 P.P.E. (or 10 I.S.P.) into it.

Built-in P.P.E. Battery: *Optional* for an additional cost of 225,000 credits, a built-in TW P.P.E. Battery holding a reserve of 100 P.P.E. can be added. This is enough for an additional 20 hours of drive time, but is seldom purchased unless TW Features are added; the Dune Buggy doesn't usually come with TW features.

Cost: Basic unit requiring P.P.E. every time it is used: 90,000 credits in Arzno; powered by an additional P.P.E. Battery: 450,000 credits; powered by a TW generator (with built-in P.P.E. Battery): 2.3 million. Sells for two or three times that amount on the Black Market. One of the appeals of the vehicle is its simplicity and ease of construction. Another is its low cost.

Bonuses: +1 to dodge due to quickness, and good acceleration and braking response.

Weapon Systems: The Rover typically includes a light rail gun mounted on a swivel in the front of the vehicle, along with the spotlight. Beyond that, this light dune buggy is extremely customizable and is often equipped with more weapons for use by the passengers.

1. Forward Swivel Gun: Mounted between the driver's and front passenger's seats is a simple handle that swivels from side to side and controls the direction of a conventional M.D. weapon, typically a light rail gun (3D6 M.D. per 20 round burst, 3000 foot/914 m range, 800 round payload for 40 bursts) or single barrel laser (2D6 M.D., 2000 foot/610 range, unlimited payload if tied into a TW generator). This simple setup allows for either the driver or the front passenger to operate the weapon, or it may be locked into a forward position.

2. Concealed Headlights (2): A pair of high-powered headlights rise up above the forward gun. A second pair of lights can be mounted on the roll bar of the dune buggy (bar not shown in the illustration) facing the front or the rear.

Techno-Wizard Features: None standard, other than the power system. As many as three TW features may be added for an additional cost, but most people don't bother, although one third of the military vehicles in the A.M.C. have the TW Force Field (80 M.D.C.) and the P.P.E. Battery to power it.

TW "Sand Ranger" Combat Truck

Combination assault vehicle and troop transport, the Sand Ranger is a vital cog in the Arzno military machine. It is a versatile workhorse used to haul equipment and troops, for long-range reconnaissance, and for combat missions.

The Sand Ranger is similar to a modern-day pickup truck with an enclosed cabin and open bed. Constructed from M.D.C. materials, it provides good protection for those safely in the driver's compartment, but leaves those riding in the back open to attack. As those riding in the bed of the truck are generally going into combat anyway, this isn't too much of a downside but they'd better be wearing M.D.C. body armor en route. The rear comes equipped with a mount for a heavy weapon (laser pulse cannon, plasma cannon, rail gun, or TW Water Cannon) fixed on a ball mount atop a removable stand in the middle of the truck. This allows a gunner complete 360 degree rotation, as

well as a 45 degree arc of fire, up or down. The mounted gun can be removed to allow for cargo space and there is enough room for eight soldiers to sit comfortably on the bed of the truck. In this capacity it is often used to take men and gear to and from advanced camps, or into battle.

The Combat Truck is a favorite of mercenaries and Headhunters who are all impressed with the "cool" factor of driving a big, tough truck as their personal vehicle. More than a few mercs have walked from a successful job on payday and straight to the A.W.M. vehicle division to pick out a new ride. This makes the civilian model almost as popular as the military model.

Model: Arzno TWV-2800 Combat Truck.

Vehicle Type: All-Purpose Vehicle (use Pilot: Automobile skill).

Crew: One pilot and two passengers in the cab, and five passengers in the bed (as many as eight passengers in the bed if the mounted weapon is removed).

M.D.C. by Location:

*Headlights (2) – 4 each

Reinforced Cab Windshield/Windows (4) – 25 each

*Twin Plasma Cannons (2) – 25 each

Tires (4) – 22 each

Mounted Rail Gun – 50

**Main Body – 212

* Every item marked by a single asterisk is a small and/or difficult target to strike. An attacker must make a "Called Shot" to hit and even then is -3 to strike.

** Depleting the main body destroys the vehicle, making it useless.

Speed: 100 mph (160 km) is top speed, half on loose sand, no speed impediment in the rocky deserts.

Statistical Data:

Height: 6 feet, 11 inches (2.1 m).

Width: 8 feet (2.4 m).

Length: 18 feet (5.5 m).

Weight: 3,200 pounds (1,440 kg).

Cargo: Can carry roughly 5,000 pounds (2250 kg) and tow an additional 6,000 pounds (2,700 kg). This makes the Sand Ranger one of the most vital utility vehicles employed by the A.M.C.

Power System: Varies. A TW generator will power the vehicle for 20 years, twice that if used infrequently. A TW battery with 200 P.P.E. offers limited power (roughly 20 hours of constant use), or the vehicle can be set up to function four hours every time the pilot (or someone) pumps 10 P.P.E. (or 20 I.S.P.) into it.

Built-in P.P.E. Battery: *Optional* for an additional cost of 225,000 credits, a built-in TW P.P.E. Battery holding a reserve of 100 P.P.E. can be added. This is enough for an additional 20 hours of drive time, but is seldom purchased unless TW Features are added; the Dune Buggy doesn't usually come with TW features.

Cost: Basic unit requiring P.P.E. every time it is used: 265,000 credits in Arzno; powered by an additional P.P.E. Battery: 990,000 credits; powered by a TW generator (with built-in P.P.E. Battery): 3.2 million. Sells for two or three times that

amount on the Black Market. One of the appeals of the vehicle is its simplicity and ease of construction. Another is its comparatively low cost.

Weapon Systems: A true all-purpose vehicle, the A.W.M. production of the Sand Ranger comes equipped with several weapon systems to supplement its role as a workhorse.

1. TW Dual Brimstone Plasma Cannons: These TW weapons fire bolts of magical fire from forward-fixed units mounted above the front wheel-wells and below the headlights. They may be fired by the driver via controls on the steering wheel, or by a gunner sitting “shotgun” operating a control mechanism that extends from the dashboard.

Primary Purpose: Assault & Defense.

Mega-Damage: 4D6 M.D. per single blast or 6D6+14 per twin, simultaneous blasts at the same target.

Range: 1,200 feet (366 km).

Rate of Fire: Each single or double blast counts as one melee attack.

Payload: Unlimited with a TW generator, 40 blasts with a battery, each individual blast drains 2 P.P.E. from the battery. Or one blast can be fired for every 8 P.P.E. (or 16 I.S.P.) pumped into the TW weapon by someone inside the vehicle.

2. Rear, Truck Bed Gun Turret: A heavy weapon of choice can be mounted in the bed of the Combat Truck for a tail gunner. Typically a heavy weapon laser, laser pulse cannon, plasma cannon, rail gun, or TW Water Cannon mounted on a built-in ball unit atop a removable stand in the middle of the

truck. It allows a gunner to fire the weapon in a 360 degree horizontal arc of fire, and 45 degrees up and down. Standing or seated mounts are available. The standard rail gun may be loaded with normal rounds or with silver, or may be substituted with a water cannon, energy rifle, or other weapon.

Primary Purpose: Assault & Defense.

Mega-Damage: Varies with weapon type, but generally does 6D6 M.D., 1D4x10 M.D. or 1D6x10 M.D., or similar Hit Point damage for anti-vampire weapons.

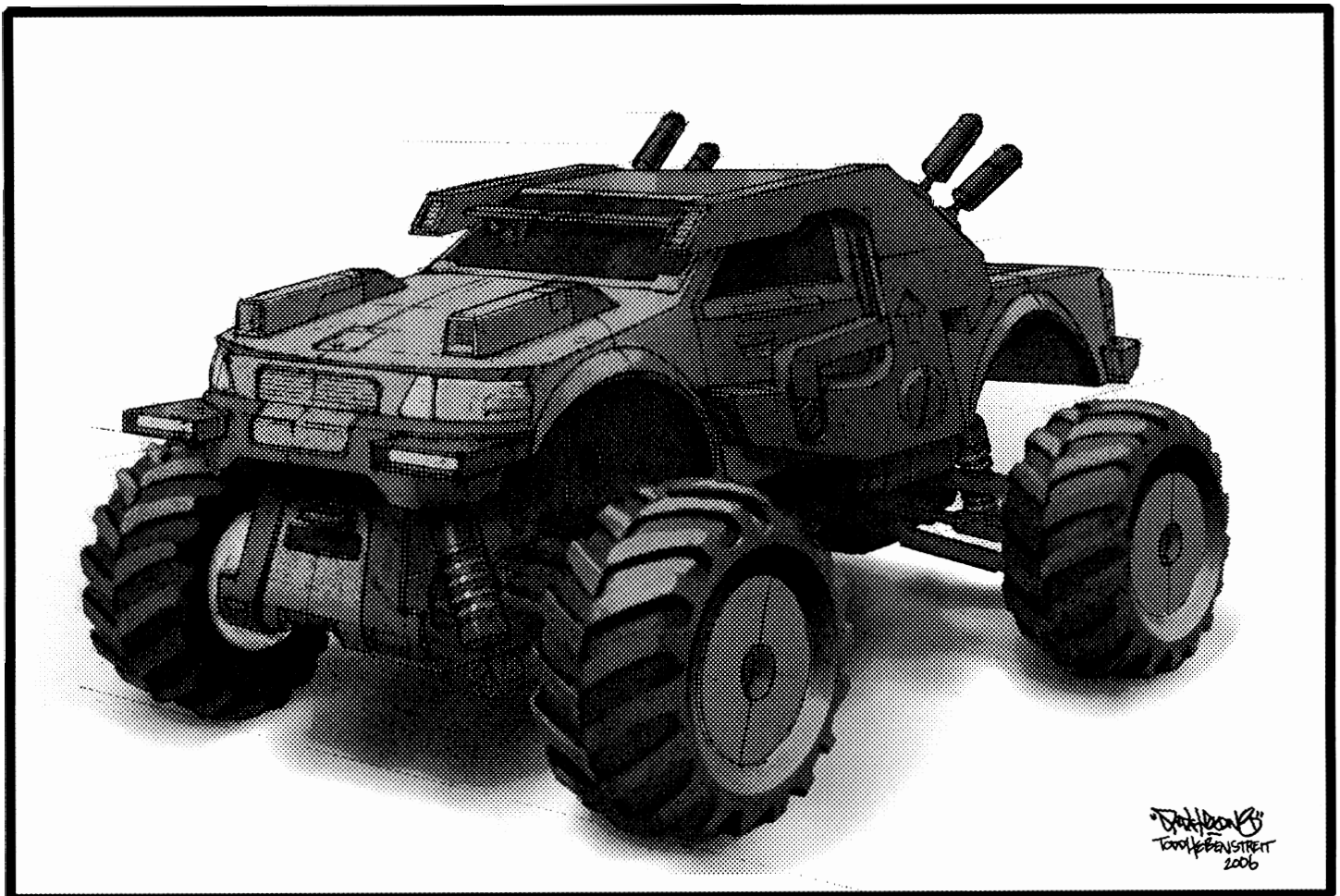
Range: Varies with weapon; 2,000-4,000 feet (610 to 1219 m).

Rate of Fire: Each blast counts as one melee attack.

Payload: 50-100 bursts of conventional or silver ammunition, unlimited for energy weapons tied into a TW generator, 15-30 for those tied into a P.P.E. Battery (40-60 if the weapon has its own battery).

3. Headlights (4): Two pairs of high-powered headlights are standard. A second pair of lights can be mounted on top of the truck facing the front.

Techno-Wizard Features: None standard, other than the power system. As many as three TW features may be added for an additional cost, but most people don't bother. Half of the Sand Rangers in the A.M.C. have the TW Force Field (80 M.D.C.) and the P.P.E. Battery to power it.





Vampires

The large mass of eyes and tentacles felt another sting as more of its dark children fell to the blades and stakes of the armored soldiers.

One by one the undead fell, each time taking a little bit of the Vampire Intelligence with it. The ancient monster sensed that morning was approaching and knew that most of its human protectors had been slain or lured away by the attacking army. Normally confident, the Intelligence shifted nervously in its underground chamber as it surveyed its options.

The Master Vampire was among the first to be slain, murdered by a treacherous human slave. Now the creature's Familiar was being bombarded by wooden spears, its body already laced with wounds from silver blades. The Vampire Intelligence screamed an unearthly bellow as its demonic Familiar perished, sending pain and agony surging through its hideous creator. Losing the Familiar weakened the monster's tenuous hold to the Earth.

Many levels above, the outer doors to the temple flew open and soldiers flooded the grounds. Destroying dark minions in their wake, they progressed toward the lower caverns where the Vampire Intelligence waited. The pulsating blob of flesh and tentacles was now very weak and even more afraid. As the last of its guards were destroyed, the Vampire Intelligence made preparations for dire action.

Minutes later, the human destroyers entered the Intelligence's huge chamber. The monstrosity howled terribly and flailed its fanged tentacles, rending armor and flesh. It dropped men, instantly dead, to the floor and bellowed like nothing before heard on this planet. The soldiers' armor and weapons rattled as they fell to the ground. Most gasped their last breath hoping their ultimate sacrifice would not be in vain. Some shielded their eyes in fear and recoiled from the ancient horror, and prayed. Others clinged to life and screwed up the courage to charge again. No matter how many fell before them, still the soldiers pressed forward and the monster wailed.

Priests in coarse robes carrying large banners and crosses held aloft on poles ran up from the rear and rallied the warriors.

The creature spewed blood now as it flailed. Its howls filled with agony rather than rage or defiance. The captains and elite warriors now ran forth through the place paved in the bodies of heroes. Their battle cries rang out louder than the cries of the beast as Cyber-Knight and Sky-Knight, Juicer and cyborg, Ley Line Walker and Techno-Wizard, human and D-Bee fought with gleaming silver swords, spears, streams of holy water and flights of arrows made of wood.

As the second wave began its attack there was a peal of thunder in the chamber, and the tentacled horror vanished in a great blue flash and a hot wind that swept the cave. Sulfur stung their eyes and the stench of death filled the air.

What vampires remained alive either disintegrated into ashes or fell to their knees where they stood. A few of the undead looked up with pleading eyes, but uttered no words, for they

knew they could not be forgiven nor shown mercy. The warriors continued their onslaught now with renewed vigor until each vampire was staked, decapitated and burnt.

After the first moments, of screams and fire, all was silent. Then cheers erupted from the men as they held high their weapons and shouted out cries of victory amidst sobs of relief and tears for their fallen comrades. They had saved their land from the pestilence of vampirism. They had slain the undead hordes and sent the Vampire Intelligence that had spawned them back to whatever pit from Hell it had crawled out of. Hundreds of good men had died and thousands were wounded, but it was all worth it. Bad enough the vampires already dominated Mexico, they could not be allowed to press beyond it. And some day, the men thought flush in triumph, one day they will take the battle into Mexico and free the millions of men and women held in bondage by creatures such as these.

The Vampire Intelligence, now safe in another dimension, licked its wounds and cursed mankind. All through time the story had been the same. Earth was an unconquered realm, despite hundreds of attempts by dozens of Vampire Intelligences. The Vampire Kingdoms of Mexico held by its brethren was not enough. The Intelligence wanted its own Earthly kingdom. It was time for a new strategy, and it began to plot its return.

The above is just one example of a nameless Vampire Intelligence's bid to invade and conquer Earth.

Like all other Vampire Intelligences over the millennia, the Intelligence responsible for creating the undead legions of *Fort Tombstone* has tried to conquer Earth in the past and failed. It was this string of failures that has led this particular Vampire Intelligence to the revelation that a new strategy was necessary. While many Vampire Intelligences and other evil creatures had limited success enslaving humanity, humans always proved to be resilient, defiant, survivors. In retrospect, the vampire lord recognized it had often underestimated the ingenuity and audacity of humankind. The people of Earth advance their technology more rapidly every century and adapt quickly to new threats.

This time, the Vampire Intelligence had decided that old dogs can learn new tricks, and it is taking a page from the human play book. It will use military tactics and man's own technology against him. To that end, it has found the perfect General in its Master Vampire, *Xavier Stuart*.

The time seems ripe to make its move in North America. Humankind is splintered between a dozen kingdoms all vying for power and control. The most powerful force, the Coalition States, has weakened itself in a war that has eliminated a fearsome (to vampires) kingdom of magic called Tolkeen. Now, while the other kingdoms are distracted with the Coalition States and have turned their attention to that nation or their own fears, now is the time to make a move. If done right, no one will be the wiser until too late.

The grand strategy. Xavier Stuart was wronged in his first life, constantly overlooked and marginalized. Once a Coalition officer from Chi-Town, Xavier now leads a new army of the undead. He is a brilliant strategist with a zeal for battle and a desire to rule over others. He loves nothing better than sending his undead minions into battle against the mortals. The goal, of course, is the eventual takeover of the world, but Xavier and his Vampire Lord are both very patient. The initial goal is the con-

quest of North America, and the first step is establishing a base of operation in the Southwest. So it is, the Master Vampire Xavier quietly builds an army and plots his takeover of the continent from deep within a silver mine outside of Tombstone, Arizona.

To accommodate the vampire lord's desires, Xavier has developed a three-pronged strategy to spread their influence throughout the region. The first is the building of an organized vampire army. Not just a horde of savage undead, but an army that uses military strategy and modern weapons. Second, Xavier is building a network of human and D-Bee loyalists and cultists via his *Blood Priest*. Finally, Xavier has enlisted the aid of the most unlikely of allies: a group of Cyber-Knights disgruntled with their founder. Rogues known as the *Black Swords*. Together, the Vampire Intelligence hopes to insinuate the undead throughout the Southwest, and before anyone realizes it, have conquered the land and be poised to seize more.

Fort Tombstone

The start of a Vampire Kingdom

Vampire Population Breakdown

450 Secondary Vampires in Tombstone.

200 Secondary Vampires scattered around the area.

75 Wild Vampires active in Tombstone.

250 Wild Vampires in stasis sleep.

975 total

Vampire Minions & Slaves

300 Mortal Blood Cultists loyal to the undead in Whetstone.

200 Mortal Blood Cultists scattered around the region.

2,200 Mortals enslaved in and around Tombstone; 450 are mind slaves.

130 Mortal mind slaves scattered across Arizona and New Mexico.

Fort Tombstone: Approximately 450 *Secondary Vampires*, 325 *Wild Vampires*, plus General Xavier Stuart, the Master Vampire, himself.

Approximately 75 of the Wild Vampires are allowed to stay in Tombstone as personal servants and supernatural laborers. They are watched closely and controlled so as to not reveal their presence to the outside world. The remaining 250 Wild Vampires are held in *suspended animation* within one of the vampire lairs awaiting to be unleashed as expendable shock troops.

Other Controlled Territory: Another 200 of *Xavier's Secondary Vampires* dominate or have a growing presence in several small communities, homesteads, and strongholds throughout the state of Arizona and northwestern New Mexico. They wait for their leader's call to arms.

Total vampire population is steady between 900 and 1100.

Human Minions of Fort Tombstone Kingdom: Roughly 2,200 *humanoids* are enslaved by Xavier's minions in Tombstone and in the slave camps. Of those 2,200, a sizeable 475 are *mind slaves* completely obedient to their undead masters.

Some 300 members of the **Blood Cult** in the town of Whetstone *willingly serve* the Tombstone Vampires, and nearly 200 cultists more are scattered in ones and twos across the New West.

Fort Tombstone

Fort Tombstone is built on the pre-Rifts ruins of Tombstone, Arizona, the famous Old West mining town and home to the legendary Wyatt Earp, John "Doc" Holliday, and the Clantons. The silver rush of the early 1880's brought fame and fortune to the small town with thousands of hopeful prospectors in search of wealth. The resulting lawlessness and the shootout at the O.K. Corral made Tombstone one of the best-known cities of the old American West. Its prominence waned with the advent of the 20th century and by 1911, flooded mines and low silver prices all but wiped the town off the map. It survived and prospered as a tourist attraction through the 21st Century, bolstered by fame brought on from literature and film, but was a relic of the past left behind during the technological revolution of the Golden Age. As always, its citizens preserved the history of Tombstone for future generations and kept the town alive by catering to tourists curious to catch a glimpse into the legendary past of the Old West.

When the Great Cataclysm struck, Tombstone was little more than a roadside landmark with a population of approximately 2,000. It fell early in the Dark Age along with scores of other small towns throughout the New West, leaving a perfectly preserved ghost town behind for those who survived the holocaust to rediscover, decades or centuries later.

There is no recorded history of Tombstone during the Dark Age or the Post-Apocalyptic world that has followed. Humans and even D-Bees of all kinds made at least temporary homes in its abandoned and crumbling buildings for years. Whoever hung their hat on the old ruins were its inhabitants. In the last 74 years, however, Tombstone was taken over by settlers who decided to make it their home. Its new residents re-christened it **Fort Tombstone** and tried to build happy lives as miners and ranchers.

Xavier Stuart targeted Fort Tombstone for his home and base of operations for a number of reasons. For one, it is perfectly located for his purposes. His proximity to Mexico and to the Bisbee vampires made it relatively easy for him to accumulate the beginnings of his army without causing a stir. Vampire activity is unwelcome by the few humanoids who inhabit the region, but not at all unexpected. Close proximity to the Bisbee vampires would help to conceal their own tribe and, Xavier hoped, some of them might be persuaded to join his ranks. For another, the climate in southern Arizona is perfect for vampires, with very little rainfall and few bodies of water to encumber them. Third, in the stony desert one can see for miles, making it impossible for an invading army to appear unnoticed. And there was more.

Fort Tombstone was perfect because the human population was small enough to manage, especially at first, and small enough to maintain without showing their hand to the outside world. Once under the vampires' thrall, the population of mind controlled slaves and those residents dominated by fear or otherwise enslaved, could easily maintain the illusion that everything

was fine and dandy at Fort Tombstone. The people's reputation for being isolationists cold to outsiders meant visitors would not expect a warm welcome nor plan to stay longer than they absolutely had to. Thus, to its neighbors, Fort Tombstone seems the same as it ever was, unfriendly to strangers, and suspicious of everyone. (Ironic how their paranoia and attempt to avoid outsiders doomed them rather than saved them.) Furthermore, Tombstone was ideal because it was only a stone's throw from the sites of several mines, covered from the volcanic ash and fallout of the Great Cataclysm and concealed by centuries of shifting ground. Again, the irony seems complete, vampires making their lairs in a network of ancient silver mines picked clean of the silver ore that is death to vampires. Here, the main vampire tribe could live in secrecy, away from prying eyes, safe from the daylight hours. With the labors of his tireless undead minions and human slaves, the mine network was cleared, and sections expanded and refit for its new role as the vampires' den.

Days in Fort Tombstone

Things are always quiet and orderly at Fort Tombstone, without so much as a raised voice heard night or day, much less the random gunfire and violence seen at many of the larger New West settlements. The population seems to be well-armed, and many people have vampire fighting gear to protect themselves against the "Bisbee horde," although it is not a common practice to wear crosses or make use of garlic or wolfsbane.

Fort Tombstone seems, as most vampire-controlled towns do, to be a normal frontier town. Humans and some D-Bees can be seen walking the streets and conducting business at the banks, general stores, farms, markets, and saloons, but most are at home busy working their fields or ranch. There is a strong law enforcement presence (all of whom are loyal and mind controlled servants of the undead) who keep troublemakers (i.e., nosy strangers), bandits and monsters at bay. The people are wary of outsiders with big guns and fancy armor, but that has been the case for generations, so it doesn't raise any alarm. To the casual observer, Fort Tombstone is a normal town of hard-working, no nonsense, and hardened settlers in the New West.

However, the normalcy of the town is a deliberate and practiced deception. After spending any significant amount of time in the town (something that adventurers find curiously hard to do), characters will begin to feel the unsettling qualities of the town. Many citizens seem to be extremely nervous of strangers whether they are heavily armed or not. Most avoid strangers, including lawmen, Justice Rangers, Cyber-Knights, vampire hunters, Operators, Body Fixers, and Preachers, all of whom are usually welcome even in the most hard-bitten and paranoid towns. Many people, including children, refuse to speak to strangers, and run away or scream for help if they feel cornered or threatened in the least.

The law is always quick to respond to *trouble from outsiders*. ("But sheriff, I only asked the boy a question.") The law don't cotton to strangers, neither. Even the slightest misunderstanding is likely to have the strangers *escorted out* of town by the sheriff



and 1D6+2 of his deputies. (“I don’t care what yer business here is, boy. Yer kind ain’t welcome here. Now, git ‘fore I lose my temper and somebody gits hurt or you find yerself in jail.”) If a stranger argues or pushes back, the sheriff and his men – joined by neighborly town folk (other mind controlled minions or terrified slaves) – will strike out with alarming force to “settle the trouble, right quick.” This usually means a beating and being taken a mile (1.6 km) outside of town and dumped with their belongings and a warning to “stay outta Fort Tombstone and don’t come back.” If the “law” thinks the outsiders are drifters easy to deal with, they may be arrested, jailed, and turned over to the vampires, who turn them into mind slaves, or put in irons (chained as slaves), and taken to work in the mines.

Outsiders the “law” believes are genuine trouble – including scouts and agents for vampire killers, lawmen, powerful adventurers, Reid’s Rangers, Cyber-Knights, the A.M.C., and similar tough guys – are warned to watch themselves, keep the peace and get out as soon as their business in town is concluded – before sundown, if possible. However, the law only arrests or bothers outsiders if they really do poke around too much where they don’t belong. Otherwise, they can come and go unmolested. Any stranger who is even suspected of having discovered the vampires’ secret or who voices concerns about “a vampire or two hiding out in town” is dealt with severely. He is likely to be encouraged to stay in town *overnight* and have a talk with the sheriff or mayor (both of whom will insist “there ain’t no vampires in Tombstone”).

Despite what you may be thinking, the vampires do NOT attack nosey outsiders unless they actually uncover an active vampire or their lair in the mines. Instead, if the visitor or group doesn’t seem genuinely convinced everything is okay in town, the people will try to keep them in town till an hour or two before sunset. (“Oh no, your jeep ain’t working. Don’t worry, we have a good mechanic who’ll fix you up right quick, fair prices too.”) Before the stranger(s) leaves, one of the townspeople will try to get an idea where they are headed, and watch which way they go. Then after sunset, a pack of Secondary Vampires will tail them and attack. Mercs and adventurers may also get waylaid for their equipment. If the vampires’ minions notice something “the movement” needs or wants, the visitors are targeted for attack.

Victims attacked by the vampires at night are usually captured, stripped of weapons and valuables, and put to work as slaves, or more likely, imprisoned in cattle pens (human cattle) to be fed upon by the Tombstone vampires over the next 1D6 weeks before they are slain or turned into the undead. **Note:** The Tombstone vampires always try to do their dirty work *OUTSIDE* of town away from Fort Tombstone where a vampire attack can be blamed on bandits, wild animals, or the Bisbee vampires. (“Everyone knows things ain’t right over there in Bisbee, if you catch my drift.”) The Tombstone vampires have no problem traveling (as wolves, bats or in vehicles) a few hundred miles to deal with troublemakers from the outside. Furthermore, most folks in these parts don’t question a death that happens out in the wilderness where travel is always precarious, at best.

Tombstone residents who talk to strangers do so willingly and without fear. They always seem to know all the right things to say to any query, too. “Oh, it seems peaceful now, but we had

to fight off some bandits last week.” “We pretty much take care of our own, we don’t do a lot of trading with other folks. Besides, there ain’t nobody close enough to trade with.” “Vampires in Bisbee? You betcha, but I think we’re too big o’ town and too ornery for ‘em to bother with. We’ve managed to fight off every vampire that’s come our way, so they leave us alone mostly.” “Heck, we’ve killed plenty of vampires in these parts, so they’ve learnt to keep their distance I reckon.” “Wild Vamps is the ones that give us the most trouble from time to time.” “Vampires who travel alone and in pairs are the trickiest and most dangerous varmints, but they prey mostly on strangers. My guess is the vampires have learned they’ll rile up the whole town if they attack one of us, so they mainly target drifters and strangers passing through like yourselves. So be careful out there, ya hear?”

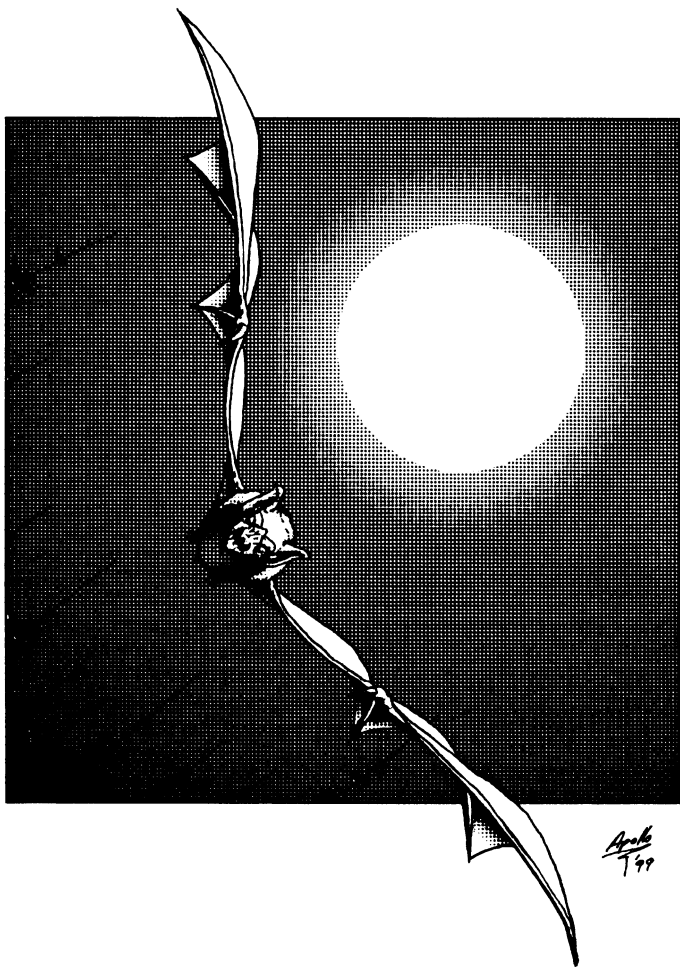
A few of the shops even sell stakes and wooden mallets, but don’t offer much else in the way of vampire fighting gear, and no wooden or silver ammo or arrows. “We aren’t exactly a big trade town, Mister. We don’t see many visitors. Ain’t much to attract folks, you know.” “We like to keep to ourselves an’ don’t go lookin’ for trouble, Sir. We have what we need an’ ain’t worried about every tin horn or drifter like you who comes to town. If you ain’t prepared for travel in these parts an’ the chance of encounterin’ vampires afore you git here, then you’re the stupidest soul alive an’ deserve whatever you git.”

Asking about vampires may also elicit a frightened response that seems genuine. “What are you askin’ about vampires fer so much? You didn’t have a run-in with a pack and lead ‘em here, did ya? Maybe you oughtta be talkin’ to the sheriff.” “Don’t be bringin’ none o’ your foolishness to town, dagnabit! You wanna kill vampires, do it away from here. This is exactly why we don’t like strangers sniffin’ around our town. They always seem to bring trouble with them. And we don’t need no trouble, ‘specially with vampires.”

Game Master Note: These average, everyday humans and D-Bees are those enslaved by the vampires and forced to live in the town to help keep up the facade of normalcy. Many are directly under vampire mind control, including many of the most prominent members of the community such as the sheriff, all of his deputies, the mayor, the local minister, and most shop owners. Others are kept in line through fear of retribution from the vampires and, more importantly, of their hidden informants scattered throughout the community. The people of Tombstone trust no man, particularly strangers, not just because they could represent trouble, but because they could be a new minion of the undead come to test them. Consequently, virtually everyone in Tombstone, slave, mind controlled henchmen, man, woman and child plays his role to the hilt. If anything, many seem angry, sad, or rude, but that’s nothing unusual in these wilderness towns where life is hard. Indeed, Xavier Stuart and his Secondary Vampires frequently send agents and mind slaves into town to root out dissidents and strong-willed people who might defy their will or betray them.

Nights in Fort Tombstone

Vampire activity is, obviously, only an issue at night. Fort Tombstone itself is relatively vampire-free, as the undead in Xavier’s kingdom prefer to rule through mind slave proxies. Fur-



thermore, a vampire in town is just as likely to be disguised as a bat in the rafters or a wolf sniffing around for scraps.

The excavated silver mine outside of town is the real “vampire central.” Here hundreds of vampires sleep during the day under the guard of loyal mind slaves, any of whom would face certain death to prevent even one vampire from being harmed. At night, the vampires feed on the prisoners locked in the cattle pens as well as the human slaves and servants in the town and surrounding labor camps. The Tombstone undead are expected to follow rationing restrictions, which preserves the food supply and conceal vampire activity. The undead come and go on their errands throughout the night, most often in bat and wolf forms, but also in human form. Some appear as local farmers or workers, others as the law, mercs and adventurers armed, armored and transported by conventional military vehicles. A stranger who gets within 30 miles (48 km) of Fort Tombstone after dark *may* notice these nocturnal activities, but they are all done quietly. Any outsider who encounters a vampire on the prowl is not likely to live to tell about it.

Deep within the earth, the vampire General, Xavier Stuart, rules from a throne carved into the face of the rock, and consults with his vampire and mortal advisors. During the day, even his most trusted aides don’t know where he sleeps. The old silver mines serve as his headquarters, where he plots and schemes his conquest of humanity. The town, a front to fool those who wander into the area, but also to facilitate the building of an army preparing for war. Hidden in town and in the mine tunnels are stored weapons, armor and equipment for the war that is coming. A war that will be fought by the vampires’ human slaves during the day, continued with renewed energy and inhuman power at night by the vampires. Local businessmen buy and

trade for new weapons and equipment to help supply Xavier with his specific needs. The sheriff and the deputies are the chief organizers and defenders of the military gear.

Fort Tombstone, 109 P.A.

The town is known as “Fort” Tombstone, because the entire inhabited portion is surrounded with a wooden palisade wall with sharpened stakes turned outward and a six-foot (1.8 m) trench at its base to ward off unwelcome visitors, human and vampire alike. Its people make a living as ranchers, farmers, and hunters as well as craftsmen and businessmen. In short, no differently than most other communities in the region.

Outsiders are *not* welcome, particularly after nightfall. The people of Fort Tombstone have had simply too many problems with the Bisbee vampires to allow strangers to stick around past sunset, or so they say.

This is true. Even before Xavier took control of the town, vampire attacks were common and humans taken as cattle and slaves to feed the vampire population; rarely killed outright. Only the Wild Vampires slew their victims, and even some of them kept slaves for food, at least for a little while (1D4 days). Consequently, there are hundreds and hundreds of survivors of vampire attacks walking around with the scars of vampire bites on their necks, arms and legs. Actually, this is true all across the Southwest, so bite marks should not alarm experienced vampire slayers and mercs from the region.

Under Xavier Stuart’s rule, things changed. The Bisbee vampires have been held at bay and vampire clan wars in the middle of the desert are common, though most adventurers and even vampire hunters may be at a loss as to what the conflict is all about, or that there are two powerful, rival clans vying for control of the territory.

Xavier, a Master Vampire, took over Tombstone with military precision. First, he infiltrated and studied his target, just as his superiors in the Coalition Army had trained him. Then he systematically subverted the community by targeting the leaders of the community. Not killing them, but making them – the sheriff, deputies, the mayor, the preacher and others with influence and power – all his servants. Once they were his, the rest came easy, and one night, the people of Fort Tombstone realized they had been invaded and conquered without so much as a shot being fired. Oh, there were attempts at resistance and escape, but by then, the vampires and their human henchmen were in control. Those who fought openly were slain or disappeared. Some were made examples of and literally torn apart or fed to the wolves.

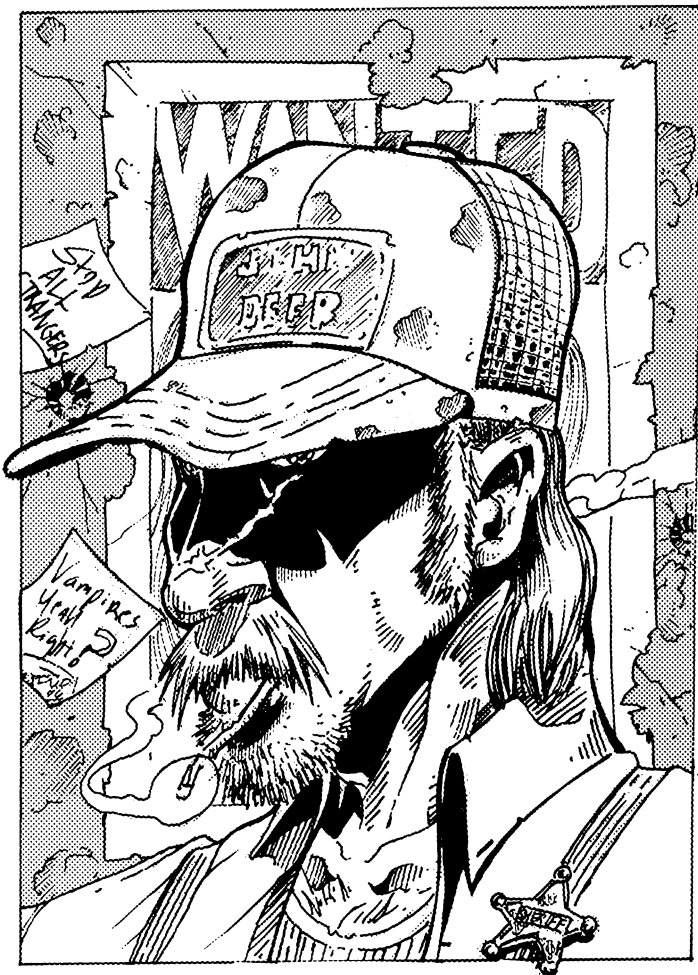
Today, nobody resists and most of the humans in Fort Tombstone bear the “scars of feeding.” The scars are usually hidden to avoid raising suspicion from a perceptive and suspicious outsider, but they are there. To ask a towns person about such scars or vampire attacks gets a response like, “Sometimes we fight off attacks better than others,” or “I was lucky to survive that one,” or something similar. They point to the armed sheriff and his deputies as their protection, and the wooden and silver weapons and crosses that many carry. By all indications, the town is successfully defending itself against random vampire incursions from Bisbee and south of the Rio Grande.

The truth is that through the use of mind slaves planted throughout the population of Tombstone, General Xavier Stuart rules from afar through fear and paranoia. All the townspeople know that the sheriff, deputies, the local priest, and a couple of local Gunslingers are all under vampire control, but they don't know who else. The friendly neighbor or old Mrs. Maples could be "one of them." The citizens know that there are others among them and it is that fear that keeps them in line.

Notable Places in Town

The town of Tombstone has all the amenities one could ask for in such a remote part of the country. Conventional and TW generators provide electricity and lights, most homes and businesses have indoor plumbing, running water, and the wealthiest even have air-conditioning. There is a small, clustered area within the palisades and a downtown area with a church, city hall, the sheriff's office, jail, a couple of boardinghouses, the Heaven's Light Hotel and Restaurant, and a small market district with a handful of shops, farmers market, and a trading post.

(Designer's Note: Seeing as how Tombstone is a real place, I decided not to include a map. A quick Internet search should get you whatever you need in terms of its modern layout. Game Masters feel free to place these particular points of interest wherever it suits you, and to expand on this limited information with more of your own. – Jason Richards)



Sheriff's Office

Sheriff Hatchett and his 11 deputies are all under vampire mind control. They patrol the streets heavily armed and clad in M.D.C. body armor from Arzno to "keep the peace." The office is an S.D.C. building attached to a small, M.D.C. lockup containing five, 6 x 6 foot (1.8 x 1.8 m) jail cells and a 15 x 10 foot (4.6 x 3.0 m) holding area. The sheriff is in the office most of the time and lives in a small house with his wife and son (neither of whom are mind-controlled) two blocks away. Half of the deputies can always be found on duty at the office or roaming the city streets on foot, horseback, or in one of the two *Sand Ranger* trucks operated by the local law enforcement.

Sheriff Daniel Hatchett – Quick Stats: 6th level Sheriff. Miscreant alignment (was Principled prior to mind control). I.Q. 13, P.E. 14, P.P. 19, and Spd 21. Skills of note include: Speak American (95%), Speak Spanish (95%), Law (80%), Interrogation Techniques (65%), Horsemanship: General (60%/40%), Find Contraband (58%), and Streetwise (52%). Has Hand to Hand: Expert, W.P. Energy Pistol, W.P. Energy Rifle, W.P. Rifles, W.P. Shotgun, and W.P. Handguns, all at 6th level of experience. Sheriff Hatchett's weapon mastery, sharpshooter, and quick-draw initiative bonuses are with *rifles*. He has a custom Wilk's 567 "Long Gun" that he always carries when on the job.

Typical Fort Tombstone deputy – Quick Stats: 3rd and 4th level *Deputies, Cowboys, or Gunfighters*. Miscreant alignments (they were Scrupulous and Unprincipled prior to mind control). Stats listed are average for the deputies in town, with attributes typical for that O.C.C. Skills of note include: Speak American (95%), Speak Spanish (80%), Law (55%), Horsemanship: General or Cowboy (48%/28%) or Pilot: Hover Craft (65%), and Streetwise (34%). All have Hand to Hand: Basic, W.P. Energy Pistol, W.P. Energy Rifle, and one other modern W.P., all at 3rd level of experience. Half have Sharpshooter or Paired Weapons: Handguns skills, all can ride a horse.

The Holy Cross Church

This church was built by a missionary from the Barony of Hope, Colorado, at the time of the resettling of Tombstone. It is now run by **Reverend Robert McCraw**, a 3rd level Preacher, Scrupulous alignment, only he's been under vampire mind control for two years. He was one of the first to fall, as was his wife, Amanda (Anarchist), and three out of four sons, Carl, Brandon, and Todd; all are 1-3 level Vagabonds (church deacons, all Scrupulous) ages 16-21. The eldest son, Taylor, is a first level Preacher, like his daddy (age 23, Miscreant), but a member of the Blood Cult and a willing servant of Xavier.

The church basement is home to three Secondary Vampires, some of the few who live inside the town. They steer clear of the building above (particularly the sanctuary), coming and going by a tunnel accessible from a woodshed behind the bar nextdoor. The church basement also holds several tons of weapons and armor for General Xavier Stuart's impending army and war against Arzno. Most are basic items intended for use by the humans in his army. Buried in one corner of the basement, under some broken concrete, are a collection of a 1D6x100+300 crosses and religious icons best kept out of the hands of the citizens. Most silver items and other valuables have been taken out of town and sold for weapons and armor.

Mayor Cisnero's Residence

Carlos Cisnero, the mayor of Fort Tombstone, lives in a two-story home in the residential section of the town. From there he conducts most of his business. His official office is at the City Court Building next door to the sheriff's office and across the street from City Hall (also used for town meetings and, before the vampires came, celebrations and festivals). Just beyond these buildings is the town square and the farmers' market. The mayor only spends a few hours a day in the office in town and uses his home as a meeting place for his personal business deals, in addition to city business. At night, the home and City Hall are a place for General Xavier Stuart to meet with the lieutenants in his undead army and his human servants.

Mayor Carlos Cisnero – Quick Stats: 9th level Scholar and politician. Diabolic alignment (was Anarchist). I.Q. 15, M.E. 12, M.A. 22, P.S. 10, P.P. 13, and Spd 9. Minor Psychic with the powers of Mind Block (4), See the Invisible (4) and 55 I.S.P. Skills of note include: Appraise Goods (90%), Barter (81%), Basic Math (98%), Find Contraband (62%), Hand to Hand: Basic, History: Post-Apocalypse (89%), Horsemanship: General (55%/35%), Law (95%), Philosophy (90%), Research (95%), Speak American (95%), Speak Spanish (95%), W.P. Handguns and W.P. Energy Pistol, both at 7th level of experience. In addition to a variety of handguns (he collects them), he also has a TW Water Pistol, Arzno Vamp-Killer 2000 weapon kit, six Vampire Chaser Grenades, a TW Concealment Cloak, a silver dagger, a silver cross and 92,000 in Universal Credits, all as part of his "insurance policy" in case of betrayal by his undead masters.

Unlike other people of power and influence in Fort Tombstone, Mayor Cisnero is not actually under vampire mind control. He is a corrupt politician of the worst order who struck a deal with Xavier and his horde early on, and assisted in their quick and quiet takeover of the town for the promise of a high position within Xavier's new Vampire Kingdom. He uses his position of power to help keep the public in line, all the while getting rich off of the underhanded business deals with the Black Market, smugglers, bandits, mercs and thieves who he's dealt with in buying supplies for the secret vampire army.

Livesay's General Store

This is one of the places where visitors are likely to stop by. The owner, Tyrone Livesay, is a congenial man who radiates sincerity, but he is also one of Xavier's mind slaves. This fellow can answer any question about vampires and strange occurrences in such a way as to put anyone's worries aside. His wife, Loretta and daughter, Nellie, are nearly as smooth and convincing as he is. They are best friends with Minister McCraw and his family. Tyrone is a 10th level Vagabond merchant, Anarchist alignment.

Boot Hill Cemetery

This pre-Rifts cemetery is still in use, and is given a wide berth by the citizens of the town, most of whom consider it to be haunted and home to scores of vampires. It sits upon a hill outside of town, beyond the palisades. The vampires seem to pay it little attention, though they do have several dozen Wild Vampires staked and buried throughout it, reserved for emergencies.

Adventure Note: The citizens are correct in their feeling that the cemetery is haunted. No less than six Haunting Entities and a pair of Poltergeists are active within its wrought iron fence. One of the Haunting Entities takes the form of the old missionary who founded the Holy Cross Church and is buried at the top of Boot Hill. The ghost gives even the vampires problems if they try to enter the graveyard, approaching them with crucifix raised. If approached by the player characters he will lament that an evil has "stolen his flock" and "taken root in his town." However, he never speaks of vampires or undead, nor does he know any true details about what's going on.

Tombstone Slave Camps

Fairbanks Homestead

Location: 6.5 miles (10.4 km) due west of Fort Tombstone.

Population: 200 slaves (100%) and 20 Secondary Vampires.

The Fairbanks Homestead was once a large ranch owned by a human family in the early years of the P.A. calendar. The ranchers raised horses and cattle, as well as pigs, chickens, and other livestock with the help of a few Fennodi and Psi-Stalkers. Evidence suggests that at least two generations grew up on and around the homestead, each one bringing in and breeding more people into the fledgling community. All made comfortable lives for themselves, with the Fairbanks family selling and trading beef and leather, horses, eggs, milk, and other necessities to towns far and wide across the New West.

The community was eventually wiped out by the Bisbee vampires and forgotten until Xavier moved into Fort Tombstone. He uses the many homes, barns, and other buildings to house 200 human slaves and a contingent of vampire supervisors. Of the slaves, a dozen are under direct mind control by the vampires there in the camp. Six serve as crew chiefs and taskmasters, one as the manager of the ranch, and the rest are covertly inserted into the general slave population to serve as the vampires' eyes and ears. The ranch has been reopened and is used to provide much of the food needed to sustain the kingdom's human population. Some vegetable crops are also grown and processed at the ranch.

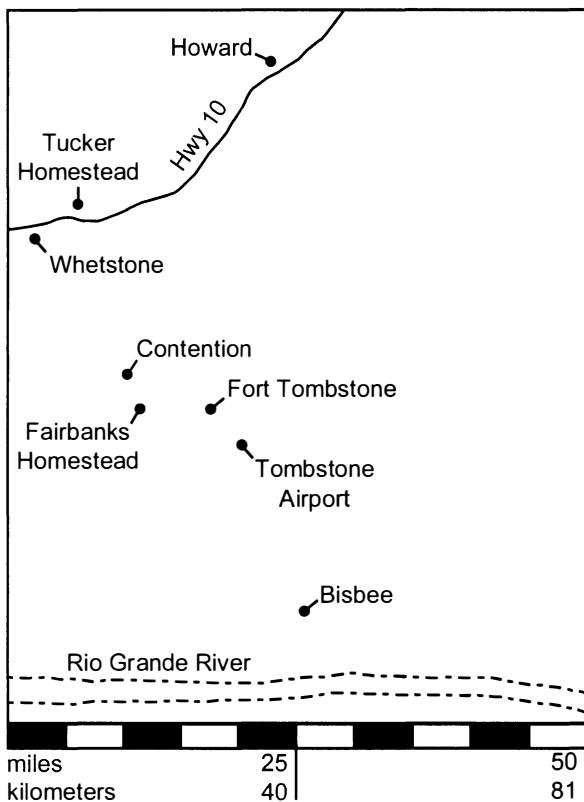
Old Tombstone Airport

Location: 4.0 miles (6.4 km) southeast of Fort Tombstone.

Population: 140 slaves (100% human) and 15 Secondary Vampires.

The most brutal conditions faced by vampire slaves are those seen at the ruins of the Tombstone Municipal Airport. Here human slaves are forced into hard labor, salvaging M.D.C. concrete and other building materials from the site. Such resources are rare in southern Arizona and are used to help fortify vampire defensive positions in and around Fort Tombstone, particularly the mines. The humans at the old airport are generally the "problem" slaves prone to an excess of free thought and dissent. They are worked to the point of death in the desert heat and most often are given as live prey to vampires Xavier wishes to reward. It is not uncommon to see one of Xavier's elite vampire

Tombstone Area



officers strolling through the work area, taking his pick of the slaves and then bleeding him or her dry. Average life expectancy once one reaches the airport is less than three months.

The town of Contention

Location: 8.1 miles (13.0 km) northwest of Fort Tombstone.

Population: 200 slaves (75% human, 25% assorted mutants and D-Bees) and 20 Secondary Vampires.

The Contention slave camp is the newest of the three and has only been in operation for less than a year. It was established after documents found buried in the town showed that more mined out silver mines existed around Fort Tombstone. Contention was the first of the mines to be rediscovered after *Lucky Cuss* (now the vampire lair), and Xavier's minions still search for *Grand Central*, *Tough Nut*, *Bunker Hill*, and other mines. (**Note:** There are, in fact, dozens of mines in the Tombstone area of varying size. All in all, the region has yielded well over 1.5 million pounds of silver and lead, plus considerable quantities of gold. Although economic reasons caused the mines to all cease operation in the early 20th Century, there remain significant quantities of these valuable metals today. Of course, the vampires avoid mines that may still have silver, and inhabit only those which have been mined out of ore.)

The Contention camp is utilized for two purposes: as a cash cow for the Fort Tombstone vampires, and as a secondary lair in preparation for an expanding kingdom. Silver is more valuable in the New West than at any time in history, and vampires have few concerns about selling it off through their mind-controlled fronts. While it could certainly come back to bite them (no pun intended), the benefit the vampires get from the sale of the ore is far greater than the cost of facing silver weapons that originate

from their own ground. Silver anti-vampire weapons will continue to exist with or without the Fort Tombstone supplies. (See the massive amounts mined from the mountains in Silvereno; **Rifts® World Book 14: New West.**) The ability to buy or trade for weapons, armor, fuel, and other necessities far outweighs the threat of silver bullets. The open sale of material so deadly to the undead around Fort Tombstone also helps the vampires there to hide in plain sight.

Other Vampire Strongholds

In addition to the silver mine, slave camps, and the city of Fort Tombstone itself, General Xavier Stuart has established minions in a number of other communities and locations throughout Arizona. Each serves a purpose, be it a military stronghold, spy network, or just preparation for a future expansion. They are well-disbursed and offer Xavier a great deal of valuable intelligence and assets for his various operations. While Xavier may plant a minion or two (vampire, mortal, or mind slave) anywhere in the New West, the most significant forays beyond the protection of Fort Tombstone are noted here (listed more or less as they lie from north to south down the state).

Gallup. This town lies on I-40 on the New Mexico side of the border with Arizona. Nearly 2,300 humans live in the city, shunning most D-Bees, but allowing some of the least alien-looking human mutants to live in their midst as second-class citizens (mostly mutants, minor psychics, and those with few features and no significant mutant powers or traits). Xavier sees Gallup as a great expansion opportunity for his kingdom, giving him a gateway to the east and a remote base able to put direct pressure on Arzno and other places of civilizations in the north. The undead maintain a secret presence in Gallup with some 35 Secondary Vampires currently hiding in remote or abandoned areas. Most of the vampires (75%) have taken one mind slave. This provides the undead with safe houses and growing influence in the community. The wife of the police chief, the resident psychic healer, and several prominent business owners have fallen victim to mind control so far.

The Petrified Forest. This area in northeastern Arizona lies just north of the ruins of Interstate 40, and is used as an encampment and rendezvous point for vampires engaging in strikes against trade traffic in that region of the state. Even in pre-Rifts times, the sight of the Petrified Forest was bizarre to behold, with the remains of an ancient rainforest laying about the multi-colored landscapes of the Painted Desert. In the time of Rifts, the unusual scenery is contrasted with the inherent danger from the large numbers of deadly Canyon Worms that inhabit the land. While there are no permanent vampire residents in the area, up to 50 congregate for short periods, seeking refuge from the daylight in caves and even ancient Native American dwellings carved into the rock.

Camp Verde. The ghost towns surrounding Camp Verde are used by Fort Tombstone vampires and their allied humans as jump-off points for raids. Roughly 45 miles (72 km) south of *Flagstaff* on Interstate 17, and therefore just inside the area generally considered *the Waste*, 20 to 50 Secondary Vampires may be encountered at night meeting with their human slaves, spies, allies or loyal cultists who are stirring up trouble for the



Clarkdale Confederacy and those traveling near Camp Verde. Xavier is considering abandoning this site due to a significant surge in resistance from the ranchers and citizens of Clarkdale. The Waste also keeps many traders steering far clear of easy attack from Camp Verde. If the site is abandoned, the vampires will likely reposition themselves somewhere further to the east or concentrate their forces on more promising locations such as *Gallup*, or set up permanent operations in the *Petrified Forest*.

Green Valley. Twenty-five miles (40 km) south of Tucson is the town of Green Valley. Fifty Secondary Vampires live in and around the town of 1,200 human and D-Bee farmers. Xavier's long-term plans for Green Valley are hardly grandiose, but involve simply taking its citizens for slaves and feeding stock. Half of the vampires have a mind slave in the general population.

Greaterville. This town will be the next area of expansion for Xavier in terms of "human" resources. The town lies 40 miles (64 km) west of Fort Tombstone and is inhabited by 700 Fennodi and a mixed group of approximately 150 D-Bees, mutants and humans. The heavily-Fennodi population proved difficult to control initially, so Greaterville is actually ruled by 25 Secondary Vampires along with their heavily-armed mind slaves (each vampire has a mind slave in the population, half of them Fennodi). The Fennodi's defensive abilities are difficult for the vampires to overcome, so Xavier is considering just allowing some of his select favorite minions to go into the town to hunt and feed to their hearts' content. One mind slave poses as the leader of a gang of bandits who have taken over the town and hold its populace in check.

Whetstone. Whetstone is the home of the *Blood Cult* and Xavier's Blood Priest, the inhuman D-Bee Lord Suthue. Located about 25 miles (40 km) northwest of Tombstone, the small town is nothing more than a gathering of fanatic humans, mutants, and D-Bees who worship the vampires and perform mayhem in Xavier's name. Some 300 cultists make their home in the semi-permanent settlement of tents and shacks. No vampires live in the town itself, but a few keep a watchful eye out from the Tucker Homestead Ruins. (See the section on the **Blood Cult** later in this book for more information.)

Tucker Homestead Ruins. Twenty Secondary Vampires live in the ruins of the Tucker Homestead, the residence of a family of adventurous opportunists. After a generation of occupation, the Tuckers were slaughtered by some unknown party (perhaps vampires, perhaps some other monstrous threat), leaving their family lodges along with their barns and other buildings for the Fort Tombstone vampires to use several years later. Just five miles (8 km) from Whetstone, Xavier's undead minions keep an eye on the cultists who operate from that location. On occasion, 1D6 vampires lead the cultists in raids and other activities in service of their master.

Howard. Another small post-apocalyptic settlement overrun shortly after it was established. Like so many early settlers of the New West, these hopeful frontiersmen went to an early grave through some unknown supernatural misfortune. The ruins are controlled by 20 Secondary Vampires and their 15 mind slaves, all of whom oversee 115 humans and 50 Fennodi. Located on the remnants of I-10 only 30 miles (48 km) north of Fort Tombstone, the town is used to attract traders, mercenaries, and adventurers who can be relieved of their high-tech equipment or targeted for the *Slow Kill*.

Lowell. Far from a Fort Tombstone stronghold, the ghost town of Lowell was destroyed by vampires centuries ago. The remains lie only a short 2 miles (3.2 km) from Xavier's vampire competition in Bisbee. Ten of Xavier's vampire servants hide out in Lowell, keeping an eye on the aggressive tribe. These vampires prowl the outskirts of Bisbee, probing its defenses and occasionally engaging the vampires who live there. Xavier has been watching Bisbee in this way for months, and is nearly prepared to launch a campaign to destroy them. A campaign that will manipulate human and D-Bee mercs from Arzno and the surrounding area to do his dirty work for him. This plot is more than a sublime sense of humor or irony, he plans to watch and assess the strengths, weaknesses, strategies and tactics the humans use on Bisbee so that he may develop countermeasures to thwart his enemies when he attacks Arzno.

The Vampires' Lair

The Silver Mines of Tombstone

The tunnels in the mine are rough, unfinished passages that twist and weave as they follow veins of plundered silver or other precious materials pulled from the earth centuries ago. The mine can be divided into two separate sections, one branching left from the entrance, and one to the right. The leftward tunnels are generally referred to by the vampires and their slaves as the "northern tunnels," and those to the right as the "southern tunnels."



Half of the northern tunnels were dug centuries ago and recently reclaimed by Xavier and his minions. The other half are on going new construction dug by slaves in the last two years for Xavier and his undead army. The southern tunnels are deeper than those where Xavier makes his lair, and look as much like natural caverns and hollows as man-made. The vampires avoid the southern tunnels almost entirely, and currently all digging and construction is restricted to the northern sections of the mine.

In both cases, tunnels vary from 6 feet (1.8 m) to 25 feet (7.6 m) wide with ceilings rarely over 8 feet (2.4 m) high. Tunnels are usually lighted only when miners are in the area, at which times lamps are hung from hooks driven into the rock; the mortal servants of the vampires get by with electric lanterns and flashlights. With its twists and turns and absolute lack of natural lighting, any adventurers who cannot see in the dark will require some form of illumination or function as *blind* (-10 on all combat moves). In the depths of these tunnels even light-amplification equipment such as conventional nightvision optics are rendered ineffective without an additional source of light.

The labyrinth of ancient tunnels and caves are so jumbled and twisting that without a map, proper lighting, or some point of orientation one can become almost hopelessly lost within minutes. Just being in the caves without intimate knowledge of their workings makes a character -10% on his Land Navigation skill, even with a map and in favorable conditions. Being without a map adds another -10% penalty, darkness another -15%, and after each failed Land Navigation roll the character becomes more and more confused and lost; a -5% for each failed roll.

Maximum penalty is -60%. Those with the Splinking skill receive no penalties. The tunnels are so vast that there are some portions still unexplored by the vampires, who tend to stick to the beaten path. **Note:** The ancient tunnels are NOT shown on the map.

1. Outer Encampment. Twenty-four miners make their camp at the mining site, plus four crew bosses. Each boss works with a crew of six for twelve hours at a time. That means there are at least a dozen people outside the mine entrance. They can be found cleaning and repairing equipment, cooking, sleeping or tending to the camp. All are human, no D-Bees allowed.

The only permanent buildings at the camp are the kitchen (the large building depicted on the map), storage houses for precious ore (silver, gold, iron and copper), as well as a storage shack and the two small houses for the bosses. There is a well outside the kitchen. The rest of the miners sleep doubled-up in canvas tents nearby.

Like other parts of Xavier's secret domain, the human population is managed through fear, mind control and manipulation. Paranoia, distrust, and fear run high among the labor force because nobody knows who has been bought off by the vampires or which (if any) are subject to mind control. The workers all slave away and suppress any desire to rise up or make a run for it. Not a single one of the miners trusts another, nor do they trust those in town or even wandering adventurers for fear that any might be a vampire plant trying to catch them in some rebellious act. They have learned that good behavior is rewarded with hot food, a warm bed and exclusion from being food stock. Bad behavior carries with it grave consequences.

2. Main Entrance. This unassuming, timber-framed entrance belies the evil that stirs beyond. Outside and to the left of the entrance is a trailer filled with all sorts of well-maintained excavation, digging and mining equipment, from hand picks and axes to jackhammers and a half dozen Wilk's laser torches. At least one, usually two laborers are nearby watching over the area, maintaining equipment, or taking a meal.

The elevation of the entrance is taken as zero and used as the reference for other elevation notes, e.g. an elevation marked -9 feet (2.7 m) is 9 feet (2.7 m) below the grade of the entrance.

3. Heavy Equipment Storage Area (Elevation -36 feet/-11 m). This large cavern houses the heavy mining equipment used to excavate and clear the tunnels of debris and any valuable ores. It includes two 6x6 ATVs with large beds for hauling rock, plus several wheelbarrows and a large machine used for sorting precious materials from waste. In the back of the area is an old-style CS Command Car, two Bandito Arms Command Cars, and two NG Prowler hovercycles, all covered with canvas tarps. Each has only the basic equipment and/or weapon packages.

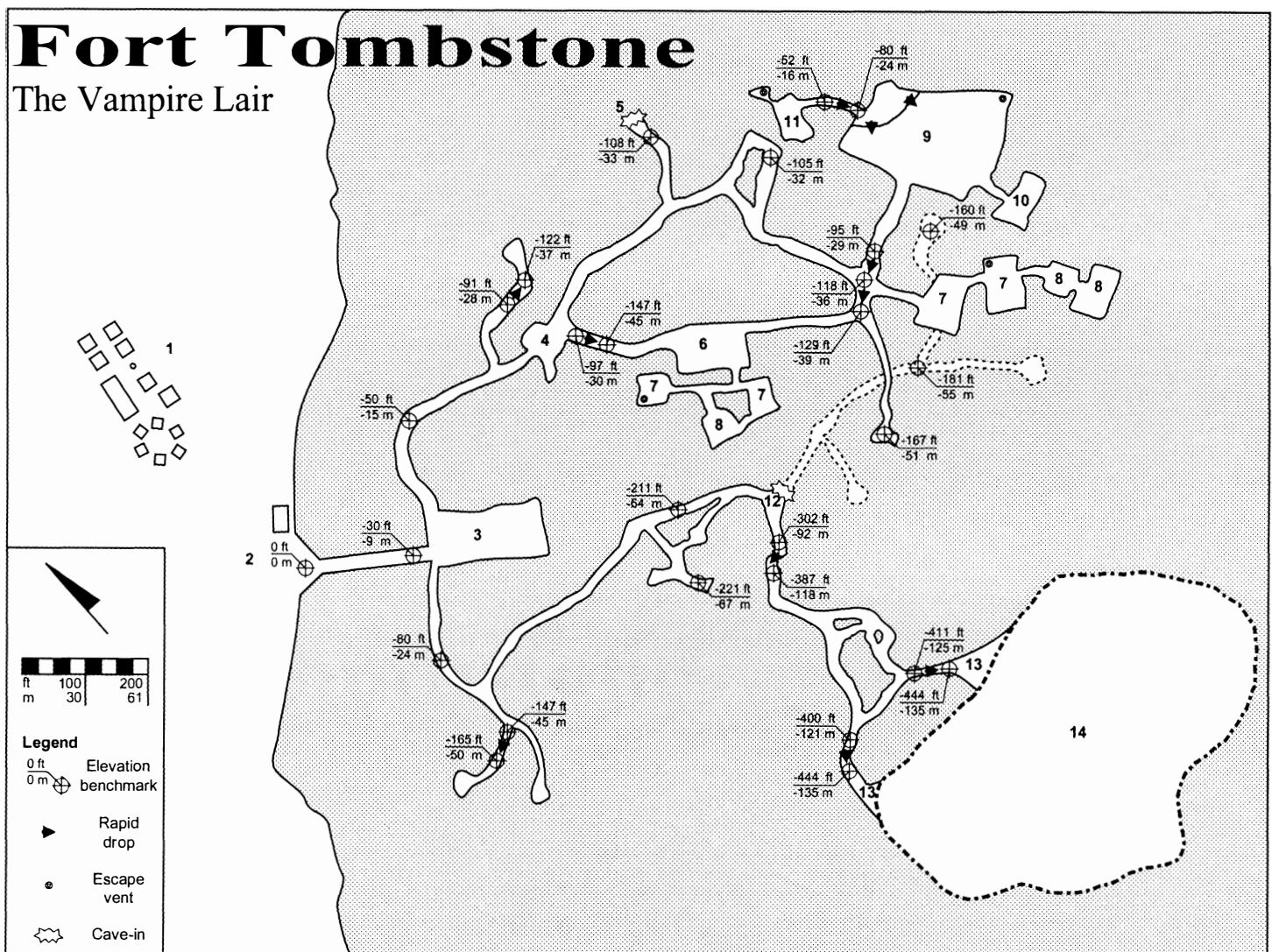
4. Miner Work Area (Elevation -97 feet/-30 m). The workers who tend the mine are currently tunneling southward chasing a small vein of copper. Six miners and their crew boss can be found here at any time, day or night. Like the workers outside, they do not respond favorably to intruders and will fight to expel any trespassers. There is a chance that some (those under vam-

pire mind control) will fight to the death and turn any survivors over to their undead masters. Others will fight out of fear of the vampires, but are unlikely to sacrifice their lives. Any retreat will be made deeper into the mine, toward the coffin rooms where they can find inhuman reinforcements.

5. Cave-In Site (Elevation -108 feet/-33 m). This cave-in site predates the vampire occupation or any of the laborers. Some modest efforts were made to clear it, but it was soon determined that the entire tunnel beyond is collapsed. That may or may not be true, but the vampires aren't really interested in further exploration at this time.

6. Common Room (Elevation -150 feet/-46 m). This large room is used by the vampires as a command area where they can congregate when coming or going from missions, entertain themselves, and feed. The room has bare floors and walls, but is otherwise furnished with tables and comfortable chairs. Several mind slaves are present to act as guards during the day and as valets at night. They are well-armored and armed with energy rifles and explosives, and will fight to the death in defense of the lair or their masters. As many as a dozen humanoid are chained to the walls for the purpose of being bled by the vampires. If freed by outsiders, they will not flee for fear of gruesome retribution by their undead masters.

7. Secondary Vampire Coffin Rooms (Elevations vary). These rooms serve as sleeping quarters for the Secondary Vam-



pires stationed in the mine (the majority of Xavier's horde). Ceilings are high, roughly 15 feet (4.6 m). Throughout each of these rooms are racks holding coffins three high where the Secondary Vampires sleep through the day. During the day, three mind slaves with energy weapons and body armor watch over their sleeping masters. The larger of the coffin rooms have escape vents to allow the rapid departure of the vampires in their bat or mist form should the need arise. **Note:** The undead are nocturnal creatures who sleep during the day. However, deep under the ground where the light of day cannot reach them, the vampires can rise from their coffins to defend themselves against intruders.

8. Wild Vampire Coffin Rooms (Elevations vary). These two rooms are identical to #7 above, except they house a total of 250 Wild Vampires staked and held in suspended animation. These rooms are not regularly guarded, but intruders must pass guarded rooms and the sleeping chambers of hundreds of Secondary Vampires.

9. Xavier's Throne Room (Elevation -80 feet/-24 m at its raised level, and -95 feet/-29 m at the floor level). This room is the largest in this part of the new mine network, having been excavated by a work force numbering into the hundreds, and the vampires see it as the headquarters for Xavier's army. Its 30 foot (9.1 m) ceiling is supported by huge steel beams that run between giant stone and steel columns lining the walls. Around the edges of the room are racks of weapons and armor, and tables covered with gems and precious metals. A dozen Secondary Vampires supervise 50 humanoid slaves as they sort, clean, and repair military supplies of all types.

In the northern corner of the room is an elevated platform on which stands General Xavier Stuart's throne, carved from the wall against which it sits. From his high vantage point the Master Vampire can address his troops, hold jury over slaves, cast down punishment and hold court with his leaders. The room is used for large gatherings of vampires to discuss strategies, tactics and plans before a major operation. The mind slaves sleep on bedrolls in the corner where they can be available to their vampire lord at a moment's notice.

Xavier is considering adding an additional chamber and a secret exit to this room so he can move fully-armored groups in and out quickly and efficiently.

10. The War Room (Elevation -95 ft/-29 m). General Xavier Stuart's war room is located adjacent to his throne room. The wall is covered in maps and charts, tables are littered with casualty numbers, equipment inventories, and battle plans. It is here that Xavier plans his militaristic strategies with his most trusted officers. There are fifteen coffins on five racks where these loyal Secondary Vampire leaders sleep during the day. Two guards are posted outside the door at all times; mind slaves who were once CS soldiers during the day, and a pair of Xavier's Warrior vampires at night. Unless instructed differently by their master, all will fight anyone who tries to gain entry other than Xavier or one of his Leaders, no matter if the trespasser is human, vampire, or other. The guards wear body armor and carry heavy weapons for fighting both vampires and mortals and they will fight to the death.

11. Xavier's Private Chamber (Elevation -48 ft/-15 m). This room serves as Xavier's private office. It is sparsely furnished with a table and four cushioned chairs. A bookshelf

stands against the wall. Against the farthest wall is the coffin of General Stuart.

On the floor in the corner is a small cot where Xavier's soothsayer and slave, *Cana the Blind*, sleeps. Four protectors stand outside the door to this chamber at all times, Warrior vampires at night and former CS soldier mind slaves during the day. They wear heavy armor and carry heavy energy weapons, explosives, and automatic side arms loaded with silver bullets. Unless escorted by Xavier, no one enters the chamber other than the Master Vampire and his servant Cana.

Game Master Note: Behind the bookcase is a crack in the stone wall, no wider than a coin is thick. This crack is actually the only passage into Xavier's *real* nightly resting place, a hollow carved into the stone and bedded with soil. It can only be entered via mist form and no living or undead soul but Cana knows it exists. Thus, Xavier *cannot* be found daily in the coffin located in his chamber. It is a ruse to lure would-be assassins and traitors out into the open and reveal themselves. Unknown to anyone, Xavier also has a secret chamber in the deserted part of the old mine where he may also sleep or hide. Even Cana doesn't know about its location.

12. Cave-In (Elevation -272 ft/-83 m). Like the cave-in noted in #4, the vampires made a cursory check to see if any other tunnels could be uncovered, but their interest soon waned when they found nothing. **Adventure Note:** Had they pushed on just a little further they would have found a tunnel leading upward and passing less than 15 feet (4.6 m) from another tunnel above. As it is, this passageway remains undiscovered.

13. Water's Edge (Elevation -444 ft/-135 m). From hand-made passages the tunnel quickly changes via a 90-foot (27.4 m) drop to water-carved caverns ending with a flat stretch bordering an underground lake.

14. Underground Lake (Elevation -444 ft/-135 m). A layer of limestone holds a small body of water in the caverns deep below the surface. The water is usually about 10 feet (3.0 m) deep in the middle, but can rise or drop by five feet (1.5 m) during the most extreme wet or dry spells. The presence of the lake is a big reason the vampires steer clear of the southern tunnels.

A Brief Introduction to Vampires in Rifts®

Could there have been a better subject for the first Rifts® World Book than the **Vampire Kingdoms**? From day one, vampires have been an integral part of the Rifts® world. Demonic invaders, controlled by otherworldly intelligences, enslaving and feeding on the human race like monstrous parasites who subjugate and rule over their human flock as if they were mindless animals. Now *that* is good stuff! The sort of epic setting that makes Rifts® one of the greatest role-playing games of all time.

Here you have vampires in a totally unique light. Although they permeate fantasy literature and role-playing games of every sort, the concept of entire nations of vampires is something that, before Vampire Kingdoms, was never before realized. These vampires don't hide away as individuals or small groups, stalking their prey from the shadows. They don't sit in solitary castles, hunted by mobs with torches and pitchforks. They are not

relics of history, clinging to the past and unwilling to embrace modern society and technology. These vampires break the mold, build grand cities and rule over humans whom they treat as livestock and house pets. That's why they make such great plot points and villains.

To play a campaign with vampires as the antagonists, a Game Master really needs to dig in and use everything these great villains have to offer. Each caste of vampire fulfills some of our preconceived notions about these legendary monsters, and can fulfill the needed roles in your campaign. I've found they make for some awesome role-playing.

— Jason Richards, Author

Strengths & Weaknesses

Palladium's vampires are, perhaps, most renowned amongst role-players for the way they capture the whole spectrum of the undead mythos, from ancient legend to Hollywood and literature. They range from the crazed and animalistic to the refined and sophisticated. Their vulnerabilities and supernatural abilities also fit most of what we would expect based on what we have seen on the big screen or read in books for generations. All of the details are available in **Rifts® World Book 1: Vampire Kingdoms**, but below is a short list of the "basic" vampire powers and weaknesses. Think of this as a quick lesson or refresher, or even the basics that well-informed player characters are likely to know with a few successful *Lore: Demons & Monsters* skill rolls.

Vampire Abilities

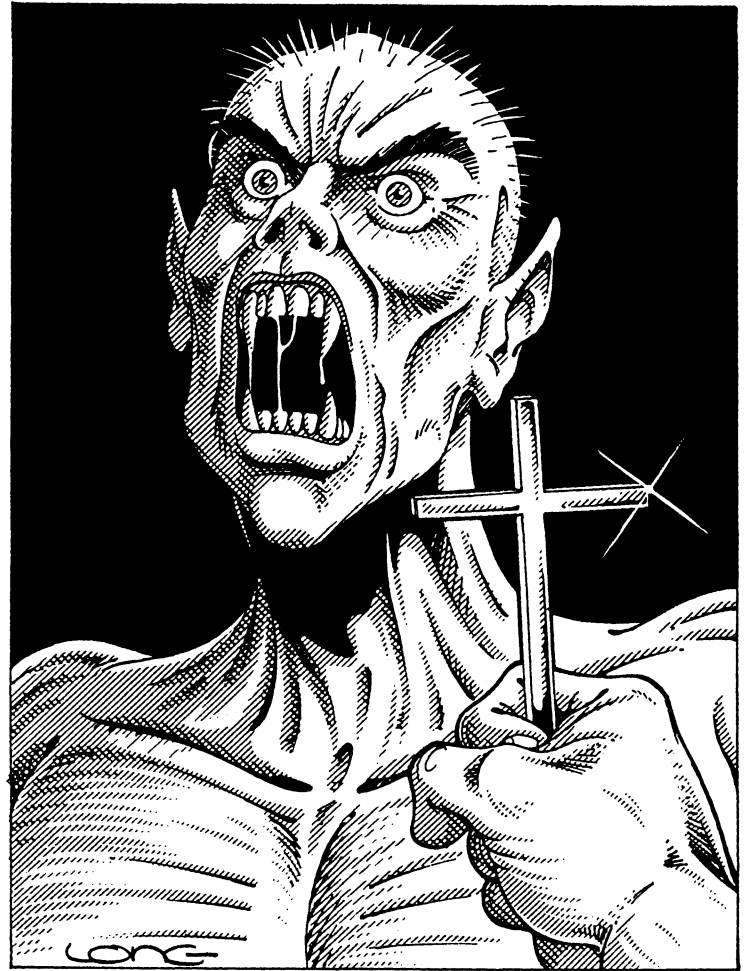
- Invulnerable to most S.D.C. and M.D.C. weapons. Lasers, ion blasts, particle beams, hand grenades and Boom Guns have no effect! Mega-Damage rail gun rounds knock the demons around and tatter their clothing only enough to make them angry.
- Unaffected by fire, heat, and cold. These are problems for the living, not the undead.
- Impervious to knockout/stun attacks.
- Immune to mind control, many psionics, and many magic spells.
- Amazing regenerative abilities, even past death.
- Staking a vampire through the heart doesn't kill it, as many foolishly believe, but forces the vampire into suspended animation. Remove the stake and the monster will rise to stalk again.
- Metamorphosis into a bat, wolf, or mist at will.
- Supernatural Physical Strength.
- May use modern technology, though many tend to rely on their phenomenal powers.
- Possess some magical and psionic abilities, like controlling animals and mind controlling select victims to serve them.

Vampire Vulnerabilities

- Silver and wood can damage the vampire or even send it into suspended animation.
- Running water and holy water cause damage and hold them at bay.

- Garlic, wolfbay, and some magic also keep the undead at bay.
- Holy symbols (most traditionally the cross) will terrify and hold lesser vampires at bay. The touch of a holy symbol to the flesh of a vampire will burn and damage the creature.
- The light of day will incapacitate and eventually kill a vampire, reducing it to ash.
- The vampire must sleep during the day on the soil of its homeland. "Homeland" being the *birthplace* where the man was turned into the immortal undead.

There is, of course, a lot more to it than the above. Vampires have a complex set of rules of reliance and vulnerability to all things linked to the element of earth, and possess vast supernatural power. Please consult **Rifts® World Book 1: Vampire Kingdoms** for everything you might ever want to know about vampires, but were afraid to ask.



Vampire Society 101

By Jason Richards & Kevin Siembieda

Here is a brief overview of the different classes of the undead. Special attention is given to the use of each of these characters in an adventure campaign.

Wild Vampires

Starting at the bottom of vampire society, you have the Wild Vampires. These are your animalistic, predatory undead who run in packs like wild dogs terrorizing the countryside at night.

In the classic, almost metaphorical form of a wolf, or in their sickly, corpse-like humanoid form, these creatures call out from the darkness. Glowing, red eyes peer out from the night accompanied by snarls, threats, and disturbing laughter. In a game context, these undead savages make for great encounters. While some live free and run wild, others are used as the shock troops and fodder of organized vampire operations led by a Secondary and/or Master Vampire. If the wild pack seems to have one or two stoic leaders calling the shots from a distance, you can bet that they are part of a larger, more organized and sinister operation. Beware.

Wild Vampires are a basic building block in a vampire campaign. They fill a number of roles from both a role-playing/game development point of view, and from a dice-rolling, combat angle. While they make great “random encounters” to fill the void in a long trek across country, they can be the henchmen of Secondary Vampires, a Demon Lord or a powerful, evil sorcerer, or they can be the foot soldiers in a vampire invasion. Wild Vampires are also excellent tools of foreshadowing – you’ve just entered vampire country, and who knows what lays ahead except more undead, uncertainty and evil.

From a combat-oriented point of view, Wild Vampires are just fun villains to pit against players. With relatively low levels of Hit Points and negligible skills and experience, even improperly equipped players should be able to survive a first encounter or two, provided they aren’t outnumbered by the savage undead. Fighting Wild Vampires is fairly straightforward, tooth and claw sort of fighting, given their dislike for most technology and their low levels of I.S.P. It also preps the players (or not) for the thinking and much more dangerous Secondary Vampires, who often command Wild ones and rule their own dark domain, be it a little village, town or an entire city or kingdom.

Secondary Vampires

Once players figure out how to handle a Wild Vampire in a fight, they will usually underestimate the more intelligent Secondary Vampires. While the same in all fundamental respects (powers, vulnerability to wood, water, etc.), the big differences come in attitude and intelligence. It is the Secondary Vampires who have built the huge Vampire Kingdoms in Mexico. Smart characters will think of them as Greater Demons who use cunning, strategy and treachery to get what they want. Most are arrogant and evil in the extreme, and regard humans as little more than annoying, intelligent cattle and playthings. Secondary Vampires pick out and stalk their victims to *Slow Kill* and thereby procreate – give birth to – new undead. They are physically more powerful than Wild Vampires, but only slightly so. Their intelligence and disdain for humanity are what make them so much more dangerous.

The sophistication and deadliness of Secondary Vampires does vary with the age and experience of the monster. One could almost classify the caste into two categories: old and young, or Alpha vampires and Beta vampires. Young Secondary Vampires are those who have recently joined the ranks of the undead (under 30 years old as a vampire) and lack experience and a complete understanding of their powers and abilities. Many are overconfident, and feel invulnerable, and superior to their mere mortal prey. They have forgotten or even resent their

past lives as humans and seem bent on mocking, tormenting and destroying that which they were once a part of. This means they also underestimate mortal adversaries, are unprepared and make mistakes that spell their doom. The young (or Beta) vampires are also usually intimidated and outwitted by their elders.

Old Vampires (or Alphas, who have been undead for 75 years or more) are like the lion who is king of the jungle, a wise, powerful survivor who uses his wits as well as his supernatural powers. Older Secondary Vampires can be as clever and ruthless as the Master Vampires who created them. Not only do they gain more power and strength with age (and experience level), but the very trick of staying alive for a century or two fortifies them against the humanity that actively seeks their destruction. These elder creatures of the night remain confident and have a plan even when a capable group of heroes (the player group?) throws everything they have at them. Elder Secondary Vampires also know when to cut their losses and make good their escape to fight another day. These cunning demons are often the masterminds of insidious plots to enslave entire towns, and crave power. Thus, they terrorize entire towns and kingdoms, and love it when humans and other mortal beings are powerless against their will. The ultimate predator, they even compete and wage war against other vampire hordes in a bid for power. And ultimately, that is *global power*. They seek to rule the world of men and turn humans into livestock and house pets. In other words, if *Rifts®* were a side-scrolling 16-bit video game, the elder Secondary Vampires would be the level “bosses.”

Design Note: One thing that I’ve noticed when playing in or running campaigns that involved vampires is that there is an aspect of Secondary Vampires that is dramatically underused. Secondary Vampires have an insane amount of psychic mind-control power at their disposal, which it is very easy to overlook amid the many other overt powers and abilities of the creatures.

I was running a play test for this book at a convention and had pitted my players against a group of vampires, mostly Secondary. The players were extremely resourceful and quickly turned around the ambush they walked into and were laying waste to my villains. Here I was, down to my last few vampires, each of them trapped and separated from the rest. It was at this moment, when victory was so easily at hand for my players, that I realized I had totally forgotten about one of the Secondaries’ greatest weapons . . . mind control. It’s funny how quickly things can change when one of the party members has suddenly turned his particle beam rifle against his teammates, the slave to a vampire’s will. – *Jason Richards*

Master Vampires

If Wild Vampires are the savage grunts, and Secondary Vampires are Greater Demons, then the *Master Vampire* is the Demon Lord. As cool as Wild and Secondary Vampires are, let’s face it, we G.M.s love to pit players against the Master Vampire. They are the ultimate player nemesis, beings of tremendous power and influence out to enslave the world.

Aside from personal power and their natural abilities, they command legions of other vampires, mind slaves, and human supplicants. They are the dark princes in the kingdoms of the undead and creators of the vampire infestation. Only the dreaded Vampire Intelligence, who rules through the Master, is a true godlike monster.

Master Vampires, more or less, have all of the advantages and abilities of Secondary Vampires, amplified. Their closeness to the Intelligence gives them greater strength of mind and body, as well as increased psychic power and mind control over other undead, the undead they probably created. Their attributes challenge those of lesser gods and Demon Lords, and they have the psionic power of a Mind Melter. Very few heroes in the Megaverse can go toe-to-toe with a Master Vampire and survive to tell about it. Teamwork, cunning and luck are all necessary when characters are pitted against such an adversary.

For all of their power, few Master Vampires wander freely through the world, even if they rule a large kingdom. Like all vampires, they are keenly aware of their own vulnerabilities and that any mortal with a spear and a lucky throw could kill them. Players are likely to encounter Master Vampires as the backstage masterminds of insidious plots, the dark hand behind subtle and far-reaching manipulation and intrigue, or the unholy leaders of evil kingdoms. They are far too important to their Vampire Intelligences to be lost through a turn of fate, for they are the source of the vampire contagion and the humanoid representatives of the Intelligence. It is the Master Vampire who is needed to expand the influence of the Vampire Intelligence and spread the supernatural pestilence that is the undead. It should be a rare and terrifying experience for characters to face a Master Vampire, and to destroy one a great triumph akin to striking down one of the gods of darkness.

Vampire Intelligence

The Vampire Intelligence is, basically, an evil god and the root source of the vampire plague. It is this inhuman creature who first finds a willing humanoid to become a Master Vampire, and thereby spread the essence and influence of its evil. Once it has enough undead minions in a given dimension, the creature can permanently fix itself to the world to rule over them and their conquered human cattle. Such is the goal of all Vampire Intelligences.

In game terms, the Intelligence makes an appearance in only the most powerful and epic campaigns. To encounter an Intelligence is like meeting the devil face-to-face. The being is cruel and evil beyond all measure and seeks only to increase its own power through the conquering of the human race and all mortal beings.

Other minions of the Vampire Intelligence. A Vampire Intelligence has other resources available to it that may work into any vampire oriented campaign. Most notable of these are its powerful *Demon Familiar* and the infamous *Blood Priest*.

The demon familiar is an extension of the Intelligence created into a form where it may roam the world for whatever purpose may be laid before it. It is usually a tool of terror among humans who dare resist the vampires and a protector and last line of defense for any Vampire Intelligence that successfully enters the mortal world. This powerful, giant, bat-thing can only be summoned on a planet upon which the Intelligence has established its physical presence. To stand against the Demon Familiar is a sure sign that, at the very least, one has got the Vampire Intelligence's attention.

The Blood Priest is a witch who has entered into a pact with the Vampire Intelligence. They are used in a number of roles by

the intelligence, from the leaders of death cults to the commanders of vampire legions. For more on these villains, see the section on the *Blood Cult* and the *Blood Priest Villain O.C.C.* elsewhere in this book.

The Vampire Army

The small band of vampire hunters pressed their attack, beating back the hapless Wild Vampires with their silver bullets, bows and arrows and homemade water balloons. They had waged attacks like this against the undead so many times it had become routine. As the beasts scurried this way and that, more fell screaming as the silver projectiles zipped through their bodies and a few good shots pierced the hearts of the undead horrors. A lone figure watched through his binoculars as the vampires were pushed over the crest of a large hill, ran halfway down its slope, and then turned to rush their pursuers. The confident humans rushed to meet them point blank to finish them off.

The observer on the hill lowered his binoculars, stared straight into the night sky and motioned to a man in the officer's car several yards behind him. "Yes, Sir," echoed through the radio headset.

"Fire in the hole." The man flipped a switch on the box at his side and then pulled his own binoculars to watch.

The Wild Vampires held their ground in close combat with the hunters. Fighting was fierce and intense on both sides until the whole group was suddenly engulfed in flame and debris. The explosives buried under the ground on which they all tread went off in successive rows. The humans buckled as shrapnel pierced their armor and their bodies, and explosions crippled their legs. The vampires, impervious to the fiery explosions, were merely stunned for a moment and quickly regained their footing, pouncing like hungry wolves upon the humans who had survived the onslaught. The few humans who managed to limp away from the minefield would have fallen to the Wild Vampires in another minute, but were, instead, met by a squad of undead rushing in from the left flank.

In one minute all was still on the battlefield, except for the vampires feasting on their kills. When they were done, they would salvage weapons, equipment, and armor from the corpses and leave them for the vultures.

The observer on the hill motioned again and the two Secondary Vampires in the officer's car walked to his side.

"You see?" he said to them. "Have you ever seen anything like that?"

"No, My Lord." The two said in unison.

"Military tactics. That's what will make us unstoppable. Too often our kind rely on instinct and raw power, and though it serves us well, it is not enough in this age of technology and magic."

"And it's so simple, General."

The self-proclaimed General Xavier Stuart, Commander of the Tombstone Vampires, smiled. For the fiftieth time, the training exercise had gone perfectly. They were ready to take on a real challenge.

“Arzno,” said the General. “Arzno will be fall just like these lost souls, because they don’t expect us to combine our natural abilities with military strategy and tactics.”

“And when Arzno falls, Arizona will be ours!” exclaimed one the two vampire Captains.

“And New Mexico, and Colorado, and all the other territories will fall like dominos until we stand on the doorstep of the Domain of Man,” added the General with a grin. “I’ll really enjoy watching the Coalition States fall. And it all begins right here.”

Vampire Incursion

In **Rifts® World Book 1: Vampire Kingdoms**, we caught a glimpse of unprecedented societies of vampires. The kingdoms of Mexico are ruled by Vampire Intelligences, hidden away in giant temples in the Yucatan. Master Vampires are their acolytes, serving as governors of vast territories and massive populations of humans and undead. Some rule by force, others with even-handedness toward human slaves, but none have much to fear. The enslaved people are in no position to challenge them, and even the greatest heroes and warriors dare not attack lest they be overrun and destroyed. For 250 years there has been an unspoken sort of arrangement. The Vampire Kingdoms stay in Mexico, and the humans to the north pretend they don’t exist. Sure, individual vampires and wild packs cross the border and hunt in what was once the old American Empire. By the standards of civilized folk living in the North and East, the New West, especially the Southwest, seems to be overrun with the undead, but compared to Mexico, they are wrong. Most importantly, there have been no coordinated attacks launched by the existing kingdoms. No diplomats or politicians cut this deal, it’s just the way things have been for 250 years.

From time to time, however, there is a *new*, upstart colony unrelated to those in Mexico. The vampires consider all of North America to be free game. The Southwest and the Mexican border are common breeding grounds for the undead only because conditions there suit them well. Most new vampire colonies are discovered and snuffed out before they represent a serious threat to humanity. Every generation or so, however, a serious incursion takes place. Such is the case in Arizona on two different fronts.

Arizona vampires are on the offensive. Two different bands, the Bisbee vampires and the still secret Tombstone Vampires, have made major inroads into the region. **The Bisbee vampires** are traditional undead who, though cagey and clever, rely mostly on their superior power to deal with human threats. Reid’s Rangers, the Arzno Mercenary Corp, Sky Knights, Justice Rangers and other heroes have all done battle with bands of undead from this enclave. Here, standoff and skirmish are the rule, not open war. So far, the humans and their allies have held the Bisbee vampires from expanding their colony and are successfully working to whittle them down rather than engage them in an all out war. The leaders of Arzno and the Lyn-Srial Sky Knights have talked about joining forces in an all out purge, but for now, the containing operation has been working well. Furthermore, over the last two years, the Bisbee population has been reduced by 40%, suggesting if the mercs keep up their efforts that they should run the Bisbee vampires out of the terri-

tory, if not completely eradicate them, within the next three years.

Unfortunately, nobody knows about the vampire infestation at **Tombstone**. These undead have quietly insinuated themselves deep in human territory and taken over a sizeable human community without anyone being the wiser. The Master Vampire, Xavier Stuart, has organized an honest-to-goodness vampire *army* unlike any seen anywhere on Rifts Earth. They have succeeded so far, by using military strategies and tactics Xavier learned as a low ranking officer in the Coalition Army. Given a new lease on life, he dreams of becoming an unstoppable power and, one day, challenging the CS for dominion over North America. The secret of his success has been managing to curb the vampire instincts of his undead legion, teaching them basic soldiering and incorporating human weapons and technology in their bid to conquer the US and Canada. This is a brilliant plan, but it is held together only by *his* charismatic influence over the undead who serve him. Without the self-proclaimed General of the secret Tombstone Vampire Kingdom, the vast majority of his undead minions would resort to more savage and natural means of combat and conquest. Indeed, there are those among his legion who hate the idea that they have to use the “tools and weapons of men” to conquer mere humans, and resent being forced to do so. From Xavier’s point of view, these tactics will make him the great conquering power on Earth, provided he can execute his plan. He knows many of his underlings bristle at using the “tools of men” but believes that a swift and easy victory over a notorious human power like Arzno will win them over to his way of thinking.

As with all vampires, Xavier Stuart’s goal on Earth is the total domination of all life for his master Intelligence. Such grandiose plans are not accomplished overnight, and the Master Vampire and his minions are fully prepared to spend centuries realizing them. Xavier has developed a plan of attack to see such goals come to light.

First, far greater resources are needed than are currently available in and around the Tombstone-controlled areas. For the vampires, resources such as weapons, ammunition, armor, and fuel are all secondary to the need for sufficient quantities of blood to sustain the vampire army. The Southwest near the Rio Grande does not offer nearly enough human food stock, and the current contingent of vampires is already stretching it to the breaking point, and even that requires strict rationing and the extensive support of magical and psionic healing methods.

To grow his horde to the necessary strength, expansion of slave and feeding stock is a must. To this end, the deserts of Arizona have been targeted. The whole of what was once Arizona has a population of roughly 100,000 in 109 P.A.; even the control and enslavement of half that number would be a significant kick-start to Xavier’s military campaign.

The City-State of Arzno is the vampire General’s greatest obstacle. The city itself makes an appealing target, with its concentration of residents and its fine military personnel who would all make ideal additions to Xavier’s undead army. However, they are one of the most prepared combat forces ready and able to deal with a vampire incursion. The level of magic, combat training and their knowledge of the undead is second to none. Add to these factors that they are a well trained military force in their own right and that they have allies with the likes of Reid’s

Rangers, Cyber-Knights and the Lyn-Srial Sky Knights who will rally to their aid in a matter of days. Arzno is a force to be reckoned with. However, he thinks he has the element of surprise: a vampire army packing modern firepower and technology to supplement their supernatural powers. That's something even the mercs of Arzno will not expect. With good strategies and a little luck, Xavier believes he can take the city-state before they can regroup and develop counter strategies. When Arzno falls, there is nobody for a thousand miles who will be able to stop them. Reid's Rangers, the Cyber-Knights and other forces may be powerful warriors, but their numbers are too small to be effective by what will, by then, be a swelling army of unstoppable undead.

Once Arizona and New Mexico fall, he'll probably push into the Pecos Empire, pause to entrench and reorganize, and then begin to expand his vampire kingdom. No matter how he decides to get there, the destination is *Lone Star*. If Xavier can seize the Lone Star military compound he would have a wealth of technology and manpower at his disposal, while at the same time taking away an important CS resource. Furthermore, he'd have a multitude of human and D-Bee bandits, tribal people and settlers living throughout Texas to use as food and turn into more undead warriors.

Of course, the conquering of any major territory in the New West, particularly Lone Star, hinges on Xavier's ability to grow his might throughout Arizona and bring enough vampires and slaves under his control to be able to establish a foundation for his plots. *Arzno* is the monkey wrench in that plan. Everything hinges on taking down Arzno. This time a slow infiltration like what they did at Tombstone won't work, all-out conflict seems unavoidable, which sounds just fine to General Xavier Stuart.



Exploiting Vampire Weaknesses

Some people who have never faced a vampire think it is funny that these powerful, Mega-Damage creatures are vulnerable to ordinary wood and flowing water. Call it cosmic balance, call it divine intervention, call it the nature of supernatural evil, but that has been the way since the beginning of time. That's how primitive man survived throughout the ages, and that's how ordinary humans managed to survive the demon plagues of the Great Cataclysm and the bleakness of the Dark Age. For whatever reason, all supernatural beings have what may, at first glance, appear to be a ludicrous Achilles' Heel. Those who have fought vampires and other demons thank God these horrors have a weakness to silver or wood or whatever it may be, for often exploiting that weakness is the difference between life and death.

Game Masters, you and your players are well aware of the many vampire weaknesses. The characters in your campaigns are equipped with water guns, wooden stakes, arrows, silver knives and magic weapons. They know to hunt during the day and adorn themselves with crosses and Globes of Daylight at night. One thing that is often forgotten by some G.M.s, however, is that the vampires are equally aware of their weaknesses and many take action to defend themselves against them. This is especially true of the Fort Tombstone vampires under the direction of General Stuart.

Many vampire weaknesses can be circumvented by simple planning. A well-placed mind slave or paid minion can shut off the water in the home of a potential victim. A simple armored chest plate can keep a farmer from getting lucky with a pointed stick. Traps and misdirection can easily thwart most amateur vampire hunters. Vampires are as smart as they are powerful, although in the heat of the moment, they may resort to animalistic instinct, raw emotion, brawn and supernatural powers rather than intelligence and what's smart.

Wild Vampires are the least likely to make any special arrangements or take precautions when going into battle. They are feral, animal-like undead too driven by instinct and a natural feeling of their own superiority to use any complex form of technology, wear armor, or make any significant battle plans aside from simple tricks and predatory instincts. These wild undead tend to avoid permanent homes with prepared coffins in favor of burrowing into the ground, occupying caves and basements, or hiding in other enclosed areas during the daylight hours.

Xavier deploys Wild Vampires as shock troops to soften up enemy defenses, never feeling too badly about their destruction. To him, Wild Vampires are pawns in a larger game. As shock troops, Wild Vampires weaken defenders and force them to expend valuable ammunition and other resources. They can also be used to create a distraction and draw attention away from where serious trouble is brewing. They are also suitable for prowling perimeter lines and, like vicious guard dogs, attack any mortal they encounter. Similarly, Wild Vampires can be sent down tunnels, air ducts, and other places, or into an abandoned dwelling to sniff out mortals who may be hiding or laying in ambush (forcing them to tip their hand). As you can see, they are almost always used as fodder and pawns to advance the cause of the intelligent vampires.

Wild Vampires almost never advance in experience before they are destroyed in one way or another. In Tombstone, three of every four Wild Vampires created are banished to the wild, and the remaining are used in Xavier's military. This is done because Wild Vampires are far too savage and restless to learn any sort of skills or absorb training beyond their normal capacity. For Xavier to try and train them would be a waste of time and resources so he uses them to their greatest tactical advantage, as fodder. He always has 250-300 staked and in suspended animation to be awakened as he needs them.

Secondary Vampires, on the other hand, are far more cunning and fully aware of their vulnerabilities. Although they dislike wearing armor and using the "tools (or technology) of man," most try to strike a balance between comfort and practicality. While partial armor can protect a vampire from being staked and subsequently destroyed while comatose, it also prevents them from using their powers of metamorphosis. This is a major disadvantage to vampires since it denies them mobility, stealth, and their most deadly forms for combat. Armor is used sparingly and its use depends greatly on the situation. Xavier orders the use of armor and modern weapons when going against experienced vampire hunters, such as the Arzno Mercenary Corps. Most don't like it, but they obey. They also follow his commands and execute basic strategy and tactics. Where they excel are areas involving espionage, sabotage, assassination and other black ops.

War Preparations

More than any others in recent memory, Xavier's vampires are not mindless mobs who roam the countryside feeding at will. They disguise their identities and point of origin, attacking individuals, merchant convoys and communities throughout the Southwest for a greater purpose and plan as they prepare for a major offensive.

Capture equipment. Not all vampire strategy revolves around feeding upon and capturing mortal slaves. Xavier's vampires frequently carry out military missions to capture equipment, weapons, vehicles, etc. Since Xavier's army will rely on modern military weaponry, armor, and gear, it is in need of Energy Clips, E-Clip recharging equipment, M.D.C. body armor, explosives, vehicles, etc. Such gear is most frequently captured from travelers, mercenaries, soldiers, vampire hunters, and other combatants encountered throughout Arizona, New Mexico, along the Great Trade Road and even as far away as the Pecos Empire.

Capture slave stock. Much of Xavier's military machine runs on the backs and broken wills of humans and D-Bees enslaved as food stock and laborers. Slaves serve as both a food source and work force, often fed on and healed so that they can complete a full day's work.

Destroy the enemy. The most straightforward of all of Xavier's operations are attacks carried out to undermine the enemy. Vampires will destroy villages or homesteads, ambush Arzno officers and heroes of renown, attack adventurers making a name for themselves, and rob merchant caravans to disrupt the flow of goods, services and money. Such actions are always calculated maneuvers so as not to appear as a concerted effort, but random and unrelated incidents. To that end, the vampires may

pretend to be bandits, a rival merc company (using mind controlled humans to be absolutely convincing), Bisbee vampires, and other brigands.

Slow kill selected victims. If a particular mercenary, soldier, mage, or other humanoid catches the eye of Xavier or one of his chief minions, that individual is targeted for *Slow Kill* by Xavier himself. Such victims are captured alive, although they are often drained of enough blood to force them into unconsciousness so they don't give any trouble in transit. Sometimes magic or more traditional methods of restraint are used on the captive. In abduction attacks, there is often considerable collateral damage to others who don't interest the vampires. Similar targeting tactics are used to capture one or more key personnel as mind slaves to advance the vampires' agenda. Mercenaries, soldiers, mages, and their ilk are not generally kept as simple food or labor slaves, because they tend to be too strong-willed and are more trouble than they are worth. As mind slaves, their skills in combat, magic, or other areas are worth a great deal to the vampires.

Utilize strategic locations. Xavier's vampires have spent the better part of the last year capturing or placing agents at strategic locations throughout Arizona. Some function as outposts and base camps for raids and attacks along the Great Trade Road and select communities, others are information gathering points, still others are fallback positions and safe houses. Locations such as those along common trade routes are highly desirable to Xavier, as they allow him to help control the movement of his troops as well as enemy supply lines, and establish his own, favorable, supply lines. Likewise, a contingent of vampires in populated areas can help to maintain a good intelligence network, and the outright control of a town can allow for defensible positions from which to launch other operations away from Fort Tombstone. Actions in a populated town or village can range from takeover to the insertion of a small group of vampires, to the focused concentration of mind slaves for a variety of purposes.

The Use of Feeding Stock

The average vampire requires at least two pints of blood every other day to function normally. It takes a human between six and eight weeks to recover two pints of blood, which means that in order to keep human slave stock healthy and the vampire population fed, roughly 25 humans are needed for each vampire. This type of population simply isn't available to the Fort Tombstone vampires. The approximately 1,000 vampires under the control of Xavier would need over 25,000 humans to sustain them.

Using simple magic and psionic healing techniques, a little bit of blood goes a long way. Such practices are common in many of the large vampire kingdoms of Mexico, and are utilized in Fort Tombstone to increase the frequency that a humanoid can give blood by twofold. Magic is provided by human mind slaves and the occasional vampire mage, with ample P.P.E. available to the wizards via the willing vampire population. Combined with rationing, this makes the humanoid population of 15,000 across the kingdom just enough to comfortably support the vampires. However, any increase in vampire numbers or significant decrease in the slave population could seriously impact Xavier and his plans.



All feeding operations at Fort Tombstone, where blood supplies are the most strained, are overseen by a Secondary Vampire named *Sangro Curtare*, one of the many vampires Xavier chose and *Slow Killed* for his magical and psionic healing abilities. Sangro has a mind-enslaved Fennodi named Len who acts as his personal assistant, but 8-10 other vampires selected for their magic or psionic abilities assist in the daily feedings. Male Fennodi are highly prized as mind slaves due to their natural psionic healing abilities.

Sangro Curtare – Quick Stats: 5th level Secondary Vampire. Diabolic alignment. I.Q. 13, M.E. 21, M.A. 25, P.S. 29, P.P. 26, P.E. 22, P.B. 14, Spd 23. Once a 9th level Mystic, he now uses his limited remaining spell knowledge and psionic powers to heal human slaves after they have been bled for feed-

ing by vampires. He is a particularly cold and methodical person who takes great pride in his role as *provider* to his people. Spells of note include: Cleanse (6), Cure Illness (15), Cure Minor Disorders (10), Greater Healing (30), Life Source (2+), Light Healing (6), Manipulate Objects (2+), Negate Poison/Toxin (5), Purification (20), See Aura (6), and Sustain (12). Possesses 40 P.P.E. Psionics of note include: 120 I.S.P.; Clairvoyance (4), Empathic Transmission (6), Empathy (4), Exorcism (10), Healing Touch (6), Increased Healing (10), Mask I.S.P. & Psionics (7), Mask P.P.E. (4), and Sixth Sense (2). These are in addition to those gained through vampire conversion.

Len – Quick Stats: 5th level Fennodi and Saddle Tramp. Principled alignment, but under vampire mind control. I.Q. 23, M.E. 14, M.A. 22, P.S. 21, P.P. 18, P.E. 19, P.B. 7, Spd 17. P.P.E. 32. Len was captured for his healing abilities to aid Sangro in keeping the humanoid slave stock healthy enough to work. The tall, lanky D-Bee (7 feet, 6 inches/2.3 m) is feared by the humanoid slave population because he is known to represent Sangro and carries out the vampire's every command. Psionics of note include: 64 I.S.P.; Deaden Pain (4), Empathic Transmission (6), Empathy (4), Healing Touch (6), Increased Healing (10), Induce Sleep (4), Mind Block (4), Psychic Purification (8), Sixth Sense (2), and Telepathy (4), plus the special Fennodi powers of Protective Energy Aura (27 M.D.C., recovers 2D6 M.D.C. per melee), Ghost Walk (30 minutes, 10 I.S.P.), and a natural affinity with Whisker Coyotes. (See **Rifts® World Book 14: New West** for full details on the Fennodi race.)

Sharing the Blood Supply

Vampires are instinctive predators and don't generally share well. However, the General has them working together as a team and sharing their, currently limited, blood supply. *Blood rationing* is carried out in an orderly fashion for all of those living in Fort Tombstone. Most Secondary Vampires also keep a mind slave who doubles as a blood donor. For those without a humanoid protector, other slaves are made to submit to the loss of a few pints or face an unpleasant death. Between the feeding vampire, blood victim, mage, and other humanoids and vampires, there is always enough P.P.E. to heal the slaves so that they can carry on with their labor at 90-100 percent efficiency, but it is the availability of P.P.E. that is the limiting factor in this strategy, as well as the fact that there is only so much time that can be used for feeding and healing before a valuable night is wasted. Under the supervision of Sangro and his staff, most of Tombstone's Secondary Vampires feed on two pints of blood every other day. Xavier and his favorite vampires feed every day. An extra feeding is becoming an incentive reward for loyalty and jobs well done.

Vampires deployed away from Tombstone on a hunt, military exercise, or located in a captured town or village get to feed the old-fashioned way. For this reason, all vampires in the kingdom crave getting away from the lair and into the field, and compete in deeds and acts of loyalty to get the chance for a rotation in the wilds of the New West. Even when left to one's own devices for feeding, killing of prey is seriously discouraged, as is the turning of humanoids into new vampires without approval by Xavier. Such acts negatively affect the delicate equilibrium that the vampires have temporarily struck with the environment.



The use of mind slaves

Mind slaves are used extensively by Xavier's kingdom, perhaps to a further extent than any other known vampire kingdom. While every vampire is an asset to the Fort Tombstone army and society, mind slaves bring unique advantages to the table. They are not subject to the many limitations of the undead and can function day and night with all of the loyalty of a Secondary Vampire.

Daytime protectors. Human and D-Bee mind slaves make the perfect protectors during the daylight hours. Absolutely loyal to their vampire master, a mind slave will do anything to protect him. Protectors can be warriors brimming with weapons, practitioners of magic or subtle spies placed inconspicuously to sound an alarm in case of danger.

Slave masters. Since vampires must, almost by necessity, keep humanoid slaves, the mind slaves are used to help to control the enslaved population. The distinction between *mind slave* and *slave* is that the latter has his wits about him, but is probably physically chained and forced to do labor and things against his will. A mind slave is a mind controlled henchman who works the slave captives and has no qualms about using any means necessary to keep them in line.

Along a similar vein, mind slaves are sometimes put in with the general work force where they pretend to be normal slaves. These sleeper agents work tirelessly for their undead masters, but also serve as moles to inform on any gathering resistance or popular uprisings among the slave population. They may even

attempt to gather support for a slave revolt as a ruse to expose those strong-willed enough to join such an uprising. Once identified, the troublemakers are removed and reassigned to hard labor or the food pens. The possibility of such infiltration keeps the slave population paranoid and docile for fear that one of their own may be a vampire's spy. Any outsider or new slave is always viewed with the greatest suspicion, as are any who even whisper the possibility of an uprising. The terror that vampire reprisal brings is so great that slaves regularly rat each other out to their hated vampire masters.

Supplementary soldiers. Mind slaves can be armed to the teeth with no fears of insurrection against the vampires. While they are more easily killed than vampires, they can make superior use of technology such as power armor and high-tech weapons with far more skill and experience than the undead legions can muster. Consequently, mind slaves are found in positions as Body Fixers, Operators, Robot (and power armor) Pilots, Head-hunters, mages, master psychics, and other highly-skilled jobs.

Furthermore, the combination of armed human henchmen, slaves and undead makes for a deadly and versatile fighting force. Weapons of water and wood are wasted on a soldier in full armor, while rail guns and mini-missiles don't so much as scratch the hide of an attacking vampire. Most vampire hunters, adventurers, and peasants of the New West are ill-equipped to handle a combination army, while others hesitate or pull their punch, not knowing which are true enemies and which are humans forced into battle by their undead captors.

Spies and informants. Where vampires are easily identified by anyone capable of seeing auras, sensing evil, or otherwise attuned to the supernatural, *mind slaves* are just ordinary people and almost impossible to detect. They are not possessed, nor do they carry any detectable fragment of the Vampire Intelligence. Telltale signs can include scars from bite marks (particularly if the enslavement was recent), imperviousness to mind control by others, interception of telepathic messages between the victim and the vampire, or just strange behavior, but all are difficult to detect unless one is specifically looking for them.

This adds up to the perfect spies and informants among an unsuspecting populace. Insert a mind slave or two into a community marked for conquering, or even a band of vampire hunters, and the mind slave can keep them under his watchful eyes, rat them out to his undead master and secretly work to undermine, trick or mislead them.

Designer's Note: In a play test, a young girl was discovered among the wreckage of a town destroyed by vampires. Presumably one of the survivors, she was, in fact, a *mind slave* planted there by the vampires to spy on the group. She continued to keep her master informed on the characters' movements, allowing the vampires to stay a step ahead. Needless to say, such tactics can be very effective.

Growing the vampire population

According to traditional vampire wisdom, a large kingdom is a powerful one. However, in Fort Tombstone, secrecy and the quality of its forces are prized far above all else. Quantity, at this point, would only tip off their enemies, and General Xavier Stuart needs the element of surprise to insure victory (or so he

believes). With such a limited food supply in the barren Southwest, each vampire that is created must be measured for his or her worth, loyalty and obedience.

Military Background. Men and women with military or mercenary backgrounds are Xavier's favorite additions to his carefully chosen army. He is especially fond of the front-line, rifle-toting soldiers and officers of the Coalition States and the more renowned mercenary, adventuring and bandit outfits. These typically include Grunts, Military Specialists, Technical Officers, Headhunters, Gunfighters, Bounty Hunters, Sheriffs, Deputies, and even some Robot Pilots. Whether it is his own personal preference, past life experience as a Coalition soldier himself, or part of his "big picture" strategy, Master Vampire Xavier Stuart personally sees to the *Slow Killing* of experienced and highly-skilled soldiers. Only the Master Vampire can *guarantee* the conversion of a humanoid into a *Secondary Vampire*. Secondaries who conduct the Slow Kill risk their victim awakening as a Wild Vampire. To risk the loss of such potentially valuable leadership to mindless savagery as a Wild Vampire is too great a chance for General Xavier Stuart to take, so the General turns all humans with military or mercenary O.C.C.s of level 6 and higher, personally. He'll Slow Kill select soldiers of lower level if they have special skills that the vampire General requires. Lower-level victims are generally left to the Secondary Vampires to turn, playing the odds on whether they become Secondary or Wild Vampires.

Stalkers and Special Forces. Second to the ground pounders come Wilderness Scouts, Explorers, Rangers, Special Forces, Commandos, Cyber-Knights, Glitter Boy Pilots, Gunslingers, Cowboys, and other humanoids who are hunters by profession. This often includes Simvan, Psi-Stalkers, mutants and other D-Bees from the region who live as nomadic hunters. The skills of such characters are useful for Xavier's paramilitary designs as well as countering those of other wily mercs and demon slayers. As useful as they are, unless a victim is particularly skilled, they are turned by Secondary Vampires. **Note:** *Dog Boys, Crazyies, Juicers, Wired Gunslingers, and full conversion cyborgs* are often beyond the capability of conversion into vampires. Their unique natures and chemical, implant or bionic source of power interfere with the vampire's ability to properly feed and transform them into fellow vampires via the Slow Kill. Likewise, they are difficult to control as mind slaves. As a result, these O.C.C.s are usually regarded as natural enemies and avoided or destroyed outright.

Mages and Master Psychics. Xavier has learned to use the supernatural abilities of vampires, as well as the magical and psionic powers of humanoids, to his advantage in battle as well as internally within the kingdom. The magical abilities of mages and psychics who are turned into vampires are greatly reduced in Secondary Vampires (completely destroyed if they are turned into a Wild Vampire), but what powers remain can be used to impressive effect against the human enemy.

Better still, to turn psychics and practitioners of magic into mind slaves or henchmen (the latter blackmailed or bought off to do their bidding). For this reason, most of these gifted individuals are tagged for mind control instead of the Slow Kill. This allows them to serve in a maximum capacity for their undead masters, with unequalled loyalty and their entire powers intact. Likewise, there are a surprising number of evil psychics

and sorcerers who are willing to serve the undead if the price is right.

Thieves and Assassins. Characters with more shady occupations are not Xavier's favorite minions. The General can find uses for them and many are valuable to his dreams of conquest and domination, but he doesn't respect them or care about them. City Rats, Smugglers, Safecrackers, Professional Thieves and assassins are used in covert operations, intelligence gathering, sabotage, undermining the enemy and securing vital resources, but even as a vampire, the ex-military man prefers straightforward combat to the subtle arts of deception. Still, Xavier will take whatever measures he must to win the war.

Other Character Classes. Other character classes, including Operators, Scholars, adventurers, and various R.C.C.s, are looked upon as secondary or support personnel of varying degrees of importance, but not vital to the war effort. They are considered for conversion through the Slow Kill bite, but are usually turned by a Secondary Vampire and risk their awakening as a Wild Vampire unless they have something particularly valuable for Xavier. Many of the beings across the New West classified as Racial Character Classes (R.C.C.s) fall into this group. Mortal D-Bees who do not have an O.C.C. are far less likely to have any useful skills that can be maintained through the vampire conversion process. Still, some carry advantages that make them useful to Xavier and his army even if they don't have the level of training and experience needed to be included in the Master Vampire's elite caste.

D-Bees common to the New West are counted among the Tombstone horde. Fennodi make excellent vampire and mind slave minions because they are not at all feared by the public and not generally thought of as potential vampires due to their alien appearance. Likewise, many mutant and D-Bee races throughout the New West may be turned, though humans are still the preferred targets. Nonhumans turned by the Slow Kill have the same stats as other vampires, though they maintain their alien appearance.

Xavier's Vampire Castes

Xavier Stuart's specific targeting of choice individuals, effectively handpicked by the Master Vampire, has led to a sort of caste structure within the Secondary Vampires of Tombstone. A great portion of the Secondary Vampires (roughly 50%) who were specifically selected for their unique skills or powers fall into one of the following categories: Warrior (20%), Leader (5%), Stalker (14%), Infiltrator (3%), or Thief (8%). The remaining half fall under the blanket "typical" Secondary Vampire.

Recall that a Secondary Vampire retains a total of ten skills from his or her former, mortal life. For each of the castes, the skills retained represent those most useful to the vampire in the new role it takes on in Xavier's army. Notes on common skills for each elite Secondary Vampire type are given with the descriptions below.

Leader

Leaders are the keys to keeping the vampire army together and acting as a unit. They relay orders to the Warriors and com-

mand large units on their own. Typically, Leaders are former military officers or high-leveled mercenaries or grunts. In Xavier's army, the most senior of Secondary Vampires are all former CS officers, selected for their posts as his captains and turned by the Master himself.

Leaders aren't fond of engaging in direct combat themselves, but prefer to observe and coordinate the movements of the troops. Leaders view themselves as the highest of their brethren, and some let their egos inflate to the point of questioning their Master Vampire, Xavier. The Leader caste lends itself to self-serving egomaniacs who always feel they have a better way of doing things. Multiple Leaders often quarrel unless being influenced or controlled by the Master Vampire.

Typical skills of the Leader include: Intelligence (44%), Mathematics: Basic (60%), Military Etiquette (50%), Pilot: Hover Craft (65%), Radio: Basic (60%), Read Sensory Equipment (45%), W.P. Energy Pistol, and W.P. Energy Rifle. Two additional skills may be selected, typically from among the following categories: Communications, Espionage, Military, Pilot, Pilot Related, Technical, and Weapon Proficiencies, all at 45%.



Warrior

Warriors are the combat specialists of Xavier's vampire army. They work with the Leader vampires to turn a raging horde of demons into an organized combat unit. They accompany Stalkers on seek and destroy missions to do most of the dirty work. They serve on the front lines of battles and follow orders. They are all former Grunts, Headhunters, Deputies and Mercenary Soldiers.

The Warriors tend to be savage almost to the level of the Wild Vampires, and may be mistaken for wild ones due to their aggression and commitment to battle. They have no head for leadership and are content to be ground-pounding infantrymen. They hold little prejudice for Wild Vampires and are often found in their company. Warriors are merciless in combat and love to kill by any means, fast or slow, whatever the opportunity offers. These undead grunts often use weapons such as energy rifles, heavy energy weapons, rail guns, machine-guns and Vibro-Blades of every sort.

Typical skills of the Warrior include: Military Etiquette (35%), Pilot: Hover Craft (65%), Radio: Basic (60%), Read Sensory Equipment (45%), W.P. Energy Pistol, W.P. Energy Rifle, and one W.P. of choice. Three additional skills may be selected, typically from among the following: Demolitions, Demolitions Disposal, basic Pilot skills, Radio: Scramblers, Sniper, Tracking, Weapon Systems, and Weapon Proficiencies, all at 40%.

Stalker

Stalkers specialize in tracking, capturing or killing humanoids. They are used in seek and destroy missions for Xavier, as well as the assassination of a specific mark and tracking down escaped slaves and spies. The Stalker vampire is a former Wilderness Scout, Explorer, Bounty Hunter, Ranger, Special Forces, Headhunter, Assassin, or other class with a focus on stealth, tracking and man-hunting. Psi-Stalkers and Simvan make excellent Stalkers and are frequently found in Xavier's army. Stalkers have the most autonomy, in the sense that they are given an assignment and sent on their way. Most love the hunt as much as the kill, and many are experts in interrogation and torture. Most Stalkers are so arrogant that they feel they can never lose, which can give their intended targets a slight edge. To make the hunt more challenging, some will give an opponent or target a fair warning, a head start, or ample opportunity to escape before they pursue. Particularly interesting prey may be allowed to escape, only to be hunted again the next night. And those who earn the Stalker's respect may be given a swift death rather than be tortured. Prey that does manage to escape will always be hunted down later, even if years later.

Typical skills of the Stalker include: Detect Ambush (45%), Land Navigation (48%), Interrogation (60%), Intelligence (40%), Tracking (40%), W.P. Rifles and/or W.P. Energy Rifle, and W.P. Knife. Three additional skills may be selected, typically from among the following: Camouflage, Detect Concealment, Language, Lore: Demons & Monsters, Radio: Basic, Sniper, Trap/Mine Detection, and any Wilderness Skills or Weapon Proficiencies, all at 40%.

Infiltrator

Infiltrators are trained to blend in with regular humans. This proves useful in intelligence gathering and networking through all levels of society. Along with the skills comes a specific cover, an identity that the vampire can assume in the human world. A vampire clown might be one, so might a ringmaster or merchant in a traveling show, but common facades include Bartender, Barmaid, Bandit, Body Fixer, Cowboy, Gambler, Preacher, Saddle Tramp/drifter, Saloon Bum, Rogue Scholar,



Vagabond, prostitute or traveling adventurer. Skills should be chosen to suit the O.C.C. Of particular use are those character classes that have access to sensitive situations, information, or people. The better the cover, the more likely the vampire will be in a position to help his master's efforts.

These undercover vampires may be quiet and passive, preferring to sit in a corner and watch others unobserved. Others like to approach people and strike up a conversation, and professions like bartender, barmaid, preacher, prostitute and even drifter and bum enable them to do so without drawing suspicion to themselves. Whichever the approach, the cunning vampires often "play dumb" or "innocent" pretending to be cowards, weaklings, and ordinary. One advantage that the vampire transformation gives is a feeling of superiority, so the vampire doesn't feel the need shown off to petty mortals and will happily play the fool to ingratiate itself among its intended prey. The infiltrator's activities include more than snooping around and may involve framing members of the government, starting brawls between rival gangs, causing dissension in the ranks, raising fears, promoting discord and suspicion, creating a diversion, and other mischief.

Typical skills of the Infiltrator include: Imitate Voices & Impersonation (48%/28%), Streetwise (32%), and one Pilot skill (45%). The infiltrator will also have six additional skills to help him or her blend into some aspect of society and support the "cover" the vampire has chosen. Skills may be selected from Communications, Domestic, Espionage, and Weapon Proficiencies, all at 40%.

Thief

The Thief is the vampire who works the crowds at circuses and public events, the city streets, bars and other public places, picking pockets, eavesdropping on conversations, rolling drunks, ambushing travelers and breaking and entering to steal information, maps, weapons and valuables in the support of Xavier Stuart's military campaign. These typically are vampires with histories as Vagabonds, City Rats, and various classes of thieves.

The members of the Thief vampire caste are very cliquish and more often than not hang out with their own kind. By level 6, these smooth operators usually have a small fan club of 2D4 other Secondary Vampires who look up to them with the quiet reverence that a twelve-year-old has for his favorite sports star.

Thieves are incredibly clever and sneaky, and are more useful to Xavier if he keeps them on a long leash. However, they are also very arrogant and catty, talking about other vampires behind their backs and make all kinds of schemes and under-the-table deals with local gangs, law enforcement, and even the occasional vampire hunter to their own benefit. When push comes to shove, at least half the vampire Thieves will be watching out for their own backs, not General Stuart or the war effort.

Typical skills of the Thief include: Concealment (32%), Mathematics: Basic (60%), Palming (35%), Pick Locks (45%), Pick Pockets (40%), and Streetwise (32%). Four additional skills may be selected from the Communications, Technical and Rogue categories of skills, all at 40%. Weapon Proficiencies tend to focus on knives, handguns, energy pistols and other easy-to-conceal weapons.

Xavier Stuart

Master Vampire and Vampire General

Xavier's armored boots echoed sharp staccatos through the cavern as he quickly strode through the illogical twists and turns of the ancient mine. Two vampire guards clad in black armor hit their fists against their chests as the General passed the gateway into the expanded chamber. Salutes and tribute did not concern the Demon Lord that night, and he moved quickly into the room without noticing the honors paid.

Four vampire guards held a fifth against the wall. He was bound with silver razor-wire and screamed in agony. From a table Xavier picked up a sharpened stick as he looked at the restrained Secondary Vampire. The General walked up and stood only inches from the struggling beast, staring through him with cold eyes. "Quit whining," hissed the Master. The lesser vampire was compelled to obey.

The scene of battle had been a disgrace. A simple ambush of no more than a dozen gun runners taking their chances through the Waste, botched. Ruined by this incompetent and arrogant wretch. He didn't care that the vampire team was green. Nor did he care that the gun runners had an A.M.C. escort team trained in dealing with vampires. Somehow, the fact that the A.M.C. was involved made the loss seem all the worse.

The Master snapped his fingers and the guards let go of their captive and stepped away.

"You outnumbered them two to one. However, you left with twenty men and came back with four." Xavier drummed the stake against the vampire's chest as he smiled back at the frightened undead's horrified expression.

Before the vampire could respond, the General struck, driving the stake into the chest of the vampire and bearing down on it. The Secondary Vampire cried out and spasmed wildly. Xavier pressed gently, pushing it so close to the heart that he could feel the fluid-filled sac contort and give way under the point of the stake. The insane screeches of the impaled vampire traveled through the halls. Xavier leaned again, suddenly silencing the agonized wails. Blood spurted from the wound onto the General's armored chest. The vampire gurgled and slumped to the floor.

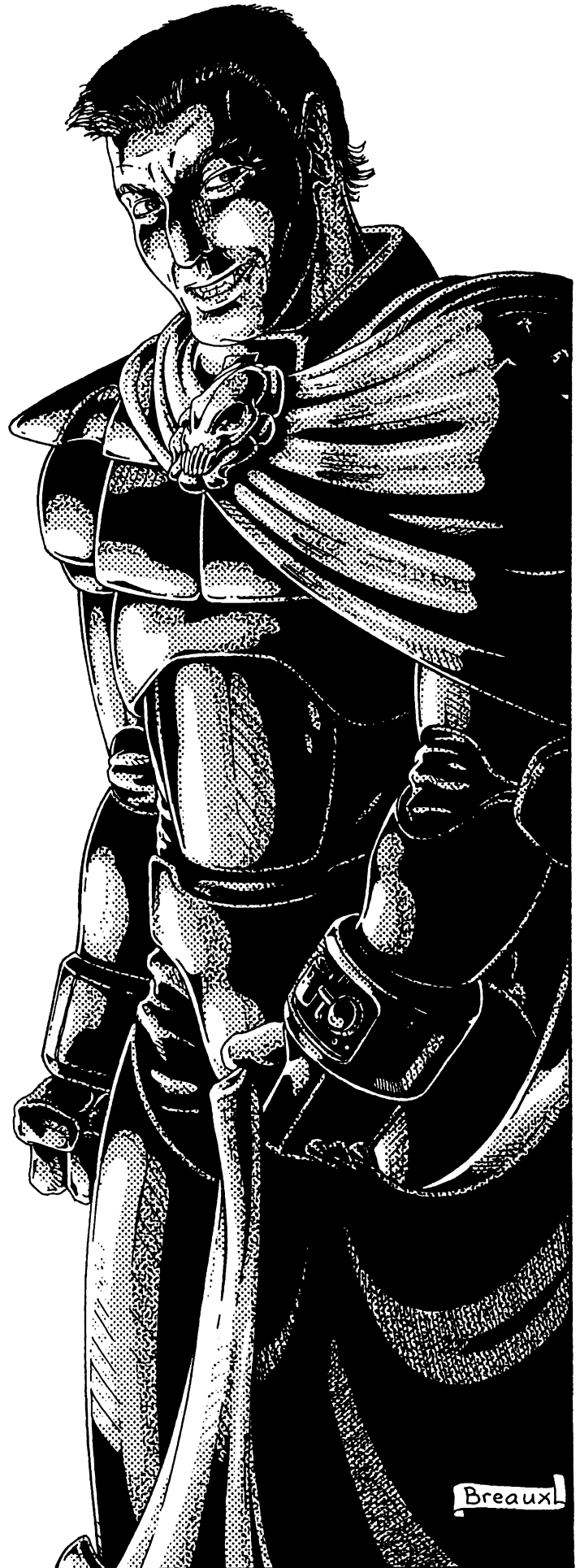
Xavier reached down and pulled the stake out, threw it on the table, and walked out the door. As the vampire on the floor gasped back to consciousness, Xavier called back his orders for punishment.

"Starvation. Three days. Don't fail me again, Lieutenant."

Xavier Stuart grew up in the Chi-Town 'Burbs. Like every citizen wannabe, he kept his nose clean, stayed out of trouble, worked hard and dreamed of earning his place inside the fortified city. He struggled to be everything the encouragement posters said: "Proud, committed, and eager to serve the Coalition States." Orphaned when he was ten by stray gunfire and bad luck during a CS raid on a Black Market dealer, the young Xavier set his sights on joining the glorious fight for humanity. Joining the Coalition Military, he thought, would guarantee his place as an honored citizen within the city walls, away from the chaos of the 'Burbs and the brutality of the wilderness beyond.

At sixteen, Xavier Stuart enlisted in the Coalition Army. He proved to be a quick study in basic training and afterward, excelled in all aspects of soldiering. He loved the competition amongst the enlisted men and women and worked hard to be the best at everything. His constant pursuit of excellence earned him the recognition of his superiors, but alienated him from many of his fellow soldiers. Decisive, cocky and bold, he showed great potential in squad tactics and leadership, and was tapped for Officer Candidate School after a brief two years of the enlisted life. Three months after his departure he was *Lieutenant Stuart*, a Military Specialist, and was transferred to the 1st Mechanized Infantry Division at Chi-Town.

As eager as ever, Lt. Stuart dove into his duties in an effort to distinguish himself and perhaps get a shot at a command and, eventually, citizenship. However, the young soldier found the officer corps to be far different from enlisted life. Over the years he grew bitter as his highly-praised service record was not enough to get him promoted further. As he struggled, promotion after promotion was given to the sons and daughters of distinguished Chi-Town citizens – his 'Burb roots always a subject of jokes and condescending remarks. It took him six agonizing years to make 1st Lieutenant and another twelve to make Captain. By 105 P.A. he was a 25 year veteran who had never had a prestigious assignment or a command of any sort, instead spending his career supervising motor pools and supply depots. He was a joke to all of those around him, and his hopes of citizenship were a distant memory. In September of 105 P.A. his last opportunity to serve his beloved Coalition in combat slipped



away. When the Emperor announced the Campaign of Unity, the aging Captain Stuart was sent to Lone Star to free up combat-experienced personnel there for service on the front lines. That was the final straw. Capt. Stuart served out the rest of the year before resigning his post and striking out on his own.

He stayed in Lone Star and headed beyond Coalition-controlled territory. He no longer had any love for the CS, and sought a human community beyond its borders. He was 41 years old, strong, healthy and looked more like 31 thanks to CS medical advancements, but felt used up. He finally found himself in a small village south of Amarillo, working for food and a bed in a barn.

A professional soldier, trained in all of the arts of war and combat, he hit rock bottom working as a hired laborer for a dirt-poor farmer. For a month he stewed, bitterly demanding his due, screaming into the night sky for justice. One night he received an answer to his dark prayers, struck a bargain, and never looked back. He agreed to help a Vampire Intelligence by becoming its General in a campaign to conquer the Americas. At last, someone . . . something great and powerful had recognized his greatness. It made him its General and gave him the order to conquer the continent, CS and all. It was a mission Xavier welcomed. He would build the most ruthless army in the world and conquer all of humanity.

Xavier Stuart Stats

Real Name: Xavier David Stuart.

Race: Master Vampire; was human.

Alignment: Diabolic.

Horror Factor: 14

Attributes: I.Q. 22, M.E. 22, M.A. 20, P.S. 31 (Supernatural), P.P. 25, P.E. 21 (Supernatural), P.B. 19, Spd 28.

Height: 5 feet, 10 inches (1.78 m). **Weight:** 160 lbs (72 kg).

Hit Points: 140; **S.D.C.:** Not applicable.

Age: 46. **P.P.E.:** 30; **I.S.P.:** 160.

Experience: 7th level Master Vampire, was a 6th level CS Military Specialist.

Description: Xavier is shorter than average, and thin, but muscular and has a regal and commanding presence. Like all Master Vampires he has slightly pale skin and is very handsome in a cool, mysterious sort of way. He has light brown hair and cold blue eyes. He can seem incredibly charming and engaging when he chooses, but when angry, he bares his fangs and his red eyes glow brightly so that no one can mistake him for anything but a vile demon.

Disposition: Xavier is the perfect military commander: He is cold, calculating, and brilliant as a leader and tactician, and hungry to prove his mettle as a true leader. Merciless against his enemies, he can be incredibly savage, cruel, and brutal to those who stand in his way or dare to defy his will. He has a mind that never forgets, and never forgives any failure or wrong, no matter how small. Endowed with the essence of his undead creator and graced by his instruction, all Secondary Vampires are expected to strive for perfection and victory.

Skills of Note:

O.C.C. Skills (CS Military Specialist): Language: American (98%), Literacy: American (68%), Computer Operation

(68%), Electronic Countermeasures (58%), Intelligence (56%), Pilot: Automobile (76%), Pilot: Hover Craft (Ground, 78%), Pilot: Robots & Power Armor (76%), Robot Combat: Basic, Mathematics: Basic (73%), Radio: Basic (73%), Running, Weapon Systems (68%), and Hand to Hand: Expert.

Espionage: Detect Ambush (58%), Detect Concealment (53%), Interrogation (58%), Undercover Ops (58%), and Wilderness Survival (58%).

Military: Camouflage (48%), Demolitions (80%), Military Etiquette (63%), and Military Fortification (58%).

Other Assorted O.C.C. Related Skills: Sensory Equipment (58%), Language: Spanish (64%), and Literacy: Spanish (48%).

Secondary Skills: Athletics (General), Body Building & Weight Lifting, Climbing (68%/58%), First Aid (73%), and Surveillance (43%).

Weapon Proficiencies: W.P. Energy Pistol, W.P. Energy Rifle, W.P. Handguns, W.P. Rifles, and W.P. Knife.

Skill Note: Some Physical skills and the Hand to Hand skill no longer apply as a vampire.

Special Abilities: Limited metamorphosis into a wolf, bat, or mist, super-regeneration (2D6 Hit Points per melee and can regrow new limbs and body parts), limited invulnerability, smell blood a mile (1.6 km) away, nightvision 1,600 feet (488 m), does not breathe, summon rodents, and summon canines. See **Rifts® World Book 1: Vampire Kingdoms** for more details on vampires.

Psionics: Master psychic, who requires a 10 to save vs psionic attacks. Alter Aura (2), Empathy (4), Mind Block (2), Presence Sense (4), Hypnotic Suggestion (6), Super Hypnotic Suggestion (20). Each psionic action counts as two hand to hand attacks.

Magic Knowledge: None.

Combat Training: Supernatural and instinctive.

Attacks Per Melee: Eight.

Bonuses: +3 to initiative, +5 to strike, +5 to parry and dodge, and +16 to damage, +8% to all skills (already included), +4 to save vs psionics/insanity, impervious to all forms of mind control and psionic and magic sleeps and paralysis, 60% trust/intimidate, +3 to save vs magic, 45% charm/impress, and +5 to save vs Horror Factor.

Other Combat Info: Killing bite (3D6 M.D.), restrained punch (4D6 S.D.C., plus the damage bonus above), full strength punch (2D6 M.D.), and power punch (1D4x10 M.D., counts as two attacks).

Weapons of Note: Xavier rarely carries weapons of any kind, and even more rarely enters combat himself. However, he has a treasure trove of modern weaponry at his disposal, and prefers to use old-style CS weaponry when necessary, his faves being the C-27 Heavy Plasma Cannon (6D6 M.D.), C-12 Heavy Assault Laser Rifle (2D6 M.D. or a 6D6 M.D. burst), the C-18 Laser Pistol (2D4 M.D.; an officer's side arm) and a Vibro-Sword (2D6 M.D.). He also carries twin silver-plated daggers. Xavier has more spare ammunition than he could ever possibly use and when entering combat, he carries a satchel with at least 20 spare E-Clips.

Body Armor: The Master Vampire has managed to get hold of an undamaged suit of CA-4 "Standard" Dead Boy Armor. He

usually wears only the chest and arm portions. M.D.C.: Main Body: 100, and Arms: 60 each.

Other Equipment: Has access to his entire armory of stolen weaponry, armor, and equipment. He needs very little, but could lay his hands on just about anything within reason. He has access to three million in Universal Credits, and a million in gems and other valuables. Another 20 to 25 million in armor and weapons is hidden away in his treasure trove deep within the mines where nobody knows his second sanctum is.

Vehicle: When leaving his lair in his human form, Xavier is driven in a Black Market knock-off of the CS AFC-101 Command Car with 180 Main Body M.D.C., a maximum speed of 200 mph (320 km) and a C-30R Light Rail Gun mounted on the back (6D6 M.D.). See page 164 of **Rifts® World Book 11: Coalition War Campaign** for full details.

Cybernetics: None, not compatible.

Cana the Blind – Grey Seer

Xavier's Advisor

"What did you gather from him?"

"I read our deaths in his eyes."

"I didn't even need your vision to see that, Slave."

-Xavier Stuart and Cana the Blind, discussing the A.M.C. Commander, Onra

Even as a youth the Seer knew he had a gift. Frequently his feelings or dreams told him the outcome of an event long before it would occur. He always had a way with people and could help them solve their problems, but he quickly found that it was actually a curse. He didn't like seeing the dark possibilities that lay in store for himself or the people he knew. This led to the promising Mystic's downtrodden attitude and sarcastic personality.

Cana enrolled in a small monastery in Colorado to allow himself to more fully develop his talents. He wasn't enthusiastic about it and merely saw it as the only real option available to him. It was at this place of peace and learning that his fellow monks named him Cana "the Blind" due to his constantly dark outlook on life and grim outlook on the future. He stayed at the monastery for seven years until he was asked to leave (another unavoidable fate in the eyes of the Seer). He packed up his few belongings and headed south into the wilderness where he felt his destiny awaited. It was there that he learned of the new vampire threat in a most unpleasant manner.

Cana had found lodging in a small farmhouse near the Rio Grande in what was once New Mexico. He was offering aid to the farmers there by predicting the best places to plant crops for the season and other information that he really didn't know, but could pass off as a genuine "prophecy" with the help of a little showmanship. One night the town was raided by Xavier Stuart's vampire horde and the citizens taken as livestock. Cana didn't resist and simply submitted himself to his new masters. When Xavier, still new to the vampire experience, found out that a human had not resisted and seemingly had no fear of him, he insisted on meeting the individual.

Xavier learned of Cana's skills and put them to the test. When the Grey Seer was able to discern a great deal about Xavier and even his past life simply by looking at him, the fledgling General told his new "slave" that he was to stay by his side and prophesy for him. Ever the pacifist, Cana agreed and chalked it up as yet another misfortune associated with his "gifts."

Cana the Blind Stats

Race: Human.

Alignment: Miscreant.

Attributes: I.Q. 24, M.E. 17, M.A. 10, P.S. 8, P.P. 7, P.E. 10, P.B. 8, Spd 12.

Insanity: Insanely overconfident in his own abilities. Cana will never doubt that the conclusions he draws will come true. This is not without reason, as it has been some time since he was wrong. However, he is far from infallible. **Obsession:** Dark future; for himself and others. He embraces darkness and misfortune as an inevitability and never tries to find joy in life or dodge a grim fate.

Height: 5 feet, 8 inches (1.73 m). **Weight:** 140 lbs (63 kg).

Hit Points: 43; **S.D.C.:** 39. **Age:** 53, but acts 83.

P.P.E.: 98; **I.S.P.:** 71.

Experience Level: 9th level Grey Seer.

Description: Cana is a short, scrawny, unimpressive figure with bad posture and a receding hairline. His grey eyes are his only interesting feature, because they are so light that they almost appear white. He carries himself with a sort of grudging reluctance in everything that he does, like an old mule working just hard enough not to be swatted by its master's whip.

Disposition: Cana is a pessimist and pacifist, constantly accepting every terrible event in his life as the fulfillment of his unshakable destiny. He's incredibly intelligent and this, combined with his paranormal powers, makes his predictions uncanny. He is a large part of Xavier's strategy building, though he does it from the sidelines with no credit given or asked. He doesn't like Xavier – in fact he hates him. Even so, Cana's strange nature will not allow him to confront his master openly, nor defy him in any way. He is frail beyond his years and aging very rapidly. These are the results of a lifetime of complacency and hopelessness.

Skills of Note:

O.C.C. Skills: Language: American (98%), Language: Dragonese/Elven (98%), Literacy: American (98%), Mathematics: Basic (98%), Mathematics: Advanced (98%), Lore: Demons & Monsters (85%), Lore: Magic (85%), Wilderness Survival (90%), and Land Navigation (88%).

Science: Astrology (54%) and Astronomy & Navigation (95%).

Technical: Language: Spanish (98%), Literacy: Dragonese/Elven (95%), Literacy: Spanish (95%), and Philosophy (80%).

Other Assorted O.C.C. Related Skills: Cook (75%), Barter (52%), and Brewing (40%/35%).

Secondary Skills: Begging (64%), Dowsing (70%), Fasting (74%), Identify Plants & Fruit (65%), Sewing (65%), and Preserve Food (40%).

Weapon Proficiencies: W.P. Blunt.

Special Abilities: **Sense Supernatural Evil:** Range: 390 feet (119 m).

Opening Oneself to the Supernatural: Invisibility (98%); even if detected, the character is +8 to save versus psionic attack and +4 to save versus magic attacks while in a trance state.

Sense Death: The Grey Seer can sense death and destruction, which means he can tell if an individual has ever killed another being, whether they have the blood of one or more people on their hands, and if they enjoy killing. This ability is especially adept at detecting the presence of the *undead*. Vampires can be detected out to 20 feet (6.1 m); Zombies, Mummies, Ghouls, Banshees, and animated dead within 300 feet (91.4 m), but their numbers or exact location cannot be pinpointed. No I.S.P. cost.

Sense Life: The seer can sense life, birth, and creation. In particular, he can sense the presence of supernatural good within 300 feet (91.4 m), but can not pinpoint their exact location or numbers. Similarly, he can recognize great good in an individual through close contact. No I.S.P. cost.

See Future Possibilities: Cana, the Grey Seer, can look at a person and often see some vague hints of things to come. Likewise, if a character is headed toward a confrontation, the Grey Seer will sense it, although he is not likely to see the outcome. These Mystics can also see the positive in defeat and humility and time for contemplation in success. No I.S.P. cost.

Vulnerabilities: Cana suffers combat penalties resulting from his low P.P. and acceptance of a hopeless outcome.

Psionics: Master psychic, requires a 10 to save vs psionics.

Sensitive: Clairvoyance (4), Empathy (4), Mind Block (4), Object Read (6), Presence Sense (4), Read Dimensional Portal (6), Remote Viewing (10), See Aura (6), See the Invisible (4), Sense Magic (3), Sixth Sense (2), Telepathy (4) and Psionic Invisibility (10).

Magic Knowledge: Spell Strength of 14.

Level One: Globe of Daylight (2).

Level Two: Befuddle (6), Cloak of Darkness (6), Fear (5), Life Source (2+), Magic Shield (6), Manipulate Objects (2+).

Level Three: Armor of Ithan (10), Light Healing (6), Light Target (6), Wave of Frost (6).

Level Four: Deflect (10), Reflection (7), Weight of Duty (10).

Level Five: Aura of Death (12), Death Curse (Special), Horror (10), House of Glass (12), Instill Knowledge (15), Mend the Broken (10+), Mental Blast (15), Sustain (12).

Level Six: Tongues (12).

Level Eight: Oracle (30).

Combat Training: None.

Attacks Per Melee: 3, or 6 non-combat "actions."

Combat Modifiers: +2 to initiative, -2 to strike, +2 to dodge, +1 to pull punch, -1 to roll with punch/fall/impact, and +2 to disarm, +10% to all skills (already included), +3 to save vs psionics, +1 to save vs insanity, +2 to save vs possession, +3 to save vs magic, and +3 to save vs Horror Factor. Automatic dodge. No automatic parry or special hand to hand attacks.

Weapons of Note: None. Cana is not allowed to carry weapons, and doesn't really know how to use any anyway. When forced into a combat situation, Cana relies on his magical and psionic powers.

Body Armor: May wear body armor made of dinosaur hide or other natural material. Cana sometimes wears light TW armor captured by the vampire forces if he is going to be in harm's way, but usually relies on his magic and psionics for protection. Being fully enclosed in armor, particularly that made of metal and high-tech materials, disrupts a spellcaster's abilities to channel magic energy.

Other Equipment: None of note. Cana has no real money or possessions, as he is the property of the Master Vampire.

Vehicle: None. Often travels with Xavier and uses whatever transportation is necessary.

Cybernetics: None. Will not get them except for medical reasons and then will strive for Bio-Systems.

Xavier's Secondary Vampires

All of Xavier's Secondary Vampires have roughly equivalent stats, with the various castes only differing in skill selection. What follows are the average stats for Secondary Vampires in Xavier's horde. Xavier's Secondaries are perhaps slightly more experienced than their peers in other kingdoms. His most trusted minions and military captains will often have higher stats and greater experience than are listed here.

Stats for the Average Secondary Vampire

Alignment: Miscreant or Diabolic.

Horror Factor: 12

Attributes: I.Q. 12, M.E. 16, M.A. 16, P.S. 25 (Supernatural), P.P. 18, P.E. 20 (supernatural), P.B. 11, Spd. 20.

Hit Points: 80

P.P.E.: 30; **I.S.P.:** 100.

Average Level of Experience: 1D4+2 level Secondary Vampire.

Disposition: Personalities vary greatly among vampires, but most Secondary Vampires can be characterized as cruel, manipulative, and evil. Xavier's military vampires are equally loyal and enthusiastic, and seek to please their master and general, as well as those vampires who he has installed as the officers and leaders of the horde. The average Secondary Vampire loathes his wild brethren and constantly derides and mistreats them.

Skills of Note: Skill level varies with the experience of the person when they were turned, but average is 4th level of experience. The Secondary Vampire retains 10 skills that were among the most important to the character before becoming a vampire. These are most often O.C.C. Skills or favorite Secondary Skills, and are taken without any O.C.C. bonuses. In Xavier's vampire army, skills tend to stay fairly consistent in each vampire "caste" as discussed above. In addition to listed skills, most vampires speak both American and Spanish (65%) and 25% are literate in at least one language.

Typical skills of the average Secondary Vampire include: Pilot: Automobile (66%) or Pilot: Hover Craft (Ground, 65%), one Modern and one Ancient Weapon Proficiency, and seven additional skills at the level of experience attained before he or she was reborn as a vampire. They will also usually have Military Etiquette (35%) and Radio: Basic (45%), both frozen at first level of experience. **Note:** See the previ-



ous descriptions for typical skills of the various *caste* vampires.

Special Abilities: Limited metamorphosis into a wolf, bat, or mist, super-regeneration (2D6 Hit Points per melee and can regrow new limbs and body parts), limited invulnerability, smell blood a mile (1.6 km) away, nightvision 1,600 feet (488 m), does not breathe, summon rodents, and summon canines. See *Rifts® World Book 1: Vampire Kingdoms™* for more details.

Psionics: Alter Aura (2), Empathy (4), Mind Block (2), Presence Sense (4), Hypnotic Suggestion (6), Super Hypnotic Suggestion (20). Considered a major psionic and requires a 12 to save vs psionics. Each psionic action counts as two hand to hand attacks.

Magic Knowledge: None for the average vampire. Vampires who were mages in their former life keep half of any spell magic they may have possessed at the time of their conversion.

Combat Training: Supernatural and instinctive.

Attacks Per Melee: 5 or 6.

Combat Bonuses (Humanoid): +2 to initiative, +2 to strike, parry, and dodge, +10 to damage, +3 to save vs Horror Factor, +3 to save vs magic, and +3 to save vs mind control.

Combat Bonuses (Wolf): The wolf form is the preferred choice combat form for the average Secondary Vampires when not wearing armor or equipped with weapons, particularly when

going into battle alongside Wild Vampires. Other forms are used for stealth or infiltration. Run at a speed of 58, leap 20 feet (6.1 m) across and 6 feet (1.8 m) high. Add one attack per melee round, +3 to initiative, +2 to strike, +1 to parry, and +4 to dodge. Bite does 5D6 S.D.C. damage. Combat bonuses are in addition to those listed above for the humanoid form.

Other Combat Info: Killing Bite 2D6 M.D., Restrained Punch 3D6+10 S.D.C., Full Strength Punch 2D6 M.D., Power Punch (counts as two attacks) 4D6 M.D.

Xavier's Average Wild Vampires

Wild Vampires are rarely included in the Fort Tombstone kingdom. A few act as servants for high-ranking Secondary Vampires, but all other Wild Vampires are either banished from the kingdom or staked. Banished vampires are sent out into the wilds of the New West to cause problems for the vampire hunters of the region, as well as keeping the peasants and farmers of the region in check and fearful.

Around 250-300 Wild Vampires are always kept staked by Xavier, placed in suspended animation in the first moments after their rebirth. The Wild Vampires are seen as a waste of limited resources and are too difficult to control, but are held in stasis

until they are needed for use as shock troops during military operations. Wild Vampires are unstaked and sent headlong into the waiting guns of vampire hunters and common villagers alike to soften the lines and cause panic. The massive loss of Wild Vampire life is never mourned by Xavier or his Secondary Vampires.

Wild Vampire Quick Stats

Alignment: Miscreant or Diabolic.

Horror Factor: 12

Attributes: I.Q. 8, M.E. 13, M.A. 9, P.S. 25 (Supernatural), P.P. 18, P.E. 20 (Supernatural), P.B. 5, Spd 25.

P.P.E.: 20; **I.S.P.:** 30.

Hit Points: 50, regenerates 2D6 per melee round and can fight until -20 Hit Points.

Experience Level: 1st level Wild Vampire.

Disposition: Wild Vampires are brutish, animalistic creatures who enjoy nothing more than causing torment and pain. The few Wild Vampires in the Fort Tombstone kingdom are jittery and restrained, since they greatly fear their Secondary Vampire masters.

Skills of Note: Language: American (55%), Language: Spanish (55%), Prowl (50%, 65% in wolf form), W.P. Blunt, W.P. Knife, and possibly a Modern Weapon Proficiency and/or a basic Piloting skill. Wild Vampires retain only the most basic skills from their former lives.

Special Abilities: Limited metamorphosis into a wolf, bat, or mist, super-regeneration (2D6 Hit Points per melee and can regrow new limbs and body parts), limited invulnerability, smell blood a mile (1.6 km) away, nightvision 1,600 feet (488 m), does not breathe, summon rodents, and summon canines. See **Rifts® World Book 1: Vampire Kingdoms™** for more details.

Psionics: Alter Aura (2), Empathy (4), Mind Block (2), Presence Sense (4), Hypnotic Suggestion (6), Super Hypnotic Suggestion (20). Considered a minor psionic and requires a 12 to save vs psionics. Each psionic action counts as two hand to hand attacks.

Magic Knowledge: None. Any magic knowledge possessed before conversion is lost to the Wild Vampire.

Combat Training: Supernatural and instinctive.

Attacks Per Melee: 5

Combat Bonuses (Humanoid): +2 to initiative, +2 to strike, parry, and dodge, +10 to damage, +2 to save vs Horror Factor, +3 to save vs magic, and +1 to save vs mind control.

Combat Bonuses (Wolf): The wolf form is the preferred combat form for the average Wild Vampires. Other forms are used for stealth or infiltration. Run at a speed of 58, leap 20 feet (6.1 m) across and 6 feet (1.8 m) high. Add one attack per melee round, +3 to initiative, +2 to strike, +1 to parry, and +4 to dodge. Bite does 5D6 S.D.C. damage. Combat bonuses are in addition to those listed above for the humanoid form.

Other Combat Info: Killing Bite 2D6 M.D., Restrained Punch 4D6+10 S.D.C., Full Strength Punch 1D6 M.D., Power Punch (counts as two attacks) 3D6 M.D.

Important Story Note

Although Xavier Stuart is convinced he is destined to take over the continent, that confidence is unfounded. The fact that the pragmatic and grim Cana believes his fate is tied to Xavier's and that he sees a great battle, does not mean that Xavier's plans for conquest are a lock. Indeed, the heroes and warriors of Arzno are much more formidable than Xavier imagines. Furthermore, the Lyn-Srial and *EVERY* hero, vampire hunter and Cyber-Knight in the New West will rally behind Arzno, and once they do, all bets are off. That's why Cana has informed Xavier that he must defeat and conquer Arzno in three days or less. Failure to crush Arzno in a matter of days is all it will take to put Xavier and his army from the offensive to the defensive, and every day after that, the vampires and their minions will weaken and their numbers dwindle.

Xavier has already made his first tactical error, the decision to attack Arzno blitzkrieg style, without warning and using modern weapons. Although Arzno's defenders will be caught offguard, they will adapt much more quickly than Xavier could ever dream. Arzno will not fall that first night, and they will fight like men possessed the second night. Like the defenders of the Alamo in a different time and place, the heroes of Arzno will immediately recognize the threat and fight to the last man. Whether they fall like the Alamo, or triumph is all that remains to be seen.

It must also be noted that if Master Vampire Xavier Stuart is taken out of the equation – captured, staked or killed – his army and all of his strategies will crumble in a matter of hours. At the first sign that they are losing, half the vampires will splinter and flee, the rest fight to the bitter end, but discarding technology and reverting to the instinctive predatory ways, insuring their inevitable defeat.

If Xavier's army is crushed, but he escapes (he is not one to fight to the death), he will mope for a year or so before formulating a plan for revenge. Unable to accept defeat, he will become obsessed with destroying Arzno over any plan to conquer the Southwest.

Ultimately, a great deal rests on the fate of Xavier Stuart and the fighting spirit of the men and women of Arzno.





Breaux

The Blood Cult

When building his army, Xavier discovered a need for human aid beyond what could be accomplished by mind slaves and forced cooperation by an enslaved or extorted populace. He needed a handful of mortals who were willing participants. The answer was the introduction of the Blood Priest created by the Vampire Intelligence Xavier served.

Vampire Intelligences possess godlike power, and the horrid thing unleashed its essence to find a person (much like Xavier) willing to serve it and its Vampire General with blind loyalty and devotion. That disciple appeared in the form of **Suthue the Blood Priest**, an evil D-Bee (or even some kind of a sub-demon) from an unknown dimension.

Xavier and Suthue rarely interact directly, and though the Blood Priest is more powerful, he is clearly subservient to the Master Vampire. In fact, Suthue has the ambition to become a second Master Vampire in the Fort Tombstone kingdom once it grows to a size that warrants one. To this purpose, he is careful not to anger either the Intelligence or the Vampire General, and is eager to pursue building and leading the Blood Cult. His efforts have already yielded him a fanatical following of some 500 mortals throughout Arizona, New Mexico, and the Pecos Empire. Three hundred are based out of his main camp in the ruins of *Whetstone*, north of Fort Tombstone. The rest wander across the Southwest in ones and twos in search of new acolytes and information to support the war effort.

The Blood Cultists

Blood Cultists are drawn to the Blood Priest for a number of reasons. Like any time of Earth's history, there are disenfranchised and outcast members of society looking to belong somewhere. On Rifts Earth, many of these are human mutants and D-Bees who are simply trying to survive in an inhospitable world. Some mortals join the cult with the hope of becoming an immortal vampire immune from pain and death. Others are simply evil or insane and seeking power, revenge or to belong to an organization that's important. Others seek peace and purpose in an organization that promotes enslaving humankind, war, conquest and undeath. All cling to the promise of being important and powerful in the new world order that High Father Suthue and Xavier Stuart promise.

The cultists worship Xavier as a god, though few have ever actually seen him. He commands them from afar through the edicts of the Blood Priest, High Father Suthue, and they obey. In fact, they see all undead as divine and superior beings destined to shepherd humanity into a new age of tranquility and purpose under their yolk. Thus, they grovel at the feet of Wild Vampires, and pray that they will win the favor of the Master or a Secondary Vampire to give them the *gift* of immortality through undeath. For the cultists, High Father Suthue is a holy figure to be revered, trusted and obeyed in all matters without question.

Cult activities

These unceasingly loyal miscreants are used in a number of capacities.

Daytime activities of the cult include protection of vampires stationed away from Fort Tombstone throughout the New West. While most of General Xavier Stuart's undead soldiers are located in and around his headquarters in southern Arizona, he has agents located at numerous locations across the countryside to collect intelligence and subvert the people of the region. For those vampires who travel many days to carry out missions for Xavier, the cultists function as a support network providing safe havens to sleep, information, cover stories and alibis, protection, and blood for feeding. Other daylight operations include carrying out acts of sabotage and banditry, reconnaissance, and general mayhem throughout the region in support of the vampires. Cultists can do daylight scouting and intelligence, attack vampire hunters, raid homesteads, attack and rob travelers (or interact with them to get information), bushwhack Arzno patrols, track down runaway slaves, cause unrest in villages and towns simply by spreading rumors or taking more direct action like the framing, blackmailing and assassination of religious or political leaders, and similar. A network of willing and enthusiastic humanoid minions is essential to this sort of activity, and the cultists are only too willing to oblige.

Finally, the members of the Blood Cult act as a P.P.E. reserve – living batteries of mystic energy – they willingly offer to High Father Suthue and other spell casters in Xavier's new kingdom. Cult members can give 100% of their P.P.E. to be used in ritual spell magic. This includes the Blood Priest's unique powers as well as actual spell casting and rituals, and is often exploited to cast the costly Blood Rift spell. The cult also gives Suthue access to a great number of eager, brainwashed fools for blood sacrifices.

Cult organization

The Blood Cult is organized simply and efficiently, which is easy due to its relatively small size. At the top is Xavier's Blood Priest, Suthue. He answers to General Xavier Stuart and the Vampire Intelligence, but has direct control over all members of the Blood Cult and its operations.

A number of other lesser Blood Priests are used to help keep the cult members in line and control cells of the cult that are spread across the territory, as well as lead in the absence of Suthue. There are never less than six Blood Priests and never more than 15 at any given time. Their areas of professional study differ, but they are usually Necromancers, dark Ley Line Walkers, or other practitioners of magic. Secondary Vampires are sometimes assigned to the level of "priest" within the cult when a cell is in need of some more direct supervision by Xavier, but these undead lords rarely answer to the lowly mortal Blood Priest and act more independently than others are allowed to get away with.

Cult members make up the general body of the group, and they hold no special privilege or authority over each other in any way. They are almost always ignorant and weak, the disenfranchised and helpless. The cultists never rise to higher positions within the cult, but remain willing servants dedicated to their vampire masters and accepting of any abuse by their superiors. Despite this sad fact, brown nosing and one-upmanship among the cultists is highly encouraged by the leadership, even if it yields no real results. Membership does give the cultists a cer-

tain sense of security, purpose and belonging, and cult members are not usually abandoned by their fellow cultists or their vampire masters. They can always count on other members of their brotherhood to help and for their vampire masters to extract bloody revenge upon those who may persecute them. Such things can be hard to find in the cold world of Rifts Earth, and are enough reason to get many to literally, sign away their life in the service of the undead.

The Blood Priest

Servant of the Vampire Intelligence

Of all of the creatures to come through any Rift on Earth, perhaps none is as fearsome or terrible as the Blood Priest. Not because they look hideous or murder people for food and pleasure, but because they are willing servants to the most vile of any of the enemies of mankind: the Vampire Intelligence.

Blood Priests can be human, but are usually monstrous-looking D-Bees and sub-demons, or violently insane and evil men and women. Whoever the creature, he gives his soul to the intelligence in exchange for awesome power and eternal damnation.

In game terms, the character is basically a Witch who has entered into a *pact* with a powerful Vampire Intelligence. Due to the unique nature of the vampire, the pact and resulting gifts are different than the traditional Witch. The powers bestowed mimic the abilities, powers, and weaknesses of the empowering Vampire Intelligence.

Functions of the Blood Priest

The Blood Priest has several advantages that make him more useful to the Intelligence than a regular vampire. For one, he can be created while the Intelligence is trapped in another dimension and used to either prepare the way for his coming or take vengeance on those who last expelled him from that particular realm. The Priest is used in establishing a cult to worship the Intelligence and his vampire minions, a vital part of establishing a foothold in any world. In fact, the cult can manipulate and influence local culture to bend it to evil ways. This creates loyal and even fanatical servants without the Vampire Intelligence or his undead minions having to control people directly.

Why become a Blood Priest?

Throughout time there has existed the desire by humans and other creatures in the Megaverse for supreme power. Being a Blood Priest ensures just that. Hundreds, maybe thousands of cult members bowing to your commands, you are given supernatural abilities, wield magic and serve a greater purpose. Basically, it all comes down to the desire for power and authority. By entering into the pact with the Vampire Intelligence, the Blood Priest gains a unique *Gift of Union* with the monster.

The Gift of Union

The Pact. Vampire Intelligences are different from most supernatural beings in the fact that their existence and livelihood

stems from creating minions and establishing holds in other dimensions through the creation of vampires and worshipers. As a result, the only requirement to become a Blood Priest is a pact of *lifelong servitude* and loyalty. Failure or breach of this one requirement means death for the Blood Priest, but only after a long period of pain and suffering. Chances are that the Demon Familiar or a horde of vampires would kill the priest if he were to go rogue and forsake his master.

After years of faithful servitude, the Blood Priest is often a candidate to become a Master Vampire (assuming the priest is humanoid and meets the requirements for such a transformation). This appeals to most Blood Priests, and, in fact, it is the ultimate dream for most.

(**Note:** A Blood Priest does not get a familiar and does not bear the Devil's Mark from his pact, but he does have the eyes that glow red when he performs magic and drinks blood.)

After the union with the Vampire Intelligence, the entire perspective of the new Blood Priest is changed. He or she becomes confident, bold, and mentally strong. The character finds he is an excellent planner/schemer and imbued with a new-found patience and cunning; all virtues of his new master. An alignment change is immediate, and the new code of ethics and morals becomes that of the Vampire Intelligence, which is usually *Diabolic*, and always evil. The Blood Priest feels superior to ordinary mortals, but inferior to Master Vampires and ancient Secondaries. The dark priest feels a kinship and equality with young Secondary Vampires, though not many of them return his sentiment.

The Blood Priest's physical appearance does not change with the union. They do not grow fangs with which to feed, nor can they turn into a bat or wolf, but they carry themselves with a strong and dominant presence. The most noticeable feature of the Blood Priest, which sometimes gets people to mistake them for vampires, is that their eyes glow blood red when using their natural abilities.

The Abilities of the Blood Priest

From the union with the Vampire Intelligence, the priest gains all of the following abilities:

1. Vampirism. The Blood Priest must consume the blood of mortal humanoids to satisfy his inhuman master; a minimum of two pints per week. This blood feeds only the inner essence of the Vampire Intelligence that dwells inside the Blood Priest, so the priest must still eat and drink to nourish himself as usual. The individual does not grow fangs, so he must drink blood by some other means. Humanoid blood must be used; animal blood can not be substituted. Denying the Vampire Intelligence's essence its nourishment carries the same penalties as starvation for a true vampire, but takes twice as long to set in.

Through this vampirism, the Blood Priest enjoys bonuses when conducting ritual sacrifices. The P.P.E. taken from a human sacrifice is not just doubled with the victim's death, but also doubled again if the blood from the sacrifice is consumed by the Blood Priest (increased by a total of four times!). At least a pint of blood must be consumed to achieve this effect.

2. Mega-Damage. The Blood Priest becomes a Mega-Damage being with 3D6x10 M.D.C. If the priest was already a

Mega-Damage being prior to the pact, simply add 3D6x10 to the total. (On S.D.C. worlds, the Blood Priest has a Natural A.R. of 14, and gets 2D4x10 S.D.C. and 4D6+12 Hit Points.)

3. Damage Resistance. All Mega-Damage weapons such as lasers, plasma, rail guns, missiles, Vibro-Blades, etc., inflict *half damage* to the Blood Priest. Mega-Damage magic, magic weapons and psionic attacks do normal damage.

4. Vulnerabilities. Simple weapons made of silver or wood do their normal S.D.C. damage in M.D., so a 1D6 S.D.C. damage silver knife does 1D6 M.D., while a 2D6 S.D.C. damage wooden arrow does 2D6 M.D., and so on.

The priest can function in direct sunlight, but is -1 attack per melee, -2 on all combat rolls and saving throws, -10% on all skills, and M.D.C. points are reduced by 25% in the light of day. He much prefers to sleep during the day, or if he must be up, stay indoors out of the light where his bonuses are full.

Water, holy water, the cross, garlic, and wolfsbane do *no* damage, but the Blood Priest is wary and fearful of them, giving them a Horror Factor of 11. Provided the H.F. roll is beaten, the priest can freely move over flowing rivers, circles of garlic, and other barriers that hold back vampires.

5. Supernatural Strength and Endurance. Strength and endurance are made supernatural, and the character can damage vampires and other supernatural creatures in hand-to-hand combat.

6. Evil Presence. The Blood Priest radiates evil and demonic power that is intimidating and even horrifying. Add a bonus of 1D4+1 to M.A. attribute. When the Blood Priest's eyes glow with the use of his powers, or when drinking blood, he has a Horror Factor of 12.

7. Long Life. The Blood Priest will live 1D4+1 times his race's normal life expectancy, and age slowly.

Magic Powers and Abilities

1. Existing Spell Knowledge. Unlike Witches, the Blood Priest does not gain any of the magical abilities of the Vampire Intelligence, but fully retains any spell knowledge that may have existed prior to the pact, provided it was not granted by another supernatural source (like a Priest's relationship with a god, or a Warlock's with an element). The Blood Priest keeps all knowledge he had of magic, frozen at the level when the being became a Blood Priest, plus has full knowledge of blood sacrifices, rituals, tapping ley lines and others for P.P.E., as well as methods of meditation and rest for recovering one's own P.P.E.

He also gains the unique abilities that follow.

2. Commune with Vampire Intelligence.

Range: Indefinite, even across dimensions.

Duration: One hour of preparation gives five minutes of direct communication per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Not applicable.

P.P.E.: 25

When the priest needs to contact the Vampire Intelligence, he spills an ounce of his own blood during a ceremony which requires an hour to complete. At that point, a line of communication is established for five minutes per level of the Blood Priest. **Note:** The Vampire Intelligence, on the other hand, may contact

his priest at any point (at no P.P.E. cost to the character) to issue new commands or to ask questions.

3. Blood Rift.

Range: A Rift may be created up to 100 feet (30.5 m) away from the spell caster, though it must be over a blood pool and on a ley line nexus.

Duration: One minute per level of the priest. Ritual takes one hour of preparation.

Saving Throw: Not applicable.

P.P.E.: 500

By spilling a gallon of fresh blood on a nexus, the priest can open a Rift to any dimension with which the Vampire Intelligence is familiar. This is often used to bring in the Intelligence's minions from other dimensions or for the Blood Priest to dimension hop to, and from, desired locations. Standard rules for random encounters with open Rifts apply.

4. Blood Sight.

Range: Indefinite, even cross-dimensional.

Duration: One minute, maximum five minutes.

Saving Throw: Not applicable.

P.P.E.: 30 P.P.E. per minute, maximum five minutes.

By peering into a pool of fresh blood, the priest can see other people or far-off places, much like a crystal ball. The Blood Priest or the one who spilled the blood must be very familiar with the place or person being viewed. It takes roughly a pint of blood to create the pool. The ritual requires 30 P.P.E. per minute of viewing with a maximum of five minutes before the blood spoils and the view is lost. The blood must be from a *live* victim or donor.

5. P.P.E. Add 2D6x10 to the Blood Priest's P.P.E. If the priest was not a spell caster prior to his pact, use this value plus the Blood Priest's P.E. attribute as the P.P.E. base. This P.P.E. belongs to the Vampire Intelligence more than the priest, and may be granted or withheld as the monstrous entity deems fit. The character gains an additional 1D4 P.P.E. per level of experience.

6. Spell Knowledge. The priest may *not* learn new spells through any means other than as noted above. The character can use Techno-Wizardry devices and recognize runes and wards, but he cannot decipher them.

7. Psionic Abilities. If the Blood Priest had psionic abilities prior to the pact, they are *lost*, destroyed by the invasion of the Vampire Intelligence's powerful essence fragment.

8. Other Bonuses. Impervious to possession and mind control, +4 to save vs Horror Factor at level one, plus an additional +1 to save at levels 4, 9 & 15, +2 to save vs magic, +1 to save vs psionic attacks, and +1 to Perception Rolls at levels 1, 3, 6 & 11.

Blood Priest O.C.C.

NPC Villain; not suggested as a player character

Racial Requirements: Any sentient, mortal being – human, mutant or D-Bee – can become a Blood Priest, though most are at least humanoid. The priest is usually recruited by the Vampire Intelligence from across the Megaverse and, in some cases, transported to the chosen world via the Blood

Rift. **Note:** Creatures of magic, vampires and supernatural beings (except for sub-demons) cannot become a Blood Priest.

Attribute Requirements: None. All one needs to become a Blood Priest is a desire for power, the willingness to submit one's life to the service of the Vampire Intelligence and the Intelligence's acceptance of the individual (and the subsequent pact and empowerment).

Alignment Limitation: Upon conversion to a Blood Priest, the character takes on the alignment of the Vampire Intelligence, almost always Diabolic.

O.C.C. Skills: These skills replace any the character may have had.

Language: Native Tongue at 98%.

Language: Other: Two of choice (+15%).

Literacy: Native Language (+20%)

Literacy: Other: One of choice (+10%).

Astronomy & Navigation (+10%)

Mathematics: Basic (+10%)

Lore: Demons & Monsters (+20%)

Lore: One of choice (+15%).

Horsemanship: General or Horsemanship: Exotic Animals or one Pilot skill of choice, except for military vehicles; pick one (+5%).

W.P. Knife

W.P.: One of choice (any).

Hand to Hand: Basic; can be changed to Hand to Hand: Expert at the cost of one O.C.C. Related Skill, or Assassin for the cost of two.

O.C.C. Related Skills: Select six other skills at level one, plus one additional skill at levels 4, 7, 11, and 15. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

Communications: Any (+10%).

Cowboy: None.

Domestic: Any (+5%).

Electrical: None.

Espionage: Escape Artist (+5), Intelligence (+5%), Interrogation, Undercover Ops (+10%), and Wilderness Survival (+10%) only.

Horsemanship: None, other than above.

Mechanical: None.

Medical: Brewing: Medicinal, First Aid, and Holistic Medicine only (+10%).

Military: None.

Physical: Any, except Acrobatics, Boxing, Gymnastics, and Wrestling.

Pilot: Any (+5%), except Robots and Power Armor, and military vehicles.

Pilot Related: None.

Rogue: Any (+5%), except Computer Hacking and Safe-cracking.

Science: Any.

Technical: Any (+10%).

W.P.: Any.

Wilderness: Any (but +10% on Land Navigation and Wilderness Survival only).

Secondary Skills: Four skills from the Secondary Skills List found on page 300 of *Rifts® Ultimate Edition*, plus one additional at levels 3, 6, 10, and 14. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get any bonuses, other than any possible bonus for having a high I.Q. All Secondary Skills start at the base skill level.

Equipment: Hooded robe or cape, one weapon and 1D4+1 E-Clips for each W.P. skill, scalpel (1D4 S.D.C. damage), ceremonial dagger (1D6 S.D.C.), 1D6+1 pint-sized jars, 1D6 vials, 4D6 pairs of surgical gloves, notebook, 1D4+1 pens or markers, 1D4 medium-sized sacks, backpack or satchel, horse or basic vehicle to match Piloting/Horsemanship skill, and personal items. Other *essentials* will be provided by the vampires the priest serves as his mission requires.

Money: Once the Vampire Intelligence has enough power to come to Rifts Earth the Blood Priest will live like a king with all of the wealth he can imagine. Until then, he sacrifices everything in the duty of his master. Starts with 2D6x1000 credits or whatever a specific character might have already owned, great or little.

Cybernetics: A Blood Priest could have had minor cybernetic or bionic systems prior to the pact, but no bionics or cybernetics after becoming a priest. Bio-Systems may be considered as an alternative if the priest is in especially good graces with the Intelligence.

Experience Table:

| | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1 0,000 – 2,080 | |
| 2 2,081 – 4,160 | 9 90,001 – 120,000 |
| 3 4,161 – 8,800 | 10 120,001 – 150,000 |
| 4 8,801 – 18,000 | 11 150,001 – 200,000 |
| 5 18,001 – 33,000 | 12 200,001 – 250,000 |
| 6 33,001 – 48,000 | 13 250,001 – 300,000 |
| 7 48,001 – 65,000 | 14 300,001 – 400,000 |
| 8 65,001 – 90,000 | 15 400,001 – 500,000 |





High Father Suthue

Blood Priest of the Tombstone Kingdom

The Vampire Intelligence that is trying to carve out its fledgling kingdom at Fort Tombstone is an ancient and powerful creature and master of billions of subjects across many dimensions. For the last century, one servant from among this host has served him better than any other, High Father Suthue. This dark being has served with distinction on three worlds, the latest of which is Rifts Earth. In every case, he has proven himself an able leader and manipulator of lesser beings.

High Father Suthue has found Earth to be challenging, and is beginning to understand why it has proven so difficult for vampires to conquer over the ages. The humans native to the dimension are stubborn, proud, and difficult to bring into submission. On the other hand, these same traits, once controlled and channeled, can turn an average human into a fanatical servant of the vampires and the Blood Cult. Through great difficulty he has managed to gather a small but devoted cult to help Xavier in his conquests.

High Father Suthue is a monstrous D-Bee, whose demonic appearance has led many to speculate that he is actually a subdemon unknown on Earth. He has a crown of horns and tough, leathery, dark grey skin. Horns also protrude from his jaw, he has black eyes that seem to be made of glass, and his mouth is full of jagged, broken fangs. With his massive frame and awesome presence, he is truly a terror to behold.

The High Father's past is a mystery to all but himself. He is from another world where the magic that courses through the veins of the planet is potent, although only half that as currently found on Rifts Earth. There is no technology to speak of, and there he ruled a vast kingdom as a ruthless tyrant and was held up as a dark god by his subjects, and yet still he craved more. It was this hunger for power and talent for manipulation and control that brought Suthue to the Intelligence's attention. He was taken from that world after his pact was sealed, to serve as Supreme Blood Priest – the High Father. This means subjugating

world after world in the name of his evil master. Since his first assignment, he has learned a little bit about advanced technology, but still finds it deplorable and inferior to the mystic arts. With three worlds already fallen to him and his master's undead legions, he has been sent to Rifts Earth to try and facilitate his master's domination over this desirable realm.

High Father Suthue is totally unique among the diverse races that inhabit Rifts Earth. He never speaks of his home world or dimension, saying only that he serves his master in the here and now and has no time or concern for his past. He has been in the service of the Vampire Intelligence for more than 150 years and seems to be experiencing the first signs of age. All Blood Priests age more slowly than is normal for their race, but since nobody knows how old he was when he made his pact or what the normal life expectancy is for his race, it is difficult to determine his age or predict how long he has to live. The evil High Father Suthue goes to great lengths to conceal any signs of weakness, but they are becoming noticeable to the discerning eye. This delights the many Secondary Vampires who view all Blood Priests as inferior "wannabes" and therefore take great joy in pointing out the shortcomings of mortal life.

In truth, Suthue's mind is still sharp, and his capacity for evil greater than ever, but his physical stamina and strength are gradually fading. This is quite a blow to the dark priest after having been so powerful for so long. Suthue fears being written off and his position usurped by a younger and more capable Blood Priest. More than anything, he fears being turned into just another Secondary or Wild vampire in the horde. His goal has always been to be a worlds conquering Master Vampire, and the Vampire Intelligence has promised him that reward when he helps conquer what was once the American and Canadian Empires for Xavier Stuart (setting in motion the conquest of the entire planet). So it is that he continues to serve the Vampire Intelligence with greater fervor than ever, hoping to, at last, achieve immortality as a Master of the living dead.

Lord Suthue Stats

Real Name: Unknown.

Race: Unknown.

Alignment: Diabolic.

Horror Factor: 13

Attributes: I.Q. 12, M.E. 10, M.A. 25, P.S. 20 (Supernatural), P.P. 8, P.E. 20 (Supernatural), P.B. 5, Spd 11. While physical attributes are still impressive by human standards, the powerful creature is not as mighty as he once was. Attributes will continue to slide, particularly P.P. and Spd. His P.S. and P.E. are bolstered by Lord Suthue's supernatural nature, but it's only a matter of time before they begin to decline as well.

Height: 6 feet, 10 inches (2 m). **Weight:** 380 lbs (171 kg).

Age: 278, and is unlikely to live past the age of 300.

Hit Points & S.D.C.: Not applicable.

M.D.C.: 110.

P.P.E.: 340; **I.S.P.:** Not applicable.

Experience: 14th level Blood Priest, was a 12th level spell caster.

Description: As noted above.

Disposition: Lord Suthue is a heartless beast who seeks to improve his own position in the service of the Vampire Intelli-

gence through cruel deeds and evil acts. His every move bespeaks violence, and he is prone to wicked and brutal outbursts of physical torture and spoken abuse. He strives above all else to gain immortality and as a result, he is completely and fanatically dedicated to the Vampire Intelligence and to his representative on Rifts Earth, the Master Vampire Xavier Stuart.

More than a century of servitude to the Vampire Intelligence and a life of avarice and wickedness has taken its toll on Suthue's mind, and his sanity hangs by a strand. If he begins to suspect that he has no chance at becoming a Master Vampire, the High Father of Blood Priests may begin to unravel. His breakdown could take the form of jealousy and resentment toward Xavier or one of those closest to him, or even as open rebellion against the Vampire Intelligence and all who serve it.

Skills of Note:

Wizard Skills (frozen at the given level of experience): Holistic Medicine (85%/75%), Identify Plants & Fruits (80%), Intelligence (74%), Lore: Geomancy & Ley Lines (90%), Use & Recognize Poison (72%/64%), Language: Gobbly (95%), History (his home world, 70%), Streetwise (30%), Writing (70%), and speaks and is literate in a number of alien languages. Has W.P. Blunt and W.P. Shield at 6th level of experience.

O.C.C. Skills: Language: Native Tongue (98%), Language: Dragonese/Elven (98%), Language: Demongogian (98%), Literacy: Native Language (98%), Literacy: Dragonese/Elven (98%), Astronomy & Navigation (98%), Mathematics: Basic (98%), Lore: Demons & Monsters (98%), Lore: Magic (98%), and Horsemanship: Exotic Animals (98%).

O.C.C. Related Skills: Lore: Religion (98%), Performance (98%), Public Speaking (98%), Interrogation (85%), and Language: American (69%).

Secondary Skills: Land Navigation (88%), Lore: Faeries & Creatures of Magic (90%), Mathematics: Advanced (98%), Wilderness Survival (95%), Skin & Prepare Animal Hides (85%), Pilot: Hover Craft (Ground, 90%), Radio: Basic (65%), and Language: Spanish (50%).

Weapon Proficiencies: W.P. Knife and W.P. Staff.

Special Abilities: Mega-Damage, damage resistance, Supernatural Strength and Endurance, evil presence, long life, and the unique spell knowledge common to all Blood Priests (described previously). From his former life as a Wizard, Suthue maintains his magical skills and abilities, all frozen at 12th level of experience, including the Ley Line Walker abilities of see and use ley lines, ley line drifting, ley line rejuvenation, recognize enchantment (90%), and recognize magic (75%).

Vulnerabilities: See the Blood Priest O.C.C. above.

Psionics: None.

Magic Knowledge: Spell Strength of 16. High Father Suthue knows *all* incantations, levels 1-10, plus the following. Also see the special spell abilities of the Blood Priest, detailed in the O.C.C. above.

Level Eleven: Create Mummy (160), Remove Curse (140), Re-Open Gateway (180), and Rift Teleportation (200).

Level Twelve: Create Zombie (250), Ensorcel (400), Meta-

morphosis: Mist (250), Soultwist (170), and Summon & Control Entity (250).

Level Thirteen: Protection Circle: Superior (300), Sanctum (390), Summon Lesser Being (425), and Talisman (500).

Level Fourteen: Close Rift (200+).

Level Fifteen: Ley Line Restoration (800), Summon Ally (600), and Transformation (2000).

Spells of Legend: Blood and Thunder (770).

Combat Training: Hand to Hand: Basic.

Attacks Per Melee: Seven.

Bonuses: +2 to strike, +3 to parry and dodge, +4 to pull punch, +4 to roll with punch/fall/impact, +9 to damage, +1 to disarm, 84% trust/intimidate, impervious to possession and mind control, +2 to save vs psionics, +10% to save vs coma/death, +7 to save vs magic, +3 to save vs poison, +6 to save vs Horror Factor, and +4 on all Perception Rolls. Critical strike on an unmodified roll of 19 or 20, body flip/throw, and critical strike or knockout from behind. Inflicts 3D6 S.D.C. on a restrained punch, 1D6 M.D. on a full-strength punch, or 2D6 M.D.C. on a power punch (counts as two attacks). Damage bonuses are added to S.D.C. attacks.

Weapons of Note: None. Lord Suthue views the use of modern weapons as beneath him, and he has no special magical or other unique weapons that interest him. He carries a large, wicked stone knife for conducting sacrifices (2D6+3 S.D.C.) that is enchanted, extremely durable, and can be used to parry magical or Mega-Damage weaponry. The Blood Priest trusts his magic and his minions to protect him.

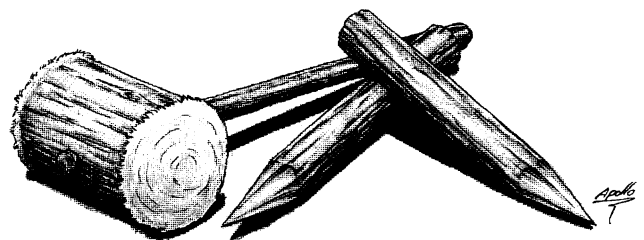
Body Armor: None. When in danger, the Blood Priest has many magical means of protection, a favorite of which is Armor Bizarre (180 M.D.C., see page 104 of the **Rifts® Book of Magic** for details).

Other Equipment: Suthue needs very little beyond blood for feeding and P.P.E. to spin his magic, both of which are provided in one way or another by his cult and his vampire masters. In terms of clothing, he generally dresses in long, black or deep blue robes with hoods.

His cult keeps several caches of weapons and supplies for raids and defense and can lay hands on enough gear to arm and armor 25 men immediately, and 100 cultists within a few hours. This is, of course, in addition to the resources that can be provided by Xavier.

Vehicle: When traveling by mundane means, Suthue is generally driven in an armored hover vehicle of some type, like a command car or a hover truck.

Cybernetics: None; augmentation interferes with magic.



The Black Swords

The fracturing of the Cyber-Knights is a tragic event that may, with time, prove to alter the fate of Rifts Earth. Like all broken fellowships and fallen heroes, this travesty comes in degrees. While many knights chose to fight for Tolkeen, they still fought under the banner of truth and honor as best they knew how. Many warriors' hearts fell into darkness as they took up pillaging and banditry, choosing lives as villains rather than crawling back to Lord Coake and those who remained loyal to the order.

There are still others who not only turned from the ways of justice and truth, but rejected them in favor of jealousy, spite, and evil. These *true blackguards* have embraced evil and are among the most cruel and despotic of bandits and mercenaries in North America. Among the worst of these are the **Black Swords**, a band of fallen knights who have recently emerged to wreak terror throughout southern Arizona and New Mexico.

The evil knights burst onto the scene with the massacre of twenty-seven innocents at the *Benson Homestead* in southern Arizona. Simply in the wrong place at the wrong time, the farmers were playing host to a group of six traveling adventurers from Mexico for the evening. The dark knights, accompanied by a dozen vampire underlings, fell on the unsuspecting victims and slew every man, woman, and child without mercy. Three of the adventurers were killed in the slaughter and the other three escaped. The attack carried the message of a new order born from the deserts of the South, Cyber-Knights in league with vampires.

The idea of Cyber-Knights working together with vampires seems impossible – completely counter to everything the knights stand for. Consequently, the story of the Benson massacre has spread across the New West like wildfire. Meanwhile, new tales of the Black Sword Cyber-Knights leading vampires in the wanton slaughter of innocent lives continue. It is all anyone can talk about. Speculation flourishes that Lord Coake, himself, will ride down to smite these blackguards, but he has not appeared. (Lord Coake has his hands full with Tolkeen refugees in the Northwest.) Nobody knows how or why even a fallen Cyber-Knight could fall so low. It's not like they are vampires themselves, and the few witnesses who have lived to tell the tales claim the knights are not mind slaves, but willing partners.

Although anywhere from 6-20 vampires have been reported to run with the Black Swords, it is the five Cyber-Knights who inspire the greatest fear. All are known by name amongst all who live in Arizona and western New Mexico, and all are dangerous warriors.

The captain of the Black Swords is **Sir Jude**, a once-noble knight of the order whose quest to eliminate the vampires had consumed him, but now has made him an ally to the undead. Many speculate he is insane, as only madness might explain his betrayal.

His brother in arms is the giant **Sir Lunais the Brute**, a scholar and philosopher trapped within an unbreakable vow of allegiance to Sir Jude.

Sir Trey Risharde is a knight with a heart full of malice, trained and sculpted by an evil mentor to get revenge on the world for his sorry existence and crippled body.

The cowardly and weak knight known as **Sir John of Conrad**, abandoned his family and personal honor for a few brief moments of fame and has never looked back. It is said he relishes his new-found infamy, and is the worst of the lot.

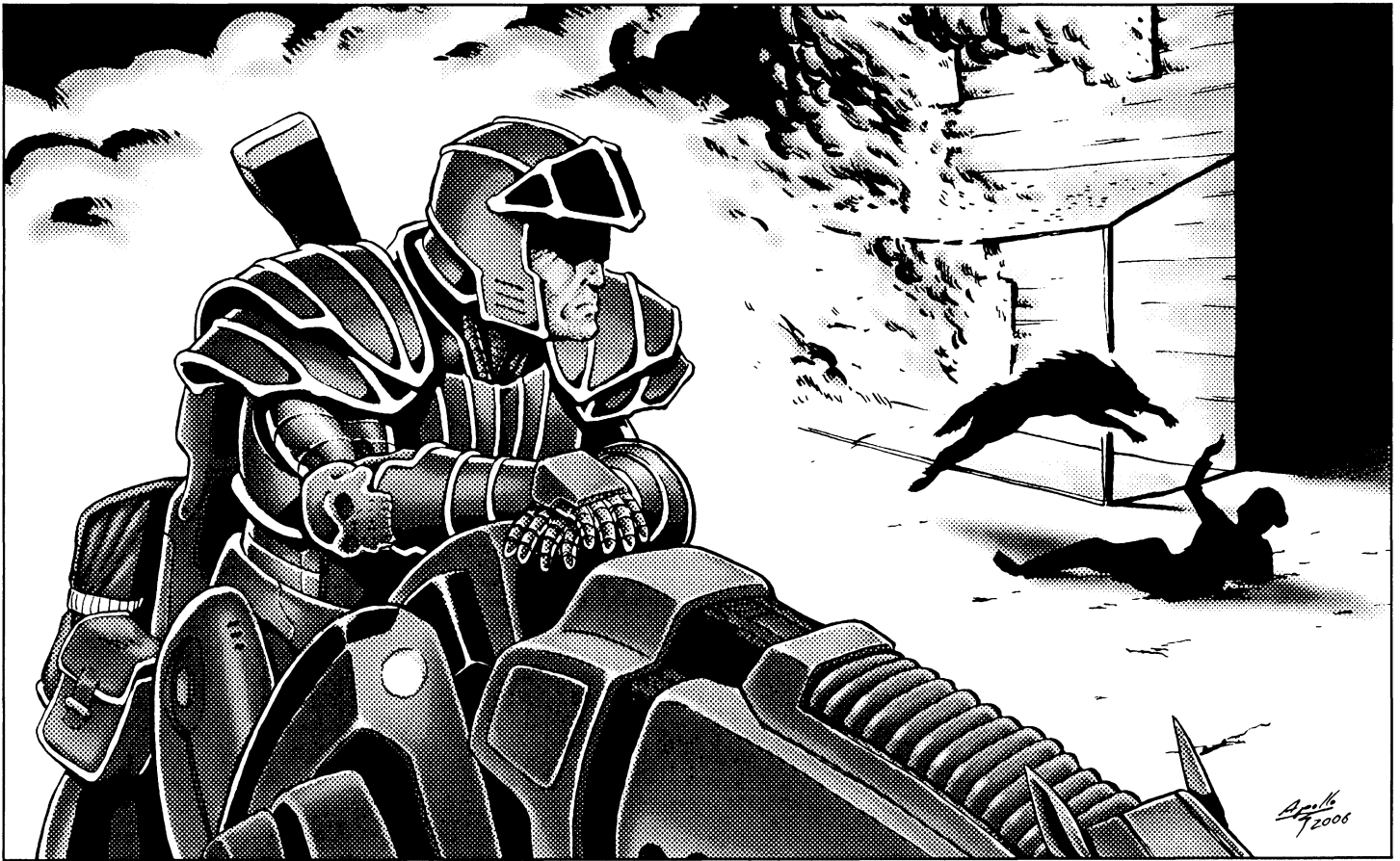
Lady Night Runner is an enigma even among the Cyber-Knights. Her strong Native American beliefs, obsession and reverence of the undead, and a mind slowly drifting to insanity, have placed her and her teammates in the service of none other than General Xavier Stuart.

Black Sword Tactics

The Black Swords' greatest weapon is fear, which they command in abundance. While these dark knights are truly great warriors, they rarely get the chance to prove it in battle. With their growing renown, even the bravest of their enemies think twice about confronting them, allowing their name to grow. In certain circles, these misanthropes could even be called *legends*, built up by the tall tales of those slain or defeated by them, and by those who fear they might be their next victims.

These fallen knights are truly villains who push the definition of all that is twisted and black to new lows. The reputation of the Black Swords is one of brutality, treachery and wanton murder. Virtually everyone in the southern portion of Arizona, from lowly peasant to traveling adventurer, has heard of the atrocities committed by the evil Cyber-Knights. Community defenders have been doubled, and everyone checks their locks twice at night and prays that these monsters pass them by. Everyone knows the Black Swords are out there, somewhere, looking for more innocent lives to end on their Psi-Swords. However, nobody knows why they are on this rampage of death and destruction, or why they have thrown in with vampires. To help spread their reputation, as of late, the group has forced captives to watch the slaughter and atrocities before turning them loose to report what they have done. It is as if the band wants people to know, and are trying to create an air of terror. This has led to the recent, widespread myth that the Cyber-Knights are, in fact, not human . . . but soulless creatures who have taken the form of Cyber-Knights.

The Black Swords frequently attack in the company of vampires, often leading (as individuals or as a group) as many as 20 of the undead in an attack or raid. When a large group of vampires are present, the Cyber-Knights stand by and watch as the vampires murder unarmed people in the street, and take action only to aid the vampires and to face any hero or champion who might step forward to challenge them. Many a meddlesome adventurer and well intentioned hero has fallen to these fiends over the last few months. The most fortunate heroes are killed outright. The least fortunate are turned into vampires to serve General Xavier Stuart. Only the noble, four-armed Sir Lunais will not lead the undead into combat, but he always accompanies Sir Jude, even now his loyal protector. Lady Night Runner



does not so much command as run with vampires as pack leader.

Now rumors have begun to spread that the Black Swords serve an unknown vampire lord raising an army of undead somewhere in the Southwest. Whatever the stories and fears, the sight of a Cyber-Knight springing to strike down the helpless and innocent alongside the undead is enough to make even the strongest warrior shudder. It reeks of pure evil, and base betrayal of the human race, and one wonders how such a thing could ever have come to pass.

The Black Swords may be found in the company of others, in addition to the vampires, utilizing groups of humanoids in their raids and exploits. For daylight objectives, loyal vampire mind slaves or undead-worshipping cultists can be used to supplement their numbers, although these valuable assets are rarely put at such risk. Cultists are too valuable as renewable P.P.E. batteries, and mind slaves are almost always hand selected for their unique skills and abilities. Alternately, *bandits and bushwhackers* are commonly hired to carry out simple harassment and raids on behalf of the Black Swords, particularly Sir John of Conrad, who maintains extensive contacts with Pecos Raiders and other thieves and miscreants. Such hirelings are never used in concert with vampires, cultists, or vampire mind slaves, but are kept separate for fear that too much information about the group's activities in Arizona (and Xavier's plans) could fall into the wrong hands. The entire campaign is designed to create an atmosphere of terror, to soften up the Arzno mercenaries and, with luck, spread their numbers out, isolate the mercs in small bands, and slaughter them in the field. So far, this tactic, while creating terror, has done little to impact the cagey mercs and heroes of Arzno. In fact, it has only served to heighten their readiness and strengthen their resolve.

Sir Jude Captain of the Black Swords

The knight leaned forward in his saddle as he watched with the weight of the world on his shoulders. He sat motionless, resting on the rise of the front of his saddle. His visor was raised as he surveyed the small town before him and clenched his teeth. It never got any easier. Dark shadows moved silently through the pale moonlight and darted into the buildings that faced the street. He clicked his tongue and gently tapped his steed's metal haunches with his heels. He sighed as he sat up straight and the robot horse slowly walked forward and down the dirt road toward the center of the town.

He could hear the screams and shrill shrieks begin, emanating from the houses and stores on either side of him as he rode down the center of the street. "Ayúdeme por favor!" they cried into the night. "El dios ahorra a mi familia!"

The fallen Cyber-Knight remained stoic as he marched through town, watching the carnage with a sort of reluctant satisfaction.

A large wolf crossed the street in front of him with its teeth crimson and shining. After casting a brief sideways glance with its glowing eyes, it ignored the knight and moved on to its next kill.

"They aren't even worried about you attacking them," an American voice said from behind. "I have to say, that is really something."

The Cyber-Knight tugged the reins to stop his mount and turned his shoulders to face the man addressing him.

"It's not really in their nature to do that," the man marveled aloud as he casually surveyed the scene, nodding to himself.

The man stood and stared up at the rider with cold, gray eyes. The knight grunted and lowered his visor before looking away. "Not really in your nature, you mean." He turned his horse to leave.

The creature of the night held up his hand. "Don't leave quite yet, Sir Jude. I have a new mission for you."

Sir Jude sees himself as a tragic hero, a living martyr for the cause of justice and light in an unholy and unforgiving world. If times are desperate, his measures are far more so. A crusader from his earliest days, Sir Jude has always sought to rid the world of the ever-increasing vampire threat found in Mexico. How he fell from his station as a demon-fighting paladin to a willing servant of a Master Vampire is a tale for the ages.

The most important consideration in trying to understand Sir Jude's conversion is the realization that he does not see it as a conversion at all. Sir Jude spent his entire youth trying to fight back the demon hordes from across the Rio Grande and appealing to his brethren for help. He called for an army of knights to be gathered and drive through the Vampire Kingdoms, straight to their hearts to destroy them all. Always outspoken and overbearing, few took his cries for such a crusade seriously. Everyone knew that the vampire threat was a serious one. Few knights denied the severity of the situation, but other forces in the world precluded such action. The siege on Tolkeen turned the heads of many Cyber-Knights across the continent, and the monster kingdom of Calgary took priority afterward. Even with Lord Coake's support for Cyber-Knights choosing to travel to the Southwest and beyond, Sir Jude felt betrayed and abandoned by his brethren.

Soon, Sir Jude's quest became an obsession. He became a knight of renowned commitment and zeal, ceasing his one-man war only to ask other Cyber-Knights and heroes to turn from their "meaningless quarrels and meditations" elsewhere in North America and to face the only *real* threat that existed, the vampires of Mexico. He managed to raise small armies of hundreds of would-be vampire slayers, but time and time again, saw many of his fellow knights and other companions perish on his frequent sorties across the Pecos Empire and into Mexico. Their deaths only fueled his hatred for the undead and for the Cyber-Knight organization who ignored the danger.

Finally convinced that he could not possibly draw the selfish and cowardly Cyber-Knights of his order to his noble cause, he made a drastic decision. Sir Jude tracked a party of vampires in northern Mexico, following the pack of giant wolves as they swept northward for a night of feeding. As they entered a small village, they fell upon its inhabitants. Sir Jude rode into town and while sitting atop his robot horse, watched the carnage, but did nothing. He became a watcher, a chronicler. Night after night he rode amongst the undead and watched them ravage the innocent townsfolk. Often warriors, adventurers, and even other Cyber-Knights would come to the aid of the victims, but Sir Jude would engage only those who dared to attack him or question his honor.

That quickly changed, however, to Sir Jude becoming a protector of the undead. Those who opposed the vampires were slain by Sir Jude's Psi-Sword, or defeated and made to watch

until sunrise and then released to tell other Cyber-Knights and people what they had witnessed.

You see, Sir Jude had made a choice, to force the hand of the Cyber-Knights. To make them get involved, helping the vampires turn the world red with blood from Mexico to Colorado, and with the help of a Cyber-Knight. Then, he reckons, the knights will be forced to take action. He would force other Cyber-Knights to leave their personal crusades and come to fight the real war. If that meant he had to become a villain, a traitor to draw them into the war against the undead, so be it. It was worth the price.

When General Xavier Stuart heard about a famous, heroic Cyber-Knight fighting on the side of the undead, he had to see it for himself. After meeting Sir Jude, he had convinced the knight to join his army and help him in his quest for dominion over North America. Sir Jude agreed. When the vampire asked why, Sir Jude told him because he had come to realize that vampires had actually brought peace to Southern Mexico and he wanted to see the same thing for the rest of the continent. Xavier bought it hook, line and sinker, and figured even a crazy Cyber-Knight and his associates would make a fine addition to his campaign of conquest. Meanwhile, to Sir Jude's thinking, the enslavement and slaughter of men and D-Bees in Mexico would never draw the wrath of the Cyber-Knight fellowship, because they were too far away and easily forgotten. However, if the vampire pestilence was brought to their doorstep, the Cyber-Knights and other heroes would be forced to address the danger and join the fray to stop the spread of vampires in their own homeland, and motivate them to build an army to purge the menace in Mexico. It was the only "noble and civilized thing to do," he reasoned. Force the hand and liberate a nation.

Sir Jude realizes he is being used by Xavier and doesn't trust him in the least. He continues to work with relative autonomy with the support of the Fort Tombstone vampires. He leads the Black Swords in the hopes that the atrocities in which they participate will ultimately draw Lord Coake's eyes to the South, where he will lead a crusade against the unholy terrors from here to southern Mexico. This, as he sees it, is the end that justifies the means. It's crazy, to be sure, but it might just work. Certainly, the Cyber-Knights will ride to the aid of their allies in Arzno. Meanwhile, Sir Jude hopes the escalation in violence by his Black Swords will prepare the heroes of Arzno and alert them to the menace at Fort Tombstone. Should they perish, they die heroes in a greater cause.

Sir Jude Stats

Real Name: Jude Acedelma II.

Race: Human.

Alignment: Aberrant (was Scrupulous). Sir Jude's actions are in many ways the epitome of dedication and commitment to a cause that is just and righteous, but his blind devotion to his quest to the exclusion of all else has twisted his own definition of morality. He can no longer see right from wrong, and is an insane monster willing to sacrifice anyone for his quest to battle the Vampire Kingdoms.

Attributes: I.Q. 11, M.E. 19, M.A. 21, P.S. 22, P.P. 13, P.E. 18, P.B. 8, Spd 18.

Height: 6 feet (1.8 m); **Weight:** 180 lbs (81 kg). **Age:** 41.

Hit Points: 41; **S.D.C.:** 85.

P.P.E.: 20; **I.S.P.:** 40.

Experience Level: 8th level Crusader Cyber-Knight.

Description: To see Sir Jude on the street in plain clothes is hardly a memorable experience. He is of average height and build, with collar-length blonde hair and brown eyes over a flat nose and chin; altogether a rather plain-looking man. There is something in his countenance, however, that is chilling to the soul. While once a jovial and spirited man who enjoyed sport and music and all manner of diversion, he is now sullen and stone-faced. He never smiles or shows any emotion whatsoever. He has the look of a man who is lost within himself. In many regards he is as much one of the “living dead” as the monsters he abhors.

Disposition: Sir Jude does everything in his life with a fervor that most people have trouble even beginning to comprehend. The quest and the sacrifices he has made have torn at his heart and mind for years and have finally driven him mad. He is now left with nothing but an icy resolve to bring about a war against the Vampire Kingdoms of Mexico and liberate the people of that country. To that task he is willing to sacrifice anything and anyone. **Note:** Because he does hate vampires with all his soul, he will do nothing to directly protect or rescue Xavier, and he will take a back seat in the siege on Arzno once the battle is waged. He wants to see heroes angered and motivated to the point of carrying the battle into Mexico, not see them destroyed.

Mega-Damage via Cyber-Armor: A.R. 17.

Cyber-Armor M.D.C. by Location:

Shoulders (2) – 14 each

Back Shoulder Blades (2) – 20 each

Forearms (2) – 15 each

Thighs/Upper Legs (2) – 20 each

Chest Plate (Main Body) – 74

Skills of Note:

O.C.C. Skills: Language: American (98%), Language: Dragonese/Elven (98%), Language: Euro (98%), Language: Spanish (98%), Literacy: American (85%), Anthropology (80%), Body Building, Climbing (90%/80%), Gymnastics (Sense of Balance 76%, Work Parallel Bars and Rings 86%, Climb Rope 79%, Back Flip 89%, Prowl 30%), Horsemanship: Cyber-Knight (91%/71%), Land Navigation (76%), Lore: Demons & Monsters (85%), Paramedic (85%), and Swimming (95%).

Espionage: Detect Ambush (70%), Intelligence (65%), Tracking (65%), and Wilderness Survival (70%).

Other Assorted O.C.C. Related Skills: Athletics (General), Fencing, Forced March, Literacy: Spanish (75%), Mathematics: Basic (80%), Pilot: Hover Craft (Ground, 75%), Sensory Equipment (55%), Electronic Countermeasures (40%), and Radio: Basic (55%).

Secondary Skills: Cook (70%), Horsemanship: Exotic (65%/55%), Pilot: Automobile (74%), Play Musical Instrument: Spanish Guitar (70%), Sing (70%), Spelunking (70%), Dowsing (35%), and Identify Plants & Fruit (40%).

Weapon Proficiencies: W.P. Archery, W.P. Knife, W.P. Shield, W.P. Sword, W.P. Energy Pistol, W.P. Energy Rifle, and W.P. Rifles at 8th level of experience, and W.P. Axe, W.P. Quick Draw, and W.P. Handguns at 4th level of experience.

Special Abilities: All standard Cyber-Knight abilities, including creating two Psi-Swords (3D6 M.D. each). Sir Jude also has an uncanny resistance to Horror Factor in general and is immune to the Horror Factor of any Master, Secondary, or Wild vampire (bonuses included below).

Psionics: Major psychic, requires a 12 to save vs psionics. Summon Psi-Sword (no I.S.P. cost), Create Psi-Shield (15), and Meditation (0). Sir Jude has no other psionic abilities.

Magic Knowledge: None, but is fully versed in the properties and abilities of vampires and many other supernatural creatures through lore and personal experience.

Combat Training: Hand to Hand: Martial Arts, Fencing, and Cyber-Knight Zen Combat.

Attacks Per Melee: Seven.

Bonuses: +4 to initiative, +2 to strike, +4 to parry and dodge, +5 to pull punch, +6 to roll with punch/fall/impact, +1 to entangle, +4 to disarm, and +6 to damage. 65% trust/intimidate, +2 to save vs psionics/insanity, +6 to save vs Horror Factor, and +3 to Perception Rolls. Body flip/throw, all hand strikes, all foot strikes including leap kick, critical strike on an unmodified roll of 18, 19, or 20, all holds, back flip, back flip escape, +1 to strike and parry with a sword or dagger, and +1D6 damage with a sword.

Cyber-Knight Zen Combat Modifiers: W.P. Paired Weapons, W.P. Shield, combat acrobatics, basic combat awareness, +4 to automatic dodge against tech, cloud sensors, and advanced combat awareness.

Other Modifiers: Weapons of Note: Most of Sir Jude's weapon choices stem from his history as a vampire hunter. In those days, he favored wooden lances and arrows, with his Psi-Swords for hand-to-hand combat. Since his fall, he has mostly taken up the modern equivalents of those ancient weapons, and a few others for good measure.

Vibro-Lance: Mega-Damage: 3D6+6 when on horseback. Add 3D6 damage for a charge (counts as two attacks, see Horsemanship: Cyber-Knight skill for details and other bonuses). Length: 13 feet (4 m). Note: This weapon can only reasonably be used from horseback.

Compound Bow: Mega-Damage: Varies with arrow type. Heavy explosive (2D6 M.D.) are typical. Still carries a complement of wooden arrows for hunting and enemy vampires (2D6 S.D.C./Hit Points). Rate of Fire: 6 by W.P. Archery, 8th level. Range: 860 feet (262 m).

WI-AL18 Assault Laser Rifle: Mega-Damage: 2D6+2 M.D. per single shot, or 6D6+3 per simultaneous triple pulse. Rate of Fire: Each single or triple pulse blast counts as one melee attack. Range: 1,600 feet (488 m). Bonus: +1 to strike. Payload: 21 single shots per standard E-Clip.

Extra Ammo: 24 heavy explosive arrows, 36 wooden arrows, and 12 standard E-Clips.

Body Armor: When expecting trouble (which is most of the time), Sir Jude wears traditional-looking, heavy environmental, ceramic and composite armor. The armor is matted white and gray, and looks strikingly like bone, although it has no other obvious skeletal features. M.D.C.: Main Body: 120, Arms: 35 each, Legs: 55 each, and Head/Helmet: 50 M.D.C. Penalties: -10% to climb, -20% to prowl, swim, acrobatics, and similar physical skills/performances. When relaxing or in

need of freer movement he wears a suit of lightweight black armor with 35 M.D.C. for the main body, 25 for the helmet and 10 for each of the arms and legs. The lightweight armor has no encumbrance penalties and is non-environmental.

Other Equipment: A gas mask and air filter for use with his light armor, high-powered binoculars, a large flashlight, 200 feet (61.0 m) of high-strength nylon cord, three pairs of handcuffs, a survival knife, a portable fishing rod with half a dozen types of lures and hooks, salt and spices for cooking and preservation of food, a well-stocked first aid kit, two RMK Robot Medical Kits, and an IRMSS Internal Robot Medical Surgeon System in addition to a large supply of high-quality camping gear. Sir Jude travels heavy, with the load borne by his robotic steed.

Vehicle: An obviously-robotic war horse named Troy. Has 350 Main Body M.D.C., runs 75 mph (120 km) and can leap 15 feet (4.6 m) high and 40 feet (12.2 m) lengthwise with a running start. See page 199 of *Rifts® World Book 14: New West* for full details.

Cybernetics: Cyber-Armor only.

Sir Lunais the Brute

Rahu-Man Knight and Scholar

Some rise by sin, and some by virtue fall.

– William Shakespeare, "Measure for Measure," Act 2, scene 1

Sir Lunais was among the greatest champions of the North, dedicated to defending the people of the world from the horrors of the Calgary Rift. Celebrated for his fearlessness in combat, his name was commonly spoken at court among knights and well known by the villagers and commoners of the region. Known as "The Brute" to many, his ferocity in battle made even the mention of his name a terror to the demons of the Monster Kingdom. His mercy, compassion, and wisdom were equally well-known. Perhaps above all else, he was known for his loyalty to the fellowship of Cyber-Knights. Even when a fellow giant, Burkha the Magnificent of Freehold, summoned the hero to help defend Tolkeen, the steadfast Sir Lunais chose to follow the will of Lord Coake and stand his ground in the wastes around the Calgary ruins.

Near the end of the Coalition's siege on Tolkeen, a phantom from Lunais' past returned to haunt him and forever alter the course of his life. *Sir Jude*, just beginning to be shrouded in rumor and controversy, came to Sir Lunais to ask for his aid in his renewed quest against the vampires in the South. When the giant was about to reject any notion to join in Jude's service to the vampires, regardless of the purpose, Sir Jude enacted the blood oath that the two had sworn years before. Sir Lunais, the Brute, was left with no option. Bound by his oath to come to his blood brother's call, the two immediately left the cold North for the stony deserts of Arizona.

Cyber-Knights and heroes may try to comprehend Lunais' choice, but few can fathom it. Even the hard-headed and honor-obsessed Crusaders who first established the tradition of the Blood Oath find it hard to justify loyalty to the point of abandoning the light for such an evil purpose. Meanwhile, stories

continue to travel from the Southwest of a giant knight amongst the Black Swords who can be no other but the noble Sir Lunais.

Sir Jude presented Sir Lunais a situation that offered only one possible and regrettable course of action. He tries to use his friendship and influence with Sir Jude to stem the bloodshed where he can and he, personally, tries to avoid killing women and children, and to keep the other knights from such dishonorable acts. He takes little action to attempt to save innocents from the vampires, however, aside from assuring that they will not be



turned into the undead; he will not allow their victims to be added to Xavier's legions. He mourns them all and hopes that their deaths will serve a greater purpose.

Ironically, Sir Lunais is the only one of the fallen knights to sincerely believe that the extreme actions they have all chosen to take (for one reason or another) will actually benefit the people of the Southwest and Mexico in the end. He, himself, had no idea how widespread and serious the vampire infestation is, and believes that only a great crusade led by Lord Coake can rid the world of their evil. He believes that the great Cyber-Knight leader will eventually see the seriousness of their plight, just as Sir Jude plans, and take action. Therein lies his last hope, that he might find redemption in the destruction of the vampires and find some quiet corner of the Megaverse to live out the rest of his life where nobody knows who he is or the pain he caused.

Sir Lunais the Brute Stats

Real Name: Unknown to all but close family (and Sir Jude). On Sir Lunais' home world, the revealing of one's True Name is a deeply personal and potentially dangerous act, as it carries with it element of the individual's being and can be used for evil purposes by wicked practitioners of magic.

Race: Four-armed giant (Rahu-Man).

Alignment: Aberrant (was Principled).

Attributes: I.Q. 20, M.E. 18, M.A. 15, P.S. 35 (Supernatural), P.P. 12, P.E. 21 (Supernatural), P.B. 12, Spd 15.

Height: 14 feet (4.3 m); **Weight:** 455 lbs (205 kg). **Age:** 212.

M.D.C.: 200

Horror Factor: 10

P.P.E.: 48; **I.S.P.:** 126.

Experience Level: 7th level Champion Cyber-Knight.

Description: Sir Lunais is a sight to behold. Even on a world with as many strange beings as has Rifts Earth, this race of giant is rare and terrifying. The Brute is a fourteen foot (4.3 m) pillar of muscle and power. His four arms and giant size make him look even more alien than the average D-Bee, despite his otherwise human appearance. When going into battle, armorless, he seems to be some sort of immortal, invincible demigod. Yet in spite of his awesome visage, there are warm, kind eyes under his wild head of long, jet-black hair. His four hands are as likely to be holding books as weapons, and he never raises his voice.

Disposition: Sir Lunais, or "the Brute" as he is more often known, is honorable to a fault. It is his dedication to his personal honor and the Blood Oath he took to Sir Jude that has led him from the path of a Cyber-Knight famous for his compassion and mercy, to become one of the most despised villains in the Southwest. The most tragic part about Sir Lunais is that he is the only member of the Black Swords who has actually deluded himself into believing that the methods adopted by Sir Jude are justified; even their leader doesn't have the fervor that the once-noble giant does.

Outside of the atrocities "necessary" for this quest, Sir Lunais is a kind and gentle soul. He is an avid scholar and versed in virtually all languages and lore that anyone could hope to learn. His greatest hope is that someday soon the Cyber-Knights will turn their might toward the Rio Grande and ride through the corrupted lands, freeing the humans held

in terror throughout the Southwest and into the Vampire Kingdoms. It is a crusade he'd like to join in the hopes of making restitution for the suffering he's allowing to happen now.

Mega-Damage via Cyber-Armor: A.R. 17.

M.D.C. by Location: With Sir Lunais' large size, the base Mega-Damage of his Cyber-Armor is approximately 50% greater than the armor of an equivalently experienced human. The living armor grows and recovers at the normal rate.

Shoulders (2) – 16 each

Back Shoulder Blades (2) – 27 each

Forearms (4) – 19 each

Thighs/Upper Legs (2) – 27 each

Chest Plate (Main Body) – 90 M.D.C.

Skills of Note:

R.C.C. Skills: Speak Dragonese/Elven, Faerie, and Gobbley (98%), Literacy: Dragonese/Elven, Faerie, and Gobbley (86%), and Mathematics: Basic (98%).

O.C.C. Skills: Literacy: American (86%), Language: American, Canadian, and Euro (98%), Lore: Demons & Monsters (91%), Anthropology (71%), Paramedic (91%), Land Navigation (78%), Horsemanship: Cyber-Knight (94%/74%), Climbing (98%/93%), Body Building, Gymnastics (Sense of Balance 91%, Work Parallel Bars and Rings 89%, Climb Rope 93%, Back Flip 98%, Prowl 21%), Swimming (96%).

Technical: History (81%), Law (66%), Language: Spanish (66%), Literacy: Spanish (46%), Literacy: Euro (71%), Lore: Magic (76%), Lore: Religion (81%), and Writing (66%).

Other Assorted O.C.C. Related Skills: Athletics (General), Wrestling, Astronomy (51%), Mathematics: Advanced (71%), and Wilderness Survival (71%).

Secondary Skills: Cooking (71%), Fishing (76%), Pilot: Hover Craft (86%), Pilot: Truck (70%), Radio: Basic (86%), and Read Sensory Equipment (66%).

Weapon Proficiencies: W.P. Blunt, W.P. Chain, W.P. Pole Arm, W.P. Shield, W.P. Staff, W.P. Sword, W.P. Energy Rifle, and W.P. Heavy M.D. Weapons at 7th level of experience. W.P. Spear, W.P. Rifles, and W.P. Military Weapons at 3rd level of experience.

Special Abilities: Supernatural Strength and Endurance, and natural M.D.C. in addition to the obvious benefit of having four arms. All skill and combat bonuses and penalties from the extra limbs, great size, and outlook on life are included with the relevant stats.

Psionics: Major psychic, requires a 12 to save vs psionics. In addition to Cyber-Knight powers, Sir Lunais has psionic powers like all members of his race. Summon Psi-Sword (no I.S.P. cost), Create Psi-Shield (15), Meditation (0), Intuitive Combat (10), Mind Block (4), Object Read (6), Presence Sense (4), Remote Viewing (10), See Aura (6), Sense Evil (2), Sixth Sense (2), Speed Reading (2), Telepathy (4), and Total Recall (2).

Magic Knowledge: Lore only.

Combat Training: Hand to Hand: Martial Arts, Wrestling, and Cyber-Knight Zen Combat.

Attacks Per Melee: 10

Bonuses: +6 to initiative, +3 to strike, +8 to parry, +4 to dodge,

+9 to pull punch, +8 to roll with punch/fall/impact, +1 to entangle, +4 to disarm, +6% to all skills (already included), +2 to save vs psionics/insanity, +2 to save vs possession, +12% to save vs coma/death, +3 to save vs poison/magic, +5 to save vs Horror Factor, and +3 to Perception Rolls.

Cyber-Knight Zen Combat Modifiers: W.P. Paired Weapons, W.P. Shield, combat acrobatics, basic combat awareness, +4 to automatic dodge against tech, and cloud sensors.

Other Combat Info: Body flip/throw, all hand strikes, all foot strikes including leap kick, critical strike on an unmodified roll of 18, 19, or 20, all holds, body block/tackle, and pin/incapacitate on a roll of 18, 19, or 20. Inflicts 6D6 S.D.C. (plus damage bonus listed above) on a restrained punch, 4D6 M.D. on a full-strength punch, and 1D4x10 M.D. on a power punch (counts as two attacks).

Weapons of Note: The Brute much prefers hand to hand combat over the use of long-range weapons, but is lethal with both. Favorite weapons include large pole arms and spears for hand to hand, and rail guns in long-range combat.

Magic Halberds (2): These weapons were crafted on another world for Sir Lunais' use. Normally, these combination pole arm/axes are two-handed weapons, but the giant easily wields each of them one-handed. Mega-Damage: 4D6 M.D. each, +6 damage when mounted. Add 3D6 damage for a charge (counts as two attacks, see Horsemanship: Cyber-Knight skill for details and other bonuses). Length: 9 feet (2.7 m). Bonuses and Magical Properties: +2 strike and parry due to superior balance. The blades never dull, are indestructible, and do double damage to demons. Each is worth hundreds of thousands of credits at least.

Magic Javelins (6): These are also magic weapons made on another world by a powerful alchemist. Mega-Damage: 2D4 M.D. each, and are typically thrown. Length: 7 feet (2.1 m). Rate of Fire: 9 by W.P. Targeting, 7th level. (The Brute's extra arms add two attacks to the normal rate.) Range: Due to Sir Lunais' Supernatural Strength, he can throw the javelins an amazing 750 feet (229 m). Bonuses and Magical Properties: Excellent balance, indestructible, and can be mentally returned to their enchanted quiver after striking a target. As wooden weapons, they can do the normal additional damage to vampires and other creatures vulnerable to wood.

C-40R Coalition SAMAS Rail Gun: Mega-Damage: 1D4x10 M.D. for a burst, or 1D4 M.D. per single shot. Rate of Fire: Each burst or single shot counts as one melee attack. Range: 4,000 feet (1,219 m). Payload: 400 round belt (good for 10 bursts). This weapon is extremely heavy, with the gun, power pack, and ammo belt totaling over 180 lbs (81 kg), but manageable thanks to the Brute's Supernatural Strength.

Extra Ammo: Normally none, but may carry an extra belt or two of rail gun ammunition into battle, or an extra heavy energy rifle and appropriate ammunition.

Body Armor: Between his own natural M.D.C. and the addition of Cyber-Armor, Sir Lunais rarely needs additional body armor. When he does, it can be difficult to come by due to his large size. Armor made from the M.D.C. hide of some creature will generally have around 100 M.D.C., possibly less depending on the beast.

Other Equipment: Standard for a Cyber-Knight, including two weeks' worth of rations (a lot for the giant Lunais). Most no-

tably, Sir Lunais is never without at least half a dozen books and his own personal journals and written histories. He carries dog-eared copies of *Traversing Our Modern World* by Erin Tarn and *Worlds Within Worlds* by Victor Lazlo, both in giant print, but his most prized possession is a partial copy of *Julius Caesar* by Shakespeare. He has only the first two-thirds of a human-sized volume (the rest was irreparably damaged when he found it) and has read it dozens of times, many times penning his own endings, or essays about the potential outcome of the story and the intellectual joy of not knowing. There are few things on Rifts Earth as amusing as watching this giant crouch over the relatively tiny paperback pages, excitedly turning the pages that he knows virtually by heart.

Vehicle: Sir Lunais' size makes it impossible to ride a normal horse and difficult to pilot most vehicles, but he can pilot many large trucks and hover vehicles. The Brute has a Fury Beetle that has served as his mount since his days adventuring in Calgary which he can ride using his Horsemanship: Cyber-Knight skill at no penalty. The mount, named Bucephalus, has a Main Body M.D.C. of 650 and a maximum speed of 150 (approximately 100 mph/160 km). Maximum speed can be maintained for 1D6x10 minutes at a time and can run without exhaustion for 24 hours. Full stats and details on the Fury Beetle can be found in **Rifts® World Book 20: Canada**, page 153-154.

Cybernetics: Cyber-Armor only.

Sir Trey Risharde

Mangled Body and Soul

Young Trey Risharde never knew love, compassion, or belonging. His mother died giving birth to him, a start in a life that would see little but tragedy and pain. Trey Risharde was reared in a nameless village somewhere in the pre-Rifts state of West Virginia. His entire world consisted of the thick woods surrounding his family's cabin where he lived with his four older brothers, a sister, and an abusive father who took the pain of losing his wife out on his youngest son.

Born with scars, they were made far worse through constant abuse by the rest of his family. Trey was born with deformities in his spine and right arm, severely limiting his mobility and usefulness in a world where physical labor was the only means of providing any of life's necessities. His sister took on the role that her mother had played, cooking and cleaning for the men while they all worked at trapping, hunting, and cutting timber. Trey, unable to help in these more demanding pursuits, was left behind to help his sister with housework. Combined with the constant abuse and the humiliation of being left out of "man's work," young Trey turned into a bitter child who resented his family.

It was when Trey was 17 years old that his life changed. He was bringing in water from the well when a seek and destroy squad of marauding robots laid waste to his village and killed his entire family. Trey watched the destruction without emotion, almost happy that they got what they deserved. After the robots moved on, Trey hid among the ruins, living on stored food until



an adventurer happened by. He was a Cyber-Knight, a true villain named *Sir Edward* who took the lad under his wing. The aging Cyber-Knight taught Trey that the only true freedom was power. Under the tutelage of Sir Edward he soon learned what power was. Sir Edward saw to it that his pupil's spine and arm were bionically repaired, despite the negative effects it had on his emerging psionic abilities. After two years of harsh discipline and training, the young Trey summoned his Psi-Sword and was knighted by his mentor. The two parted ways and have never seen anything of each other since, although both are aware of the other's movements through their ever-growing reputations as blackguards.

After several years of villainy throughout the Midwest, the call went out for mercs to serve Tolkeen against the Coalition invasion. Not caring about the great city's troubles, Sir Risharde took the opportunity provided by the war to lead a troop of bandits to raid the camps of both warring factions and looting of a number of small towns. After the Tolkeen war ended, Sir Risharde led his band into Colorado, where they preyed on trade caravans and other bandits who ran through the region. It was in this capacity that he first heard of Sir Jude and his peculiar turn from the fellowship. With two evil knights of such renown in such proximity, a meeting was inevitable.

Sir Risharde was immediately invited into the fold. By Sir Jude's reasoning, having such a disreputable knight in his band would draw more attention to the Black Swords and win the attention of Lord Coake and, hopefully, other Cyber-Knights.

Sir Risharde simply delights in the chance to cause such unparalleled pain and suffering upon the poor and innocent popu-

lace. He also likes the promise of position and power that General Xavier Stuart has promised him. This rogue has no higher agenda. He is evil and is happy to serve the vampires.

Sir Trey Risharde Stats

Real Name: Trey Risharde.

Race: Human.

Alignment: Diabolic evil. Sir Risharde hates all the world and seeks to bring an end to all that is good and beautiful.

Attributes: I.Q. 13, M.E. 16, M.A. 14, P.S. 12, P.P. 11, P.E. 19, P.B. 6, Spd 24. Sir Risharde's left arm has a Bionic P.S. of 20. Also see the bonuses provided by Sir Risharde's armor.

Height: 5 feet, 7 inches (1.7 m). **Weight:** 170 lbs (77 kg). **Age:** 26.

Hit Points: 54. **S.D.C.:** 56.

P.P.E.: 13. **I.S.P.:** 34.

Experience Level: 8th level Despoiler Cyber-Knight.

Description: Sir Trey Risharde is a visibly twisted and evil man who wears a permanent evil scowl to complement his black clothing and bone-like armor. His hair and eyes are dark brown and he has obvious physical reminders of childhood abuse. He has a crooked nose and a large scar from his left ear to his forehead over his left eye, plus another large scar on his chin that can't be hidden by his thin black beard. If it wasn't for his medieval-style armor, it would be hard to identify him as a Cyber-Knight due to his dark appearance, demeanor, and cybernetics. The mechanical augmentation on his right arm and shoulder, and up the entire length of his spine, is obviously mechanical and adds to his gruesome appearance. Otherwise, his short, stocky stature is not very imposing, but as it is, he is a terror to cross paths with, be it in peace or in battle.

Disposition: Sir Risharde has a heart full of poison and hate. He loathes the Cyber-Knights and their fellowship, and despises all peace and beauty. He longs only to bring pain to the world.

Mega-Damage via Cyber-Armor: A.R. 17. Reduction in armor is compensated for by the bionic enhancement, netting approximately the same protection as would be provided by Cyber-Armor alone.

M.D.C. by Location:

Cyber Armor:

Shoulder (right) – 14 M.D.C.

Back Shoulder Blade (right) – 20 M.D.C.

Forearm (right) – 15 M.D.C.

Thighs/Upper Legs (2) – 20 each

Chest Plate (Main Body) – 69 M.D.C.

Bionic:

Shoulder/Upper Arm (left) – 50 M.D.C.

Forearm (left) – 25 M.D.C.

Forearm Flame Thrower/Vibro-Blade – 30 M.D.C.

Hand (left) – 12 M.D.C.

Skills of Note:

O.C.C. Skills: Literacy: American (85%), Language: American, Dragonese/Elven, Spanish, and Euro (96%), Lore:

Demons & Monsters (80%), Anthropology (70%), Paramedic (85%), Land Navigation (76%), Horsemanship: Cyber-Knight (91%/71%), Climbing (92%/92%), Body Building, Gymnastics (Sense of Balance 90%, Work Parallel Bars and Rings 86%, Climb Rope 89%, Back Flip 98%, Prowl 30%), and Swimming (95%).

Pilot and Pilot Related Skills: Pilot: Hover Craft (85%), Navigation (55%), Read Sensory Equipment (70%), and Weapon Systems (55%).

Technical Skills: Armorer (80%), Computer Operation (80%), and Computer Programming (60%).

Other Assorted O.C.C. Related Skills: Athletics (General), Basic Electronics (55%), Basic Mechanics (70%), Demolitions (81%), Mathematics: Advanced (80%), Recognize Weapon Quality (65%), and Running.

Secondary Skills: Pilot: Automobile (74%), Pilot: Truck (68%), Literacy: Spanish (65%), Optic Systems (65%), Radio: Basic (80%), and Radio: Scramblers (70%).

Weapon Proficiencies: W.P. Battle Axe, W.P. Knife, W.P. Shield, W.P. Sword, W.P. Energy Rifle, W.P. Grenade Launcher, W.P. Heavy M.D. Weapons, and W.P. Heavy Military Weapons, all at 8th level of experience. W.P. Handguns, W.P. Energy Pistol, and W.P. Military Flamethrowers at 4th level of experience.

Special Abilities: All standard Cyber-Knight abilities, including creating a Psi-Sword or Psi-Battle Axe (2D4 M.D. Normally 3D6, but halved due to the interference of bionics and cybernetics). Sir Risharde could summon two Psi-weapons, but is unable to summon one in his left hand due to his bionic augmentation.

Psionics: A major psychic, requires a 12 to save vs psionics. Summon Psi-Sword (no I.S.P. cost), Create Psi-Shield (15), Meditation (0), Alter Aura (2), Mind Block (4), and Resist Fatigue (4). Due to his bionic and cybernetic enhancements, Sir Risharde's psionics are all used at half damage, effect, and duration.

Magic Knowledge: None.

Combat Training: Hand to Hand: Martial Arts and Cyber-Knight Zen Combat.

Attacks Per Melee: Six.

Bonuses: +4 to initiative, +2 to strike, +4 to parry and dodge, +5 to pull punch, +6 to roll with punch/fall/impact, +1 to entangle, +4 to disarm, +5 to damage with his bionic left arm, +8% to save vs coma/death, +2 to save vs poison/magic, +3 to save vs Horror Factor, and +3 to Perception Rolls.

Cyber-Knight Zen Combat Modifiers: W.P. Paired Weapons, W.P. Shield, combat acrobatics, basic combat awareness, +4 to automatic dodge against tech, cloud sensors, and advanced combat awareness.

Other Combat Info: Body flip/throw, all hand strikes, all foot strikes including leap kick, critical strike on an unmodified roll of 18, 19, or 20, all holds, back flip, and back flip escape.

Weapons of Note: Sir Risharde is, and always has been a heavy-weapons nut. His sophisticated taste and appreciation for such weapon types leads him to select only the highest quality in weapons and equipment.

Vibro-Sword: Mega-Damage: 2D4. Length: 2 feet (0.6

m). A bionic enhancement housed in the left forearm; often used as a companion to his Psi-Sword.

Flame Thrower: Damage: 6D6 S.D.C. per melee. Mega-Damage is not possible. Rate of Fire: Single shot, burns for 1D4 melees. Range: 20 feet (6.1 m). Payload: 12 shots. The napalm-like chemical mixture is inserted into the bionic arm in a secure metal canister.

WI-GL4 Revolving Grenade Launcher: Mega-Damage: Varies with grenade type. Fragmentation does 4D6 M.D. to a 12 foot (3.6 m) blast area, and Armor Piercing does 1D4x10 M.D. to a blast area of 3 feet (0.9 m). Fragmentation is used against personnel while Armor Piercing is used versus hard targets such as vehicles and fortifications. Rate of Fire: Single shot. Range: 1,000 feet (305 m). Payload: 24 rounds. Once the initial load has been expended, Sir Risharde generally switches to an alternate weapon since reloading takes two full melee rounds.

JA-12 Laser Rifle: Mega-Damage: 4D6 M.D. per single shot, or 1D6x10+10 per multiple pulse burst (three simultaneous shots) for the laser. Grenades do 3D6 M.D. to a 10 foot (3.0 m) radius. Rate of Fire: Each single or triple laser blast counts as one melee attack. The grenade launcher is single shot only. Range: 4,000 feet (1,219 m) for the laser, or 2,000 feet (610 m) for the grenade launcher. Payload: 30 laser shots per long E-Clip (10 bursts). The attached energy canister holds an additional 30 shots for the laser. The grenade launcher uses a four shot pump-action magazine. Bonus: +1 strike on an Aimed, single shot from the laser.

Extra Ammo: Risharde always has a case of grenades for the WI-GL4 on him but generally only has an extra 12 Fragmentation and 12 Armor Piercing available during combat. He also carries another 8 rifle grenades and 10 long E-Clips.

Body Armor: While Sir Risharde does have some protection from his bionic enhancement, it is not enough to keep him from having to rely on armor for protection. Likewise, unlike most true 'Borgs, Sir Risharde still requires the environmental protection provided by environmental body armor (EBA). He shows the same discernment and taste in armor as he has in weapons, and wears a suit of captured CA-6EX Coalition armor provided by General Xavier and detailed in the same bone-white and gray colors as Sir Jude's armor. He has modified the Coalition exoskeleton to allow for his bionic left arm (uses Bionic M.D.C., no armor present). M.D.C.: Main Body: 200, Arm (right): 100, Arm (left): 87, Legs: 120 each, and Head/Helmet: 100 M.D.C. Penalties: -30% to prowl, -10% to swim, acrobatics, and similar physical skills/performances. No penalty to climb. Features: HUD Multi-Screen, Computer & Video Link, Optical Enhancements, Laser Distancer, Laser Targeting (+1 to strike), adds +8 P.S. to the right arm, +14 to Spd, +10 feet (3.0 m) to the length and height of leaps, and reduces the rate of fatigue by 50%. See page 102 of **Rifts® World Book 11: Coalition War Campaign™** for full details.

Other Equipment: Sir Risharde is provided whatever he needs through his relationship with the Black Swords, but tends to hoard vital equipment for his own use should things turn sour and he be forced to bail out. He keeps a three week supply of water and food rations as well as an extra pair of Vibro-Swords, two energy pistols, two JA-12 Laser Rifles, a Stake

Driver, a TW Wood Rail Gun, two cases of extra standard E-Clips (48 clips) and two cases of rifle grenades for the WI-GL4 (144 total grenades; one third plasma, one third fragmentation and one third armor piercing), and other basic gear secretly stored away in a hidden place at the town of Howard. **Note:** He also has a three week supply of water and food rations, an energy pistol and six long E-Clips in a compartment of his hovercycle. Risharde also carries a silver cross and half a dozen wooden stakes on his person in case he is ever forced to fight his way free from his vampire comrades.

Vehicle: The fallen knight can ride a horse, but Sir Risharde's love for heavy armor and all things mechanical makes it necessary to ride a robot horse or modern vehicle. He, personally, prefers hovercycles to all others, but in a pinch he'll use whatever he has to. He pilots an *NG-480 Turbo hovercycle* with all of the bells and whistles. It includes extra armor and a mini-missile pod launcher. Top speed is 185 mph (296 km) and the missile launcher has a payload of 12 mini-missiles (typically fragmentation, 5D6 M.D. to a 20 foot (6.1 m) radius). See page 61 of **Rifts® World Book 13: Lone Star** for further information.

Cybernetics: Cyber-Armor, plus a bionic spine, left shoulder, and the entire left arm and hand. The bionic forearm contains a flamethrower and Vibro-Sword as noted previously.

Sir John of Conrad

Even from his earliest days he felt inferior to other Cyber-Knights, particularly to his brother and father. Sir John is the younger son of Sir Donovan Leona, a well respected and powerful Courtier Knight. John and his brother, Pedro, followed in their father's footsteps and joined Sir Coake's brotherhood. Sir Donovan trained his older son, while John was trained by his friend and companion, Sir Antonio, thinking that it was improper for a knight to take on two apprentices at once.

Sir Pedro had early success while *Sir John's* efforts met with bad luck and failure. Sir John was a poor candidate for knighthood to begin with. He lacked the physical attributes, conviction and moral fiber necessary to be a Cyber-Knight. To make matters worse, Sir John felt abandoned and betrayed by his father, and blamed his tutelage under Sir Antonio for his own failings. Each of his brother's triumphs made him feel all the more worthless and incompetent. Before he knew it, Sir John was so eaten alive by envy, rage, and hatred for his brother Pedro that he was barely able to master the summoning of his Psi-Sword and complete his Cyber-Knight training.

Sir John could have become a noble knight, but he saw only his own inequities as insurmountable failures, and came to believe the other Cyber-Knights must laugh at him behind his back. He loved his father and brother, but felt he could never measure up to their stature and the jealousy continued to eat into his very soul.

While campaigning with his brother in the monster-filled deserts of Utah, the two Cyber-Knights were set upon by *Worm Wraiths*. Sir Pedro immediately and enthusiastically took the fight to the demonic raiders. Sir John hesitated. Sir Pedro fought hard to destroy most of the Worm Wraiths, but without the help

of his brother, he was overmatched and fell to the monsters. Meanwhile, Sir John stood by mute and helpless to do anything but watch as his brother was cut down by a volley of laser fire.

Shocked back to reality by seeing his brother fall, Sir John charged and dispatched the few remaining Worm Wraiths. Wracked with shame, sorrow and guilt, he fled, leaving his brother's remains among the dead carcasses of the monsters, and never looked back. A little while later, he found himself at the village of Conrad. The town had been set ablaze by the marauding Worm Wraiths, and it had been the flames that had lured him and Sir Pedro to the area to investigate. As he sat there mute and exhausted, a group of villagers rushed over to warn him about the Worm Wraiths. He calmed them down and told them that they had nothing to fear for he had already dispatched the last of the Wraiths. They misunderstood what he meant and they assumed he had killed them all single-handedly. He quickly became known as *Sir John of Conrad*, who vanquished a dozen Worm Wraiths and saved a village. Before he knew it, songs were sung about his deeds, and he was cheered by fellow Cyber-Knights and citizens throughout the New West. Somehow, Sir John never found the voice to correct the mistake, and though ashamed of himself, he basked in the glory. Fate had other plans.

Unknown to Sir John, his brother, Pedro, still lived. Shortly after the battle with the Worm Wraiths, a group of desert mutants recovered the body of Sir Pedro and put their magical and psionic abilities to work to heal his grievous wounds. Through their craft, they were able to restore him to life. When Sir Pedro was told no other human body had been found, he assumed his brother, John, was slain, and his body carried away by the surviving Worm Wraiths. Lost in grief and angry, Sir Pedro pledged he would rid the world of Worm Wraiths and rode into the prairies of the New West slaying Worm Wraiths wherever he found them – avenging the presumed death of his brother by their hands. Ironically, Pedro's one-man crusade would be attributed to Sir John. When word reached John, he had no idea who might be laying waste the demonic Worm Wraiths, but he gladly accepted the credit. The twisted young knight welcomed the praise and admiration of the people, never suspecting that his own brother was alive and the source of his new-found fame.

As is always the case with a foundation built upon lies and deception, the truth became known and the people turned on Sir John, sending him into hiding and Sir Pedro into a fury. The elder brother, now realizing he'd been left for dead and his deeds stolen by his sibling, vowed to bring Sir John before his father and the Cyber-Knights for judgment.

Wishing to escape such a fate, Sir John fled south, where he took to leading bandits and highwaymen. His reputation and honor forever destroyed, he took no issue with turning to banditry. Sir John hid his identity as a Cyber-Knight, going instead by the name of Antonio Johnson. He encountered Sir Jude and his band of villains after two years of bushwhacking and pillaging. Eager to increase his profits and strike out at the Cyber-Knights, he welcomed the opportunity to ride with Sir Jude and the vampires of Tombstone. If he were to be an outcast, he would destroy the family name, and maybe several Cyber-Knights in the process.

Sir John doesn't care about the vampires' cause, just the payoff. For him, that payoff is killing Cyber-Knights and other

heroes, ruining the family name (when it becomes known who he is and that he rides with vampires), and whatever wealth and power he can garner through his alliance with the undead.

More capable than he has ever been able to believe, himself, Sir John is a valuable asset to the Black Swords and General Xavier. His knowledge of the subtle and treacherous side of combat is very useful to both groups. He has devised many a winning strategy, acquired important information via intimidation and torture, and he is especially good at predicting how virtuous knights and heroes (all of whom he despises) will react to certain situations. The latter is easy, for he simply imagines how his noble brother or father would respond, and then devises a counter-strategy to defeat or, better yet, destroy them utterly. More than any of the other Black Swords, Sir John is likely to be found in the background, watching a battle from afar, directing and advising General Xavier Stuart or his Secondary Vampires and making deals in back alleys for himself. He dislikes engaging in open combat himself, but is adept at advising and coaching others. When he attacks an adversary, it is usually from the shadows, without warning and with loyal vampire henchmen at his side to do most of the dirty work. Deception, subterfuge, treachery and assassination are his favorite, personal, tactics. He typically keeps at least a pair of loyal vampire minions at his side, and can often be seen in the company of 4-6 Secondary Vampires (levels 3-6) or advising the leaders of platoons of undead or vampire minions.

Sir John is starting to become power hungry. He likes his position of respect and leadership among the vampires, and considers General Xavier Stuart to be his friend. Furthermore, when the Cyber-Knights come, he prays that his brother and father are among them, and that he gets the opportunity to watch them die. Perhaps even get in the killing blow himself. Although Sir John is, for the first time in his life, happy among the vampires, he is a self-serving opportunist who will be the first to *bug out* should the war seriously begin to turn against his undead allies. He has no loyalty to anybody but himself, and like most rats, worries only about his own skin.

Sir John of Conrad Stats

Real Name: Sir John Leona, also known as Antonio Johnson.

Race: Human. **Alignment:** Miscreant.

Attributes: I.Q. 11, M.E. 11, M.A. 7, P.S. 13, P.P. 10, P.E. 10, P.B. 9, Spd 11.

Height: 5 feet, 8 inches (1.7 m). **Weight:** 135 lbs (61 kg). **Age:** 25. **Hit Points:** 21. **S.D.C.:** 56. **P.P.E.:** 16; **I.S.P.:** 16.

Experience Level: 3rd level Cyber-Knight (Robber Knight).

Description: Sir John has dark hair, skin, and eyes, and is of obvious Hispanic descent. He is thin and carries himself more like a thief in the night or creature of darkness clinging to the shadows than a noble Cyber-Knight like his father and brother. His goatee and short-cropped hair, intended to make him look more regal, succeeds only in making him look mousey and sinister. Everything about Sir John, from his clothing to his body language, reveals his backstabbing nature and cowardice.

Disposition: Sir John is a weasel, bully, torturer, assassin, and all-around sorry excuse for a human being. He is a petty, bitter, and self-absorbed misanthrope who never takes responsi-

bility for his actions. He blames his father, his brother, the Cyber-Knights, fate and circumstance for everything he is and every vile thing he's done. The man can never be trusted to do anything except save his own skin. He cares nothing about anyone but himself. If ever there was a fallen Cyber-Knight who is the antithesis of what the Cyber-Knights stand for, it is Sir John of Conrad, liar, coward, thief and killer.

Mega-Damage via Cyber-Armor: A.R. 16.

M.D.C. by Location:

Shoulders (2) – 8 each

Back Shoulder Blades (2) – 15 each

Forearms (2) – 10 each

Thigh/Upper Legs (2) – 15 each

Chest Plate (main body) – 50 M.D.C.

Additional Armor: A concealed Naruni force field generator (160 M.D.C.; self-regenerating) with a Bandito Arms *Branaghan* M.D.C. overcoat (38 M.D.C.) on top of that.

Skills of Note:

O.C.C. Skills: Literacy: American (60%), Language: American, Dragonese/Elven, Spanish, and Euro (90%), Lore: Demons & Monsters (55%), Anthropology (45%), Paramedic (60%), Land Navigation (56%), Horsemanship: Cyber-Knight (76%/56%), Climbing (67%/57%), Body Building, Gymnastics (Sense of Balance 65%, Work Parallel Bars and Rings 71%, Climb Rope 79%, Back Flip 85%), and Swimming (70%). Espionage: Intelligence (35%), Detect Ambush (45%), Interrogation (35%), and Imitate Voices and Impersonation (41%/21%). Rogue: Concealment (28%), Find Contraband, Weapons, and Cybernetics (24%), Palming (30%), Prowl (45%), and Streetwise (28%). Other Assorted O.C.C. Related Skills: Athletics (Aerobic) and Mathematics: Basic (80%). Secondary Skills: Detect Concealment (35%), Literacy: Spanish (40%), Pilot: Automobile (64%), Pilot: Hover Craft (60%), Radio: Basic (55%), and Research (50%). Weapon Proficiencies: W.P. Blunt, W.P. Knife, W.P. Shield, W.P. Sword, W.P. Energy Pistol, W.P. Energy Rifle, and W.P. Handguns at 3rd level of experience.

Special Abilities: All standard Cyber-Knight abilities, including creating two Psi-Swords or Psi-Daggers (2D6 M.D. Each).

Vulnerabilities: Sir John suffers some skill penalties due to his low M.A., and his cowardice and lies sometimes work against him, especially when facing anybody who has been used or betrayed by him in the past.

Psionics: A Major Psychic, requires a 12 to save vs psionics. Summon Psi-Sword (no I.S.P. cost), Create Psi-Shield (15), and Meditation (0). Sir John has no other psionic abilities.

Magic Knowledge: None.

Combat Training: Hand to Hand: Martial Arts and Cyber-Knight Zen Combat.

Attacks Per Melee: Five (3rd level Cyber-Knight).

Bonuses: +4 to initiative, +2 to strike, +3 to parry and dodge, +6 to pull punch, +3 to disarm, +3 to roll with impact, +1 to save vs Horror Factor and +3 to Perception Rolls.

Cyber-Knight Zen Combat Modifiers: W.P. Paired Weapons, W.P. Shield, and combat acrobatics.

Weapons of Note: Sir John favors weapons that are easy to conceal and quick and silent to use. To this end, he typically

uses laser pistols and small blades. He likes the Wilk's laser rifles for their light weight, good balance, and accuracy, but would much rather do his damage through subterfuge (or better yet, get someone else to do it for him). In terms of concealment, nothing beats the Psi-Daggers he can make appear at will.

Vibro-Knives (2): Mega-Damage: 1D6 M.D. Sir John always has at least a pair of small Vibro-Blades concealed on his person.

Silver Daggers (2): He also has a pair of silver plated daggers (1D6 S.D.C./H.P. damage; double to vampires) and a silver cross he keeps around his neck, under his garments.

Wilk's 210 "Pocket Pistol": Mega-Damage: 1D6 M.D. Rate of Fire: Single shot only. Range: 400 feet (122 m). Payload: 3 shots. Recharged directly, does not use an E-Clip.

Wilk's 457 Laser Pulse Rifle: Mega-Damage: 3D6+2 M.D. per single shot, or 1D6x10 per multiple pulse burst (three simultaneous shots). Rate of Fire: Each single or triple laser blast counts as one melee attack. Range: 2,000 feet (610 m). Payload: 30 shots per long E-Clip. Bonus: +1 to strike on an Aimed shot.

Extra Ammo: 12 long E-Clips.

Body Armor: Sir John does not like to advertise the fact that he is (or was) a Cyber-Knight. Consequently, he wears average, everyday body armor and clothing. Among his favorite armors is his Naruni force field generator (160 M.D.C.) and the Bandito Arms Branaghan armor with overcoat, generally without the helmet. M.D.C.: Main Body: 38 (+28 with overcoat), Arms: 18 each (+8 with overcoat), Legs: 24 each (+12 with overcoat), and Head/Helmet: 40 M.D.C. Penalties: Light; -5% to climb, prowl, swim, acrobatics, and similar physical skills/performance when wearing the overcoat. This armor is non-environmental.

If going into battle with the Black Swords, or in need of environmental protection, Sir John wears a suit of Crusader armor with the same color patterns as Sir Jude's armor. The light armor offers sufficient protection to Sir John, who rarely gets involved in a general melee, but sits back and directs others or stays on the edge of the battle. M.D.C.: Main Body: 55, Arms: 20 each, Legs: 30 each, and Head/Helmet: 35 M.D.C. Penalties: None.

Other Equipment: Sir John carries a full complement of camping and survival gear, plus more than his share of food and water. He is well-prepared to slip away in the middle of the night if things get too rough, or if he starts catching too many dirty looks from the rest of the Black Swords. He also carries far more currency than the other Cyber-Knights in his party, totaling nearly a million in Coalition and Black Market credits, plus another 200,000 credits in precious metals, gems, and Black Market items.

Vehicle: Sometimes rides a horse, but also enjoys piloting his *NG-230 Prowler*. The hovercycle has a top speed of 190 mph (304 km), main body M.D.C. of 80 M.D., adds +5% to Sir John's piloting skill, and allows him to prowl at his skill proficiency while piloting it (40%). For full details, see pages 58-59 of *Rifts® World Book 13: Lone Star*.

Cybernetics: Cyber-Armor only.

Note: Sir Jude despises Sir John, but sees him as serving an important purpose in his plot to bring the Cyber-Knights to war against the vampires. After all, Sir John is reason enough to bring his famous father and valiant brother to the Southwest, and since they are knights of great influence, they are likely to bring others with them.

Lady Night Runner

Native American Traditionalist & Vampire Ally

Lady Night Runner is an interesting character within the Black Swords. She has no personal affiliation with Sir Jude and his marauding crew of miscreants, but in her own way, she is an ally of Xavier and the Fort Tombstone vampires.

Night Runner was raised in the Casper Preserve in Wyoming, constantly fighting back demons from the Black Hill Nexus. She was raised in the strictest Traditionalist fashion and has never felt comfortable with anything modern. In the summer of 102 P.A., Night Runner and her warrior party were being overrun by demons from a random Rift. After nearly an hour of combat, half of her companions lay dead amongst the piles of demon corpses. Still the evil creatures poured from the Rift. Had it not been for the timely arrival of a pair of Cyber-Knights, the monsters might have overwhelmed the valiant warriors and swept their village. By the time the Rift closed, nearly all of Night Runner's companions were dead or wounded, and one of the Cyber-Knights laid cold on the ground.

Night Runner was surprised to find that the surviving knight was a Native American, Sir Bending River, a descendent of Modern Indians who was raised at the Nimipu Preserve in Idaho. His companion was Lady Beth, a peer and friend for many years of adventure. Honored by the lady Cyber-Knight's sacrifice, Night Runner volunteered to take her place at his side. Such is how the Traditionalist was taken in and trained as a Cyber-Knight.

Night Runner's training was unusual. For one, her Traditionalist views made much of the normal training impossible. A difficult student, she refused so much as to hold an energy weapon or wear modern armor, much less receive Cyber-Armor. She had no love for the White Man or his technology and so had a great deal of difficulty in accepting the Cyber-Knight code to help all people regardless of race and background. In fighting demons and monsters, she excelled. She was zealous in her studies of strategies, tactics and combat against supernatural beings, and she also progressed in her Zen combat, delighting in destroying machines of war with her Spirit Bow. However, regardless of training, she has never been able to conjure a Psi-Sword or Psi-Shield, despite developing other psionic powers. It was only during her travels with Sir Bending River that she was eventually able to create a Psi-Tomahawk or Psi-Spear.

Psi-Sword aside, Night Runner was soon a fully trained and educated Cyber-Knight traveling the world with Sir Bending River. The male Cyber-Knight held with the great Circle of Life and that was something she greatly respected. Even though he had no totem, Night Runner enjoyed his company and their travels in the early days of their camaraderie. She saw the fringes of the Coalition States, visited Tolkeen and the Colorado Baronies, and many other places. At first, her travels filled her with awe,

but awe quickly turned to resentment and bitterness. Visits to “civilized” kingdoms only convinced Night Runner of the evils perpetrated by civilized people against the environment. They sickened her, and she felt dirty by her exposure to them.

It was at this point that Night Runner began to receive her “messages from the gods.” First in whispers, and then more clearly she heard the nameless voices instructing her. She became more withdrawn and secretive, until, in the middle of the night, she finally fled from Sir Bending River. Lady Night Runner wandered the wilderness, heeded the words of the voices, and sought out new challenges for her warrior skills.

After nearly a year of wandering and living off the land, she happened across a war party of Papago Indians hunting down vampires. Having always studied these deathless creatures with fascination, Lady Night Runner joined the party to observe. When they finally fell upon the vampires, the Cyber-Knight was shocked. She didn’t see evil monsters, but unique creatures of her own totem! The voices in her head applauded her recognition of kindred spirits and beckoned her to join them. She left the battle and followed the undead to their lair. Arriving after first light, she waited through the day until they awoke from their sleep the next night. She begged to be made one of them and marveled that they must be gods themselves, for they defied the great Circle of Life. They did not merely go from birth to death, but then also from rebirth to undeath ... truly as only *the blessed* could do.

The vampires, recognizing something unique in this woman, took her to meet with their master. Xavier Stuart immediately embraced his good fortune. Always keeping a keen eye open for unique opportunities, he discussed with Night Runner his plans. She saw wisdom and purity in the plan, and swore her allegiance to her “spirit brothers.” She would help them destroy the civilized world and bring about the advent of a new, more natural order. Again the voices in her head applauded her decision and cheered her good judgment and wisdom.

Ever since, Lady Night Runner has stood with General Xavier Stuart in his campaign for conquest, and he has (for now) kept his word not to attack the Indian tribes in the area. He has no intention to keep his promises to the lady knight, but for the time being he has no reason to betray her, as any attack on the Indian preserves is a long way off in his plans. When Sir Jude and his Black Swords were added to the mix, Lady Night Runner was assigned by Xavier to be a guide and tracker for the other fallen Cyber-Knights. She grudgingly accepted when he confided in her that he didn’t trust Sir Jude or the giant, and needed her to keep a watchful eye on them. She frequently heads off on her own, but is constantly encouraged by her voices to continue to serve her undead spirit brothers and tolerate the evil Cyber-Knights.

Lady Night Runner Stats

Real Name: Eamemeohe taa’eva.

Race: Human (Cheyenne Indian).

Alignment: Aberrant (was Anarchist). The voices in her head often encourage her to engage in acts of murder and evil, as well as point out things they observe and things she should be careful of.

Attributes: I.Q. 11, M.E. 7, M.A. 18, P.S. 19, P.P. 14, P.E. 19, P.B. 11, Spd 25.

Height: 5 feet, 8 inches (1.7 m). **Weight:** 110 lbs (49.5 kg).
Age: 27. **Hit Points:** 35. **S.D.C.:** 96. **P.P.E.:** 21. **I.S.P.:** 45.

Experience Level: 5th level Cyber-Knight.

Description: Night Runner isn’t a raving beauty, but is young and graceful with an earthy quality that many would call attractive. She wears the traditional garb of her people, consisting of animal hides and beaded charms and jewelry. Her black hair hangs to the middle of her back and is always braided with fetishes and symbolic beads. Her nearly-black eyes seem to have a fire lit deep within them, and her narrow jaw is always locked into a look of firm resolve. She exudes a sense of purpose and confidence despite her youth and extreme view of the world.

Disposition: Lady Night Runner is highly disturbed, but doesn’t realize it. Her multitude of ever-worsening mental conditions makes her actions and general personality increasingly withdrawn and private, with outbursts of violence and erratic behavior. Although she is disruptive to the rest of the group, she enjoys the company of others, even if she isn’t crazy about the people she is with. She despises the civilized people and the White Man in general. Technology and TW magic are both seen as abominations that destroy nature. She reveres vampires and sees them as harbingers to a new, better, more natural way of life, even if the undead are the lords and masters of humans. This outlook is due, in part, to her *Bat Totem*, which makes her secretive and disruptive to groups, and makes her see vampires as kindred spirits.

Insanities: Schizophrenic, borderline multiple personality disorder. (Or is it the voice of the Vampire Intelligence, disguised to sound like many and having fun manipulating a mentally ill and tortured soul?) Night Runner hears voices encouraging and justifying her most anti-social, anti-technology, violent and evil thoughts and tendencies. Also Delusion: believes that vampires are superior beings within (or above) the great Circle of Life, and Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder: constantly wipes and cleans her hands, particularly after partaking in the atrocities of the Black Swords and her vampire brethren.

Mega-Damage via Cyber-Armor: None. Due to her Traditionalist views, Lady Night Runner declined the standard mechanical augmentation.

Skills of Note:

O.C.C. Skills: Literacy: American (70%), Language: American, Dragonese/Elven, Spanish, and Euro (96%), Lore: Demons & Monsters (65%), Anthropology (55%), Paramedic (70%), Land Navigation (74%), Horsemanship: Cyber-Knight (82%, see Trick Riding), Climbing (77%/67%), Body Building, Gymnastics (Sense of Balance 75%, Work Parallel Bars and Rings 77%, Climb Rope 83%, Back Flip 95%), and Swimming (80%). Totem Skills (Bat): Detect Ambush (55%) and Intelligence (38%). Hunting and Wilderness-type Skills: Camouflage (45%), Prowl (57%), Sniper, Tracking (50%), and Wilderness Survival (60%). Technical Skills: Lore: Indians (50%), Lore: Magic (40%), and Lore: Religion (45%). Other Assorted O.C.C. Related Skills: Mathematics: Basic (65%), Trick Riding, and Running. Secondary Skills: Cooking (60%), Hunting, Preserve Food (45%), Sing (55%), Skin and Prepare Animal Hides (55%), and Track Animals (45%). Weapon Proficiencies: W.P. Archery, W.P. Blunt,

W.P. Knife, W.P. Spear, W.P. Tomahawk/W.P. Axe, W.P. Paired Weapons, W.P. Rifles, and W.P. Handguns at 5th level of experience. W.P. Chain and W.P. Targeting at 1st level of experience. **Note:** Lady Night Runner does not have W.P. Sword or W.P. Shield.

Special Abilities: Standard Cyber-Knight abilities, including the ability to create two Psi-Spears (2D6 M.D. each) or Psi-Tomahawks (2D6 M.D.). Lady Night Runner has *never* been able to summon a Psi-Sword or Psi-Shield.

Totem Abilities: Lady Night Runner is of the Bat Totem, which gives her the skills noted above. It also provides +4 to Spd attribute, +2 to initiative, and +1 to dodge. These bonuses are already included with the appropriate stats. It also means that Lady Night Runner is rarely surprised and all enemies prowl against her at -20% on their skill percentage.

Vulnerabilities: Night Runner suffers some skill penalties due to her low M.E.

Psionics: A Major Psychic, requires a 12 to save vs psionics. Summon Psi-Spear/Tomahawk (no I.S.P. cost), Meditation (0), Death Trance (1), Mind Block (4), Nightvision (4), See the Invisible (4), and Summon Inner Strength (4). Night Runner was a natural Minor Psychic before becoming a Cyber-Knight.

Magic Knowledge: Lore only. Lady Night Runner has begun looking into magic in an effort to find out what being is speaking to her mind.

Combat Training: Hand to Hand: Martial Arts and Cyber-Knight Zen Combat.

Attacks Per Melee: Six.

Bonuses: +6 to initiative, +2 to strike, +3 to parry, +4 to dodge, +5 to pull punch, +5 to roll with punch/fall/impact, +1 to entangle, +2 to disarm, +4 to damage, 50% to trust/intimidate, -1 to save vs psionics, -1 to save vs mind control, -2 to save vs illusions, -1 to save vs any battles of will, -1 to save vs insanity, -1 to save vs possession, +2 to save vs poison/magic, +8% to save vs coma/death, -1 to save vs Horror Factor, and +3 to Perception Rolls.

Cyber-Knight Zen Combat Modifiers: W.P. Paired Weapons, combat acrobatics, basic combat awareness, and +4 to automatic dodge against tech.

Magic Fetishes: Lady Night Runner has several magic items provided to her by Indian shamans.

Spirit Short Bow (Major Fetish): Mega-Damage: Varies with arrow type. Spirit arrows, conjured magically by the bow, do 4D6 M.D. against Mega-Damage opponents or 4D6 S.D.C. against mortal foes. Normal arrows may also be fired from the bow, typically doing 1D6 S.D.C. All damages are doubled against Alien Intelligences and their essence fragments. Rate of Fire: 5 by W.P. Archery, 5th level. Range: 880 feet (268 m).

Armor Fetish (Minor Fetish): Made from the shell of a turtle, this fetish provides Mega-Damage protection to the wearer. Mega-Damage: 45 M.D.C. Regenerates at a rate of 5 M.D.C. points per day.

Ear Fetish (Minor Fetish): Made from the ears of a bat, this fetish provides the user with sharp hearing and awareness, worn braided into her hair. Lady Night Runner is +1 to initiative, +1 to roll with impact, and all surprise attacks or attacks

from behind against the Cyber-Knight make her attackers -2 to strike. These bonuses have *not* been included above.

Tracking Fetish (Minor Fetish): A necklace made from the teeth and toes of a bat gives Lady Night Runner a +10% bonus to Tracking skills, either by sight or smell. This bonus has *not* been included in the given skill percentage above.

Weapons of Note: As a Native American Traditionalist, Lady Night Runner uses only the weaponry that existed prior to the White Man's invasion of the West. So, a six-shooter or bolt-action rifle is about as high-tech as it gets for this Cyber-Knight. That being said, Lady Night Runner heavily utilizes magical Indian fetishes and her Psi-Spears.

Stone War Club: Damage: 2D4+1 S.D.C. Length: 1.5 feet (0.5 m).

Hunting Rifle: Damage: 4D6 S.D.C. single shot. Rate of Fire: Single shot only. Range: 2,000 feet (610 m). Payload: 5 shot internal magazine.

Extra Ammo: Two dozen wooden arrows and a box of rifle shells (144 bullets).

Body Armor: When in need of extra protection, in addition to the Armor Fetish (detailed above), Lady Night Runner wears armor made from the skull and wings of a Black-Winged Monster-Man (see pages 106-107 of **Rifts® World Book 15: Spirit West**). The helm is carved from the monster's skull and provides 35 M.D.C. of protection, and portions of the wings form a type of cape or cloak that provides 60 M.D.C. of protection. The Traditionalist Cyber-Knight refuses to wear any type of modern armor, but may wear armor made from the hides of creatures such as Fury Beetles and dinosaurs.

Other Equipment: Standard for a Cyber-Knight, but with no technological gear of any type. Everything about Night Runner's gear is as it would have been at the turn of the 19th century, including clothes made of animal hide, skins used for bedding, etc.

Vehicle: Of all of the Black Swords, Lady Night Runner is by far the best rider. She rides a nameless Appaloosa pony, bareback, using only a simple rope bridle. She never pilots or rides in any modern vehicle.

Cybernetics: None.





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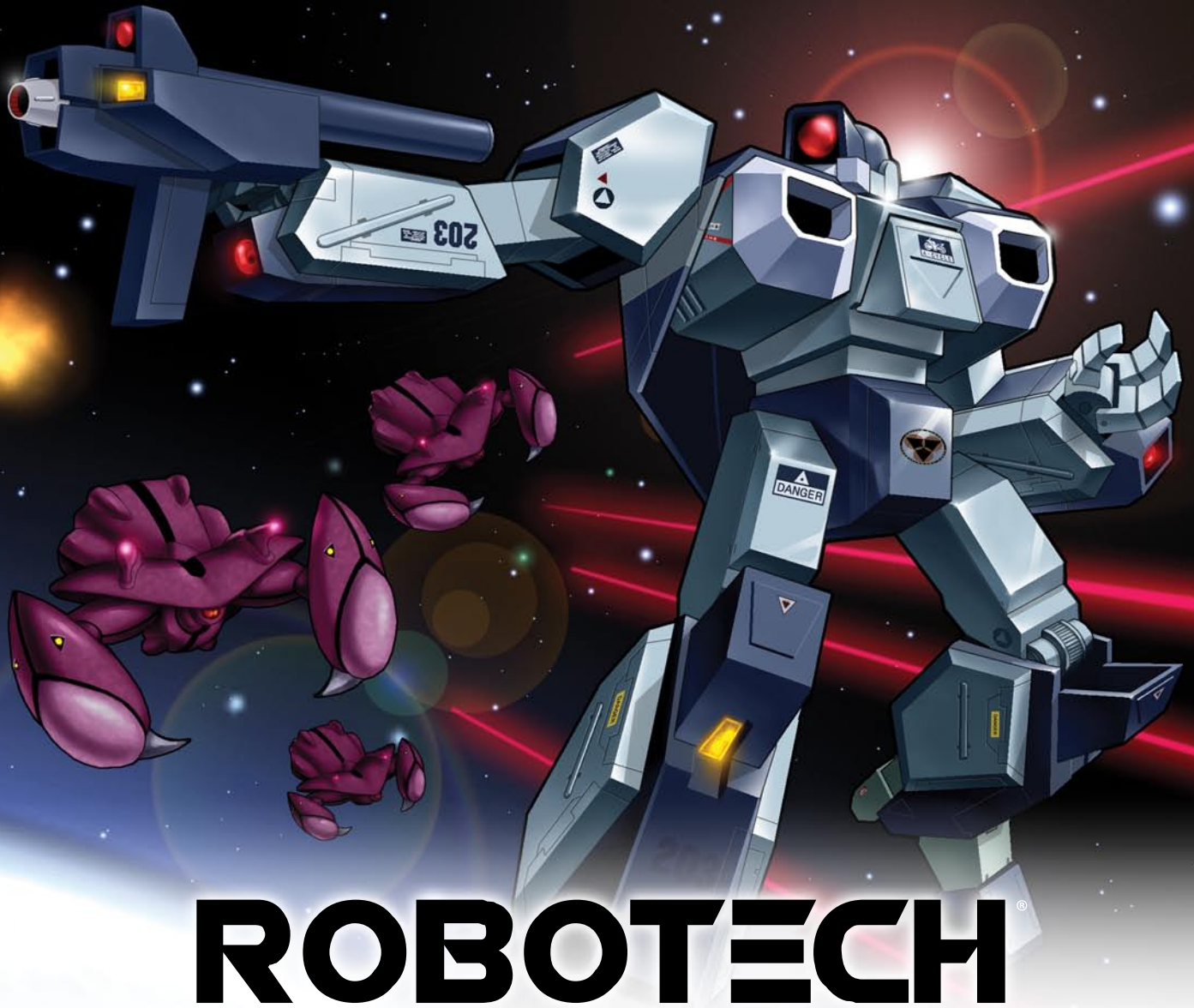
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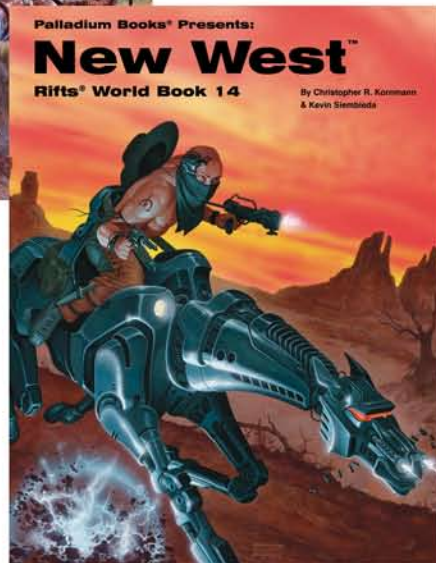
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