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A sourcebook by Kevin Siembieda

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To *Phyllis Opolko, Kevin Lowry, Sophie Bartold*, and many other heroic friends the Palladium family has lost to monsters like cancer and heart disease.

And to *Kathryn Kozora, Mike Mumah* and others of us who fight the good fight against such villains and appreciate just how precious every day with friends, family, life and love really is.

– *Kevin Siembieda, 2013*

The cover, by *Michael C. Hayes*, depicts a Master Vampire unleashing her vampire hordes in search of blood and vengeance.

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– *Kevin Siembieda, 2013*

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Doc Reid Unchained

Doc Reid sat on his horse and surveyed the carnage before him with pride. He had spent far too much time in the lab in recent years, and it felt good to be back in the field – in the thick of things. This was the farthest south he and the Rangers had ever launched an attack against a vampire dominated town. A rather large town, at that. It was an assault guaranteed to enhance the reputation of *Reid's Rangers*.

Half the town burned, civilian casualties were high, and still the liberated people cheered his name and wept with joy.

“And why shouldn't they?” he thought. “Am I not their savior? The messiah of this land?” He smiled at the confirmation of his position among the people of Mexico.

The raid had gone well. They struck an hour before dawn. A time when the vampires were still awake and active, making them easy to target out in the open, but within a window in which the sun would rise and come to their rescue should they have needed it. The sunrise also insured that any vampires caught out in the open would fry. The rest would be forced to take cover or die. Most of them, in a panic, would instinctively flee to their hidden lair. But his trained spotters and experienced Rangers would be waiting for that move. Waiting and watching where the vampires – morphed into bats, wolves or mist – would flee. After that, it was a simple matter for the famed Vampire Hunters to locate the monsters' sleeping places, dispatch any protectors, and finish the job they had started. What surprised Doc Reid was how smoothly the attack went. He really was a genius, and his Rangers, efficient and impressive destroyers of vampire vermin.

The Vampire Kingdoms had gotten increasingly bold, and it was necessary to send them a message. A message that the land north of Muluc and Tampico was protected by Reid's Rangers. That it was a land of relative safety for humanity. A land where vampires would be destroyed.

There was another message, too: The time of vampire domination in Mexico was drawing to an end.

From a distance, the Necromancer *Planktal-Nakton* waved and gave Doc Reid the thumbs up sign. The Doctor was impressed by how powerful and skilled the mage had become at waging war against vampires. Planktal-Nakton and the Necromancers under his command were the Rangers' secret weapon. People without experience fighting vampires assume the monsters hate Necromancers because they can learn magic to control and enslave the undead. But that's not the reason at all. It's because Necromancers can raise an army of the dead, and vampires have no sway over the dead. They can neither mind control nor terrorize animated corpses and skeletons. Arm the dead with weapons of wood and silver, and you have an expendable legion of soldiers impervious to the undead. Every Ranger or civilian the vampires slew in combat could be animated to join the ranks of the dead army.

All you need to do is make certain the Necromancers directing the dead are well protected from the vampires' inevitable onslaught, and you have the perfect fighting force to send against the so-called undead. Doc Reid had even turned the vulnerability of the Necromancer to his advantage. He and the Rangers knew the vampires would target the Necromancers, sending their ser-

vants and lesser vampires to find and slay them. That was perfect, because it meant the Rangers could focus their living warriors in positions to, **a)** protect the Necromancers and **b)** be at the ready to destroy the attackers they knew would come. This gave them the advantage of knowing what the enemy would do and where they'd strike, drawing them out into the open, and being ready to take them down.

The trick is recruiting Necromancers you can trust, or keep under your thumb; both difficult things with practitioners of dark magic. Doc Reid actually marveled that Planktal-Nakton had remained so loyal, especially as the Necromancer had grown to great power, both in magic and within the ranks of the Rangers. Planktal-Nakton was the General of Reid's Rangers' *Dead Army* and had a growing number of less powerful Necromancers and sorcerers under his direct command. One could even make the argument that the Necromancer commanded the physical forces of Reid's Rangers, or at least half of them.

Doc Reid chuckled out loud as he pondered such things and wondered why nobody had put together such obvious vampire fighting strategies before him. No wonder the Vampire Kingdoms fear him so. At that moment he realized they had strategies and tactics he had not shared with Lazlo. Ah, but they had commissioned him to share his extensive knowledge about vampires, not to give them his every secret.

When *Carlotta the White* motioned they were ready, Doc Reid nudged *Diablo*, his famous black steed with glowing red eyes, to trot forward. The horse was, of course, a robot steed with a synthetic hide to make it appear to be a genuine animal. Half the horses among Reid's Rangers were robots. Robot riding animals were another strategic choice. Robots are Mega-Damage constructs much less vulnerable to a vampire's direct physical attacks, don't require food, and offer superior speed that can outrun a vampire in wolf or bat form. A robot horse can also assist in combat. Though its kick or stomp attack cannot hurt a vampire, it may knock him down or block his path, and it certainly does damage to the vampire's mortal minions. (**Note:** Coating the hooves in silver or giving a horse silver shoeing doesn't work because silver is a soft metal that wears off quickly; in a matter of hours for silver-plated shoes or hooves and in a few days as a solid silver horseshoe. Moreover, silver shoes on a real horse quickly show uneven wear and pick up stones, both of which will make a horse go lame; reduce speed by 75% and it cannot jump. A lame horse will likely need to be put down.)

Doc Reid rode over to a group of prisoners under the shaded protection of a stable. There, a half dozen men who willingly served the vampires were bound at the wrists and surrounded by disapproving Rangers. One man, a vampire, lay flat on the ground. *Carlotta* held the creature down on one side with her foot stepping on his right wrist; such was the strength of a dragon hatchling. The vampire's legs were bound tight in silver chains, but two men leaned on them to hold them to the ground. The silver chains prevented the monster from being able to perform metamorphosis and trying to escape, though now that the sun had risen, there was no place for the vampire to run except inside the stable, merely delaying the inevitable. *Mii-Tar the Destroyer*

pinned the left arm down with both hands, his silver-plated battle axe laying at the D-Bee's side, a quick reach away. The rest of the people around the vampire were either there for the spectacle or prisoners being forced to watch.

A Ranger kneeling at the right side of the vampire prisoner twisted a wooden stake already impaled in the creature's side. The action caused the vampire to scream out in pain and spit blood. The vampire prisoner was already severely injured and in rough shape.

The leather saddle crunched as Doc Reid leaned over the prone vampire from horseback.

"You're one of the overlords of this town, are you not?" asked Reid.

The vampire's angry glare was his only answer.

The Ranger with his hand on the wooden stake pushed it in deeper and gave it a twist. The vampire moaned as the Ranger continued to move and twist the wooden stake, causing continuous physical damage and pain.

One of the two Lemurians who had recently joined Reid's Rangers protested. "Is this torture necessary?"

"Quite necessary," responded Doc Reid without taking his eyes off the vampire.

"I understand the need to get information," protested the Lemurian further, "but torture?"

"Where you see torture, we see justice," growled Doc Reid. Most of his men cheered in agreement. The Doctor sighed and thought to himself that Lemurians made useful allies, but were too soft. Then he reminded himself that few people were prepared for the measures needed to deal with such a demonic enemy.

"My apologies for snapping at you, my friend. You still have much to learn. Let me explain. The torture is necessary for two reasons. One, vampires are not accustomed to pain, so torture is an extremely effective and expedient means of extracting information. They're really big babies when it comes to pain. Two, few but myself and my most experienced men know that a vampire cannot perform metamorphosis or use its other powers so long as it continues to take constant new damage." Another fun fact, he realized, that he had not shared with Lazlo and didn't usually share with outsiders.

As if on cue, the Ranger manipulating the wooden stake withdrew it and plunged the weapon into a new location in the vampire's belly. As Doc Reid continued to talk, the torturer moved it in a slow, circular motion in much the same way as you might stir soup in a pot. The vampire groaned in agony.

"I thought that's what the silver chains were for," retorted the disapproving Lemurian.

"The chain is an extra measure of insurance. Here, allow me to demonstrate. Remove the chains, but make sure you two men hold its legs down."

The Lemurian took a step back and placed his hand on his weapon. The vampire groaned and gasped, releasing another spray of blood from his mouth.

"See? As long as my man continues to inflict pain and physical damage, this vermin is powerless. Of course, it still possesses great strength and must be pinned down. Otherwise, it would attack or try to flee at the first opportunity."

The Lemurian nodded in the affirmative, but Doc Reid could tell from his expression that the man found the tactic distasteful. Looking around him, Reid saw approval in the faces of his battle-

hardened Rangers, and terror in the eyes of the other prisoners, just as he desired.

Turning his attention back to the tortured vampire, Doc Reid smiled at his captive, apologized for the distraction, and continued his questioning. His tone was friendly and polite, making his words all the more condescending and infuriating to the monster.

"You don't have to answer. I know who you are. And I know you have the information I seek. So make things easy on yourself and tell me what I want to know. I'm sure Carlotta has already asked you plenty of times."

The vampire growled, blood gurgling in his throat. The torturer replied for Doc Reid by twisting the weapon in the creature's belly.

"We can play like this all day, you know," said Doc Reid. "I find it quite entertaining. You're the only one suffering. We're all enjoying this, aren't we boys?"

The Rangers all cheered. A few laughed. Someone said he hoped it took all day. The Lemurians stood silent. The servants of the vampire began to whimper. One dropped to his knees and sobbed.

Doc Reid's smiled and said, "You know me. You know what I do to your kind. I'm happy to keep this up until all you are is a mound of agony. Then, I'll pack you up and subject you to a year of suffering in my laboratory. Or, you can end this now. Just tell me which of the Vampire Kingdoms is responsible for the hiring of human assassins to hunt us."

"Go to Hell," snarled the vampire, provoking the torturer to plunge a second wooden stake between his ribs.

There was a popping sound, the vampire gasped, went silent and fell limp. One of the mortal prisoners with a ringside view to it all involuntarily exclaimed, "They've killed the master!"

Doc Reid dismounted from his steed to walk closer.

"Yes. And no," he said to the vampire's servant. "Give it a minute."

The vampire's body lurched, his eyes sprung open and he coughed blood. His captors tensed to make sure the demon was held down. Doc Reid grinned.

"Those incredible healing powers of yours can be a bitch, eh?"

Doc Reid leaned in closer and recognized fear in the vampire's eyes. His smile widened.

"We can do this all day. Maybe we even cook you for a little while in the sun? Have you ever felt the heat of the sun since . . . you know, becoming what you are?"

"Yes," wheezed the vampire.

"Good. Then you know it hurts more than anything I can do to you."

The vampire looked toward the sunlight to his left, just beyond the shade of the stable's awning, tightened his lips and turned his head in the opposite direction.

"Is that a tear in the corner of your eye?" asked Doc Reid. Then, after a deliberate, dramatic pause, he said, "I can be merciful, you know. Tell me who is responsible for the campaign against us. Who is hiring the assassins and spies, and I promise to end this. You know what? You mean nothing to me. You're just a cog in the machine. I'll even let you go. I give you my word."

"You can't be serious," protested Carlotta.

"Oh, I'm deadly serious. What difference does it make if we let this garbage go now and destroy him later?"

"You're the boss," hissed Carlotta. The other Rangers mumbled their grudging agreement. The Lemurians were surprised.

The vampire deliberated on this new proposal and asked, “Your word of honor? You’ll set me free?”

“My word of honor. No finger shall be laid upon you.”

“You realize there is nothing you can do against him even if I tell you.”

“All the more reason to end your suffering now, then, isn’t it?”

The vampire smiled, revealing his fangs.

“It’s the Vampire Lord of Ixzotz. And others at Tula and Muc luc have since followed his lead.”

“See how easy that was?” said Doc Reid. “Mii-Tar, now.”

Before anyone but Reid and Mii-Tar knew what had happened, the D-Bee removed the vampire’s head with one fell swoop of his silver-plated battle axe. The expression on the decapitated head was one of surprise.

“There is no promise to keep nor honor to hold when dealing with the likes of you,” continued Doc Reid as he stood straight and kicked the corpse. “You know what do with this carcass. Let the light of the sun turn it to ash.

“Well played, Carlotta,” said Doc Reid.

“Thank you, sir,” replied the lady with a curtsy.

“Are you getting faster, Mii-Tar, or reading my mind?”

“Getting faster, Doctor.”

“You’ll get used to this,” said the Doctor to the Lemurians.

Doc Reid turned to the six mortal prisoners and pointed to one. Each had been a willing servant of the vampires who ruled their town. A Ranger walked the terrified prisoner over to Reid, a short distance away from the others, but well within earshot. This spectacle, in part, had been meant for them.

“Do you know who I am?” asked Doc Reid.

“Of course,” said the man. “Everyone knows the Four-Armed Devil.”

Doc Reid’s thin smile stretched into a wide, toothy grin.

“Four-Armed Devil,” crooned Doc Reid, almost as if the words were the lyrics to a song. “Is that what they call me now?”

“Yes,” replied the man as tears welled up in his eyes in anticipation of the fate about to befall him.

“Oh, I do like the sound of that.”

The Doctor now stood directly in front of the man. One of his hands waved about as he spoke, another tapped his chin as if to coax out his next thought. The other two arms of the cyborg were folded.

“I believe your particular undead master managed to escape the melee, did he not?”

The trembling man’s eyes darted up, down, back and forth, everywhere but directly at the Four-Armed Devil. Too afraid to respond, all the man could muster was a sob.

“Mii-Tar,” beckoned Doc Reid with a snap of his fingers.

The massive D-Bee flashed a terrible grin, his axe still dripping with the vampire’s blood, and stepped toward the man.

“Yes. Yes!” shrieked the man.

“See, was that so difficult?” crowed Doc Reid.

“Look at me,” said the notorious Vampire Hunter. “Look at me,” he repeated in a stern voice.

“Ahhh, that’s much better. Today is your lucky day, friend. I’m going to let you go. For real. Provided you agree to deliver your vampire master a message. Can you do that for me?”

Before the man could answer, Doc Reid pressed a finger to the captive’s lips and said, “Shhhh. Before you reply, I think you should know that refusing me means you die, and I move on to

the next man. I’m certain that one of these fine gentlemen will cooperate. Don’t you agree? Now, what do you say?”

The man was certain this was some sort of test or trick, but nodded his head and squealed in a voice that embarrassed him, “Yes. I will do it.”

“Excellent,” said the leader of the Rangers in his sweetly condescending voice. He strolled around the prisoner as if inspecting him, all four of his hands moving as he spoke.

“I want you to tell him to inform the Vampire Intelligence of Ixzotz that unless they stop sending assassins and bushwhackers to attack my men, I’m coming for it. Got it?”

“Uh . . . y-y-yes.”

“Good.”

“But a . . . whuu . . . why would you warn your enemy?”

Doc Reid stopped his walk around the prisoner to look him directly in the eyes and smiled.

“Because vampires and the abominations that create them see themselves as gods. We mortals are nothing more than their cattle. Your vampire master and the Intelligence he serves will laugh at my threat, thinking it is an empty one. In response, it’s more than likely they’ll increase their efforts to destroy us with more guns-for-hire. So when I strike back and I kill it – and the monster feels its life leaving it – I want it to know who is responsible.

“I want them all to know.”

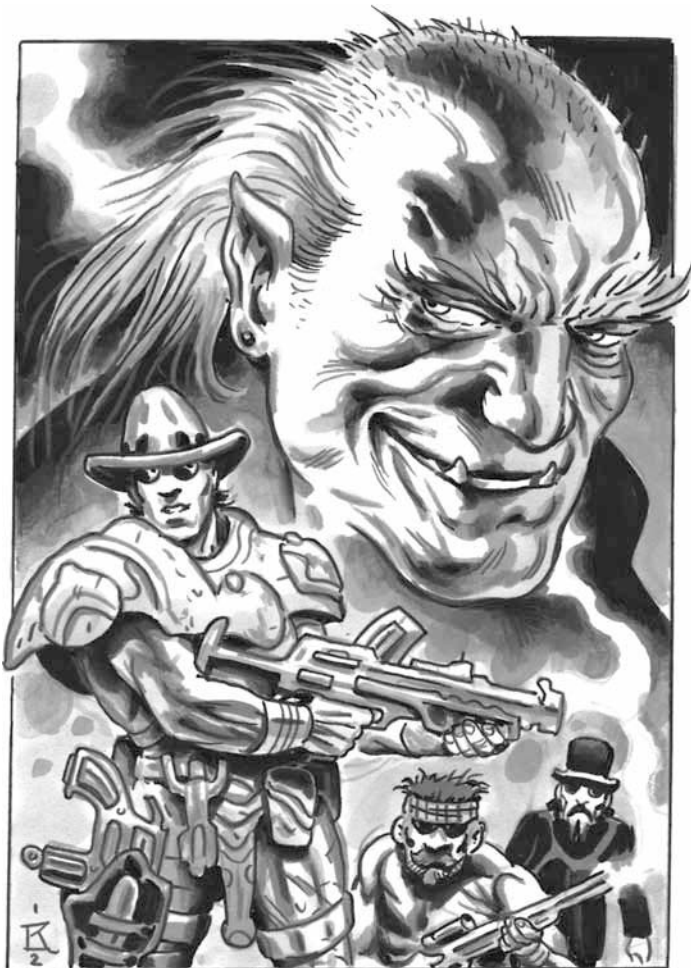
Escalation

Can Doc Reid deliver on his threat?

It seems unlikely, but you never know with this man. He always seems to have something up his sleeve, or some secret he can use to his advantage. Add to this the fact that he truly believes himself to be the *Savior of Mexico* along with his dedication to eradicate vampires, and anything is possible.

This much is certain, in the last few years, the Vampire Kingdoms have started to become more aggressive toward humans. In a surprise move, they have begun hiring other mortals to hunt and slay *Vampire Hunters* during the day, a time that was once safe for Vampire Hunters. Reid’s Rangers have been a thorn in the side of the Vampire Kingdoms for years, so the Kingdoms finally came up with a new way to deal with them. To hire mortal assassins of all sort – humans, D-Bees, creatures of magic, supernatural beings – to hunt the hunters. As ordinary people themselves, these treacherous killers who work for the undead and target Vampire Hunters can stalk and observe their prey during the day. They can even enter Fort Reid and other communities safe from vampires to learn all about their targets before they strike. Being able to walk among the famed heroes without fear of being identified as an enemy means they can learn their targets’ routines, habits and plans, then strike when they least expect it. Many have taken to setting traps and ambushes for the heroes by pretending to be innocent people in need of their help, or fellow Vampire Hunters who seek to join their ranks. This gets the assassins in close and enables them to strike without warning. These deceptions have proven extremely effective, as the Vampire Hunters do not expect to be struck down by their fellow mortals. (**Note:** More on these turncoats later.)

Some claim this tactic was the last straw for Doc Reid, driving him to unleash his just retribution. The truth is, everything has been leading up to this. Doc Reid has been planning and build-



ing for war against the Vampire Kingdoms since the first day he started Reid's Rangers.

The Vampire Intelligences, their minions and most outsiders have mistaken Doc Reid to be a madman and glory-hound who is more talk than action. At least nothing against the Vampire Kingdoms directly. All of the Rangers' campaigns have been against small to medium towns and bands of Wild Vampires in the North. Places the Kingdoms don't care much about. What the Vampire Kingdoms don't realize is that while they were fighting among themselves and toying with the people of Mexico, Doc Reid has been quietly building his power base, forging alliances, and preparing for what he calls, "The Day of Reckoning." A day that is fast approaching.

Many have argued that the good doctor is a madman with delusions of godhood. Perhaps. But he is very much a mad genius. A genius with a plan. His messiah complex is more overblown than ever, but let's not forget most messiahs are prepared to die for their cause. In the case of Doctor Kenneth Reid, he is not ready to become a martyr, but he's not afraid to die either. In fact, he is quite fearless and half convinced that he cannot die for the very reason that it is his destiny to liberate Mexico from the vampires. Oddly enough, he may be right. Doc Reid is the one man to have openly taken a stand against the vampires. He has done more than any other person in Mexico to stop the vampires dominating the entire country, and has liberated thousands of people from their rule. Though his methods may be unorthodox and downright disturbing at times, Doc Reid knows more about vampires, their motives, abilities and weaknesses than anyone on Earth. Perhaps even more than the vampires themselves!

What many have misinterpreted as inaction or grandstanding during the past decade, has been Doc Reid studying, plotting and preparing for *the Day of Reckoning*. The many Reid's Rangers who have managed to survive over the years are more experienced, battle-hardened and skilled in combating vampires than any force in the Americas. They are more prepared for war than anyone imagines, and are so dedicated that they are willing to die for the cause. For some, it is what they have been waiting for. They are unafraid and ready to unleash their unfettered wrath against the Kingdoms. Moreover, the Rangers have earned the respect and admiration of millions of mortals throughout Mexico. Even among people within the Vampire Kingdoms themselves. Every slave, vampire and person living in Mexico and the American Southwest knows the names and many storied tales of Doc Reid and his Rangers. Deep within the Vampire Kingdoms, slaves whisper among themselves about the day Reid's Rangers will come to liberate them. And many are prepared to join the fight when that day comes.

Having won the hearts and minds of the Mexican people, the good doctor has spies, informants and sleeper agents *everywhere*, even within the heart of the Vampire Kingdoms. Most of those in the Kingdoms are held under the thumb of the vampires, but they still sneak vital statistics and data to the Rangers and pray for a war of liberation. It is a war Doc Reid shall fight on many levels – surgical strikes, sabotage, espionage, psychological warfare and ground combat. Though he has never waged an all-out ground war, he's been thinking about it and planning it for years. He has spent more than a decade laying the groundwork for it. And now that he has the ears and support of his new Lemurian allies, and a quiet army of civilians, Vampire Hunters and heroes alike – all waiting to be called to arms – he is ready.

A few good men

Doc Reid is looking for a few good men (the player characters, perhaps?) to tackle a secret mission of utmost importance.

He needs a team to travel into the Vampire Kingdom of Ixzotz, find out which stone pyramid holds the Vampire Intelligence who rules that kingdom, and secure an accurate map/floor plan of the pyramid. In addition, he needs to know the precise location of the Vampire Intelligence's sanctum sanctorum within the structure. All Vampire Intelligences have a containment chamber inside one of the stone pyramids in their kingdom. Doc Reid needs to know which city, which pyramid and where inside of it. The team does not necessarily have to go inside and make a map of the place themselves, provided they can secure an accurate map/floor plan of the pyramid from another reliable source. One of Doc Reid's sleeper agents, perhaps?

It is absolutely crucial that Doc Reid is provided with *current* and *accurate information*. Though he'd like to tell the team what he needs this information for, he dares not do so. Vampires possess powers of mind control that can pierce the mind of even the strongest heroes, so the group can be given no details. All he can say is that it could topple the Vampire Kingdom of Ixzotz in one fell swoop. The problem is, he'll only have *one shot* at it, so he needs to know exactly, and with absolute certainty, *where* the Intelligence is located. Knowing what defenders and opposition might be present is bonus information, but not of critical importance. What he desperately needs is the floor plans and a way into the monster's lair.

To be sure, this is a dangerous job, but a crucial one. One that could save tens of thousands of lives, and free the people of Ixzotz from vampire domination. Anyone who is a Vampire Hunter, let alone one of Reid's Rangers, will not question the validity or importance of Doc Reid's mission. Nor will most heroes or anyone who has joined the war against the undead.

If this team of heroes is successful and comes back alive, Doc Reid offers them the opportunity to implement his plan to deliver a killing strike to the Vampire Kingdoms. See *A few more good men*, below.

A few more good men

Armed with the right information, Doc Reid is ready to plunge a stake into the Vampire Kingdoms that will shake them to their foundations. If the group who successfully supplied him with the data is willing to do it, they are his first choice for the job. If they decline, he'll find another group of heroes.

He needs someone to be able to enter the pyramid and gain access to the Vampire Intelligence's chamber while the monster is present, and activate a homing beacon that he'll provide them. Once the coordinates are sent (it takes two melee attacks/6 seconds), the team needs to get out of there or die. They should have about ten minutes.

Doc Reid makes no bones that this is likely to be a suicide mission, but that their sacrifice will save millions of lives and deliver a blow to the Vampire Kingdoms from which they will not recover. Since it is a suicide mission, he is recruiting *volunteers*. He also promises to erect a shrine to them, and to make certain everyone knows their names for the rest of time.

Only a tiny handful of people know anything about Doc Reid's secret plans for Ixzotz. If that number includes the player characters, they've just been elevated to the upper echelon of Reid's Rangers' most trusted heroes. Doc Reid shall give them their instructions himself, provide them with additional supplies and weapons should they need them, as well as two additional Rangers, one of them a 6th Level Necromancer (the other whomever is deemed appropriate by the G.M., it could even be one of the elite Rangers, like Carlotta), to accompany them and lend support. Both are willing to die for the cause.

There are some rumors that Doc Reid has gained access to a pre-Rifts thermonuclear missile, and while its detonation would have no effect on vampires, it may be capable of killing a Vampire Intelligence. Nobody knows because it has never been tried. There is no way to confirm the rumor, but if asked, Doc Reid and his top leaders dismiss it as utter nonsense.

Doc Reid's Secret Weapon

What only Sir Lazarious, Carlotta and a few others know, is that Doc Reid has acquired a *Doomsday Machine* from the ruins of Tolkeen. One of Tolkeen's darker factions had planned to use the device on Chi-Town, but the Kingdom of Magic fell before the plan was executed. The device, along with many other magic artifacts and weapons, was smuggled out of the city before the swarming Coalition troops could find it. Exactly how Doc Reid obtained the Doomsday Device is of little consequence. He plans to use it on Ixzotz. He hypothesizes that the destruction of a Vampire Intelligence will stun and terrorize the rest of the Vampire Kingdoms. He even suspects one or two Vampire Intelligences

may abandon Earth and take their legions of vampires to another dimension. After all, if Doc Reid can touch one of them, who is to say he can't reach them all? Even if that doesn't happen, the shock should put the vampires and other Intelligences off balance. While they are still reeling from the news, it will be immediately followed by a full-on attack spearheaded by 10,000 Lemurians, their unknown magic and technology, and his own expert Vampire Hunters. By his estimations, his army should be able to take down at least one other Vampire Intelligence and liberate several cities and towns. Doc Reid has reasonable expectations that the human slaves will rise up against their masters to join the battle, adding to the chaos and helping the heroes win the war. All of this should send the rest of the vampires scurrying into the shadows, where his legions will continue to hunt them down and finish them off. If they run too far south, he hopes forces in South America will do their work for them.

It's a good plan — if he can pull it off.

This is why Doc Reid needs the precise information regarding the location of the Vampire Intelligence at Ixzotz. He has only *one* Tolkeen Doomsday Device and needs to make it count.

There are a few other wrinkles. Nobody knows how the Tolkeen Doomsday Machine works or what it does. Moreover, while the team sent to enter the Intelligence's chamber think they have a homing beacon, it's actually part of the Doomsday Device. The second the signal is sent, the device magically Teleports to that location and *detonates*. All in less than 6 seconds. What happens next is anyone's guess.

FOR GAME MASTER EYES ONLY!

Players, do not read this block.

To send the beacon signal, a sequence of symbols must be pressed on the "call device." (There are two such devices, just in case one lost, falls into the hands of vampires, or is destroyed. One of the NPCs has the spare.) The Doomsday Machine itself is a silver sphere about the size of a grapefruit. It is covered in symbols that all represent the sun and the Gods of Light. Once activated it cannot be stopped. Destroying the device requires 1,000 M.D.C. and only unleashes the full effect sooner rather than later. Doc Reid has no idea what it does, so this ploy is very much a calculated risk.

It is a gamble that will pay off big. Though the magic functions as a sort of "bomb," this device is a magic Artifact of Legend and likely to be one of only a few that exist in the entire Megaverse. As a legendary magic item of considerable power, it is designed to recognize and respond to a number of different threats. In the Chi-Town scenario it would have functioned like a nuclear bomb, inflicting M.D. that would have left a crater 1D4 miles (1.6 to 6.4 km) in diameter, in the pyramid at Ixzotz it will recognize the *Vampire Intelligence* and *undead* as the threat and annihilate them.

The device unleashes 2D6x10,000 points of damage – sun energy and light – vaporizing the Vampire Intelligence and ALL vampires on that level. Before they know what hits them, a flash of brilliant yellow-white light fills that entire floor of the pyramid. All vampires are atomized. Any other demons suffer 1D6x1,000 M.D. Non-vampires are *unharméd*.

However, that is just the first wave of the Doomsday Device's initial bombardment. After the initial burst of light, the silver orb hangs in the air, where it radiates with red light streaming from the sun symbols. This light turns from red to orange, to yellow, to brilliant white in the span of one minute. The light is accompanied by a hum that starts deep and grows higher and higher in pitch as if it is counting down or leading up to something bigger. The magical light is so intense that after two melee rounds, the floating orb cannot be seen. Soon, the light seems to permeate the very stone of the pyramid. First, it radiates through the cracks in the stone, and then causes the stones themselves to glow. Seconds later, beams of light pass through the glowing stones as if they were made of semi-transparent material. As the light slices through the pyramid in all directions in an expanding ball of light, all vampires, zombies, undead, animated dead, and Soulcraft creations are vaporized. The light fills everything, so there is no place to hide within its sphere of radiance. Mortals, humans and D-Bees, on the other hand, are only filled with a sense that the unnatural brightness is dangerous and everyone is compelled to run from it as fast and as far away as they can. A saving throw of 16 or higher is needed to resist the urge to flee. It is not a good urge to resist.

After 2D4 minutes, the entire pyramid glows as if it were a wedge-shaped piece of the sun. Light continues to spread out from the epicenter, the pyramid, for 1D4 miles (1.6 to 6.4 km), but is brightest near the pyramid. At this point, the entire structure starts to shake and crumble, and the hum is now a shrill siren that can be heard for miles. The light continues to expand. Every vampire, undead and animated dead it touches is destroyed. Werebeasts, Soulcraft items, demons and creatures of the night take 1D6x10 damage. Mortals remain unharmed, though instinct tells them to flee.

1D6 minutes later, the light fills a 2D4 mile (3.2 to 12.8 km) radius. If this occurs at night, its glow lights up the night sky and can be seen from two hundred miles (320 km) away as well as from outer space. A moment later, the pyramid collapses in on itself, turned into rubble with no piece larger than a marble. There is a loud, "whup, whup" sound, and a burst of light and wind that rushes out from the epicenter of the pyramid. All buildings within the 2D4 mile (3.2 to 12.8 km) radius suffer 1D4x100 M.D., and people, animals and vegetation take 1D4x10 S.D.C. damage. Any vampires and undead within twice that radius are annihilated. The light fades to nothing and the siren squeal stops. This attack is over. The war has begun.

The result is more than Doc Reid or anyone could have imagined, and nobody could have guessed what happens next. Though other, smaller cities and towns in the Ixzotz Kingdom remain standing, the total destruction of the Mulac Vampire Intelligence wipes out the source of the vampire contagion within that kingdom, and *every vampire* whose lineage can be linked to that Intelligence, even those who may be thousands of miles away, cease to exist. Eyewitness accounts that come later will tell how the vampires screamed, began to smolder and fell over as lifeless, withered corpses. **Note:** Had the Vampire Intelligence been able to flee to another dimension, its undead children on Earth would have remained viable and active, but with it utterly destroyed, the source of their power is gone, and they cease to exist. So does the Demonic Familiar. Only the *Master Vampires* survive, provided they were not caught in the Light of Destruction and vaporized. If any Master Vampire was away, he lives, but reverts back to

an ordinary human. Any future Vampire Intelligence will sense that his creator is no more, and will shun him, as will all other vampires.

Pressing their advantage. Ixzotz is only the first salvo in the war. The Light of Destruction is the signal to attack the Vampire Kingdoms. Within minutes after the light is gone, 5,000 Lemurians besiege **Muluc** and another 5,000 strike **Milta**. One of these kingdoms will fall in a matter of a few weeks. The other will manage to stand strong for a long while, forcing a drawn out war with mixed forces.

Doc Reid sends in ground troops of Rangers, heroes, and armies of animated dead, mummies and zombies led by Necromancers, and other allies, to finish off the vampires of **Ixzotz**. Instead, they are met by the cheering throngs of the Ixzotz's liberated who have already slain many of the willing mortal servants of the vampires. The rest of the vampires' minions at Ixzotz are preparing to flee and are easily captured or slain by the Rangers or the liberated slaves. Tens of thousands of the liberated people of Ixzotz are ready to join in Doc Reid's crusade against the remaining Vampire Kingdoms, except most are thin, weak, and have no combat experience whatsoever. Two-thirds have known no other life beyond that of slave, servant or cattle of the vampires. Of these people, maybe 1D4x1,000 can be made combat-worthy within a month or two. The rest need guidance and protection from the retribution that is sure to come from the other Vampire Kingdoms. Doc Reid turns the city of Ixzotz into their beachhead military post and will soon find he will need half of his non-Lemurian forces plus new volunteers to hold the Kingdom and other lands they liberate from the angry vampire swarms that are yet to come.

All of the other Vampire Kingdoms are in shock. All will have seen the Light of Destruction. All feel the sudden death of the Ixzotz Vampire Intelligence and know the fate of the thousands of monstrous children it had created. Doc Reid presses the psychological side of warfare claiming Ixzotz was just the first, and similar destruction shall befall them all. Two Vampire Intelligences make plans to leave Earth and relocate to a dimension where humans should not be able to follow. The rest hold their ground. At least one will fall to the combined Lemurian/Ranger forces. Slaves and human cattle rise up in revolt at the other Kingdoms. Many manage to escape. Many more are slaughtered.

In the Yucatan, Camazotz doesn't realize he is one of the targets in Doc Reid's war. After all, he is *a god*, not a Vampire Intelligence. Protected by the weird dimensional anomaly that is the Yucatan, his land can only be invaded by ground forces. For the moment, he is safe from Doc Reid's armies. If anything, Camazotz unleashes some of his own forces of vampires armed with Soulcraft Dark Weapons, and other minions, to slaughter vampires from any of the other Kingdoms who try to flee beyond La Venta or past Palenque and into the Yucatan. Camazotz's forces may even venture north into the rival Kingdoms, where they help the mortal champions destroy the rival vampire forces. Once his hated rivals are gone, Camazotz plans to retreat back into the Yucatan. He believes the forces of good will owe him a debt of gratitude and leave the Yucatan and Central America for him to claim. There, he shall bide his time and build his own power base to invade, conquer and rule Central and South America. And, perhaps, even Mexico. Or so he plans. Of course, Doc Reid has other plans, though he is unaware that Camazotz has his own secret weapons with the Craftsman and the horrible magic of Soulcraft.

Despite the incredible initial success, this is going to be a hard-fought war that will stretch across the years. Vampires are like a cancer, and it is difficult to find and remove all the cells that remain hidden. Leave even a few and the cancer grows anew. Doc Reid knows this, and will be methodical and relentless in the total eradication of vampires. It is also why he cannot allow Camazotz to remain unmolested. Besides, once his forces learn of Soulcraft and how its magic weapons are created via the slaughter of innocent people, they'll have no choice but to destroy this new threat as well.

Though many heroes and unlikely allies will rise up to join the initial battles – Pecos Bandits, Cyber-Knights, the Bone Werejaguars and other werebeasts, the Anti-Monsters of South America, Shemarrians and even some Coalition forces from Lone Star – the *Coming of the Minion War* to Earth (see the upcoming

Megaverse® in Flames book) will force them to return home to face their own plagues of demons and hard-fought battles. This will leave Mexico to fight its war on its own. Which is just the way Doc Reid, Savior of Mexico, likes it.

Just one possible sequence of events

Of course, all of the above only happens if a team of heroes first, succeeds in locating the lair of the Ixzotz Vampire Intelligence, and second, successfully detonates the Tolkeen Doomsday Device. A failed attempt to destroy the Intelligence still launches Reid's war on the Vampire Kingdoms. His Rangers, freedom fighters, Lemurian allies, and other heroes still attack and fight to liberate the innocent and wipe out evil. Their war will just be that much longer, difficult and with many more casualties. Its outcome and the fate of Reid's Rangers that much less certain.

Vampire Hunters of Mexico

An excerpt from Traversing Our Modern World by Erin Tarn, 100 P.A.

As soon as visitors step into the American Southwest, they start to hear stories about vampires and the heroes who battle them. The Coalition States and most civilized people would like you to believe vampires are simple-minded creatures that are more beast-like than human. Savages that roam the badlands of Mexico in small bands and represent little to worry about here in the North. In fact, it has been my experience that the governments of most kingdoms dismiss stories of vampires as rubbish. Though the authorities in the North and Northeast insist talk of vampires and Vampire Kingdoms are little more than tall tales, I have found the people of the Southwest tell an entirely different story.

I am told the vampires of Mexico are afraid of crossing water, so the Rio Grande River holds the majority of them at bay, corralling the monsters in Mexico. Though there are vampires in the American Southwest, they are comparatively few and said to be packs of Wild Vampires. Most local people in the New West seem confident they have the vampire problem under control. At least for now.

Across the Rio Grande River, into what was once the *Old Mexican Empire* before the Great Cataclysm, however, is an entirely different story. There, it is said that *Wild Vampires* roam the northern deserts of Mexico like packs of hungry wolves and are as thick as flies. Wild Vampires are described as dull-witted beasts who can take the form of humans, bats and wolves. They run in packs and live like animals that feed upon humanoid prey. But they are not alone.

There are intelligent vampires who sometimes lead the Wild Ones, and it is these intelligent undead who are said to have built cities and established sprawling kingdoms in the depths of Southern Mexico. I am told these are dreadful places, where humans are enslaved, penned and slaughtered like cattle. I cannot speak to the validity of these claims, for I have not seen the Vampire Kingdoms with my own eyes, but everyone tells the stories. Indeed, few mortals have ever seen the cities of vampires and managed to live to talk about it. So, I must admit the stories of

Vampire Kingdoms are, for now, told as rumors and myths by the people of the New West and Mexico. I would like to believe they are, as the Coalition claims, nothing more than "tall tales," but I find the stories are too prevalent and consistent to be false. If nothing else, the fear and sorrow in the eyes of the people on the Mexican side of the river make it clear that the tales are true. Furthermore, I have it on good authority from several sources I trust, that the Vampire Kingdoms do exist.

As for my own first-hand knowledge, it is minimal, but compelling. We saw a few bands of shadowy figures at night and large wolves from a distance that our local guides told us were packs of Wild Vampires. I cannot confirm this claim, but I believe it. I did share one, nearly fatal encounter with the undead, so I know they are real and very deadly.

There is one more thing that should convince outsiders that vampires are a real and serious danger, and that is the sheer number of *Vampire Hunters*. As the people along the Rio Grande River are fond of saying, the closer one gets to the borderline of Mexico, "you can't kick over a stone without finding a Gunfighter or Vampire Hunter."

Self-styled Vampire Hunters and wannabes are everywhere along the Rio Grande. Many are little more than adventurers, gunfighters, mercenaries, and locals who claim to have taken up the mantle of Vampire Hunter. The worst of the lot are guns for hire or bandits ready and able to exterminate your undead for a set price per vampire they kill. Some seem to step into the role of Vampire Hunter or Bandit as comfortably as you or I slip on a jacket. Mercenaries, gunfighters, adventurers and bandits who call themselves "Vampire Hunters" make the undead their main targets and engage in "runs" across the Rio Grande into Mexico, where they raid what they claim are vampire packs and enslaved villages, slaying the undead, freeing human captives and seizing the vampires' possessions for themselves. All too often, I fear, these "spoils of war," as they call them, also include the valuables of the people they are supposedly rescuing. While I'm certain some of these bands are well-intentioned heroes, I



suspect others are nothing more than raiders and bandits who may or may not fight vampires at all. After all, who is to know what happens across the river where vampires are said to be the law? Still, these self-styled Vampire Hunters do brag about their exploits fighting the undead and wear wooden stakes strapped across their chests and carry the tools of the trade.

The long and the short of it is, anyone, regardless of their true occupation and background, can call themselves Vampire Hunters and ride off to hunt and slay the undead. Many of these *self-styled Vampire Hunters* pursue their crusade against the undead for reasons of their own, but do not make it their career. Instead, they operate as Vampire Slayers as circumstance dictates. It seems to me, many become crusading heroes with a stake to grind against vampires after witnessing an atrocity or suffering a personal loss at the hands of the monsters. Such individuals and groups commit to helping those in need and slaying vampires for a brief span of time. After a few weeks or months of bloodletting, they typically go back to whatever their “real” occupations are, or leave the area entirely. Others live dual lives, working like you or I at their main livelihood, but venture off to join a posse or engage in raids against the undead when circumstances call for it, such as a vampire being sighted at a particular town or troubling a neighboring region.

The genuine article makes a career of hunting the undead. True Vampire Hunters are men and women, humans and D-Bees, who are well versed in the craft of hunting and slaying vampires. They are experts in the lore and secrets of the undead and tend to be much more tempered and resourceful individuals. Like gunslingers and mercenaries, the intentions and conduct of Vampire Hunters vary widely from individual to individual. Many fight to help the innocent and destroy evil, but some fight for fame and fortune.

Heroic Vampire Hunters are dedicated heroes who have made it their life’s work to protect the innocent and destroy the undead. Most are good, moral people who function like lawmen or Cyber-Knights and who are likely to die at the fangs of a vampire. They travel the countryside helping people in need and wiping out the vampire pestilence. These cowboy heroes seldom seek fortune, though I’ve met a few who seem to revel in the trappings of fame and glory.

Vengeful Vampire Hunters tend to be good, but they can also be selfish or evil, and even good men can be savage and ruthless in exacting their revenge. In my experience, any warrior motivated by vengeance is compelled to do so by emotions that haunt and torment them like angry ghosts. The vengeful Vampire Hunter may seek to destroy a particular group of undead or all of them. As a rule, they hate vampires because the monsters took something away from them and/or hurt them in a way that can never be forgiven or forgotten. Now the heroes seek the destruction of vampires without end.

One highly respected Vampire Hunter trying to drown his pain in a bottle told me, “At first I thought every time I killed one of them bloodsuckers it would heal the pain just a little. But I’ve killed 57 of them now, and there ain’t no relief. I don’t think my suffering will end until they are all gone and dead, or I’m slain myself. Either way works for me.” Fame and fortune seldom have any meaning for the vengeful hunters. Vengeance is its own reward. Or not.

Obsessed Vampire Hunters can be motivated by hate and revenge, but many are obsessed and driven by something else.

Their motives might be almost anything: a sense of righteousness, justice, or destiny, and any countless other things. Some seek fame as Vampire Hunters. Some a glorious hero’s death. Some fight to rescue innocent people from inhuman bondage. Some fight in the name of their god. Other seek treasure in the hands of the undead. I’ve also met some who seem to enjoy the challenge of matching their wits with a demonic foe, and some who just like killing.

When battling the undead, nobody expects a Vampire Hunter or hero to hold back. They expect them to cut loose and fight with a merciless savagery that would be condemned if it were leveled against any other enemy. I spoke to one Vampire Hunter who explained to me, “Somebody has to stop these sum-bitches. Turns out, that somebody is me.” He told me this with a grin and his eyes sparkled with pride or glee, or both. That’s a common trait among the obsessed. Unlike most of the career Vampire Hunters, the obsessed, be they good or evil, seem to take pleasure and satisfaction in slaying vampires. From what I have heard, many obsessed Vampire Hunters seek fame, others fortune or power, and many seek money, if not for profit, to fund their relentless campaign of extermination.

Vampire Hunters for Hire. Not all professional Vampire Hunters are noble warriors or tortured heroes. Some are mercenaries, plain and simple. They’re good at their job, but they kill vampires only when they are paid to do so. I think many of these Hunters are *Bounty Hunters*, *Gunslingers* and *Mercenaries*. They are skilled experts, but don’t expect them to lift a finger unless they are paid to do so, or it happens to suit their fancy in the moment. Fortune is their chief motivation, everything and everyone else is secondary. Vampire Hunters for Hire court fame because it enables them to increase their fees and get free drinks.

Bandit Vampire Hunters. I repeat, not all Vampire Hunters are heroes or even gunfighters or mercenaries. Some are scoundrels, thieves and murderers. Life in the New West is hard. It attracts hardened and ruthless individuals. The Bandit Vampire Hunter is a short step away from cutthroat and raider. They are known to ride with Necromancers, assassins, bandits, D-Bees and all manner of villains on killing raids into Old Mexico. They take time to kill Wild Vampires as they roam the Mexican badlands, but they really seek to take down Master and Secondary Vampires with valuables to plunder. After they defeat the vampires and make a big enough score by killing and looting the monsters and other banditos (and perhaps some adventurers and innocent locals), they ride back up north with their spoils and to lick their wounds. The only thing I can say in the Bandit Vampire Hunters’ favor, is that their primary targets of robbery, assault and murder are vampires and their henchmen. I have little doubt that when vampires prove to be elusive targets, these lowlife predators turn on their fellow man.

D-Bee Vampire Hunters. I was surprised to see how many D-Bees take up the Vampire Hunter profession. Though as I thought about it, it makes perfect sense. With the exception of a few enlightened kingdoms, D-Bees remain feared outsiders from an alien world. The Coalition States hunt and destroy them, as do others. Even at the communities that tolerate their presence, D-Bees are often treated as second-class citizens. So it makes sense that D-Bees would gravitate to a profession like Vampire Hunter. Nobody is going to turn away D-Bee Vampire Hunters who come to help. Here in the Vampire Lands and, to a lesser degree, the wilds of the New West, D-Bee Vampire Hunters hold an elevated

position and are embraced as welcomed heroes and liberators. I suspect because of this, D-Bee Vampire Hunters strive to be the best they can be, and tend to be among the most noble of heroes.

I'm told there are even magic practitioners who specialize in fighting vampires. These include Necromancers and spell casters, and something called the **Mage Vampire Hunter**. There would never be such a vast range of Vampire Hunters if there were not vampires to fight. So yes, I believe Mexico is overrun with the monsters.

Northern base of operations for many Vampire Hunters.

The majority of Vampire Hunters, mercs and heroes operating in Vampire Lands are usually based outside of Mexico, across the Rio Grande River in the Pecos Empire or elsewhere in the New West. *Arzno, El Paso, Del Rio, Laredo, Houstown* and similar places are hot spots for Vampire Hunters, gunslingers, gunfighters, mercs, and adventurers who make "runs" into Old Mexico to fight vampires. They are based outside of Mexico, because the Rio Grande River is said to serve as a natural barrier to vampires, making the fighters feel much safer "back home" among the living. Moreover, I heard people say many times, "You never know what's right or upside down in Vampire Territory, so it's best not to overstay your welcome." By the way, all of Mexico is considered to be Vampire Territory.

The colloquialism "right or upside down" refers to the fact that in vampire-plagued Mexico, outsiders, especially Vampire Hunters, can never know who is a friend or foe, who might turn on you for profit, or to save their own neck or the life of a loved one. Things are constantly changing in the Vampire Lands. Locations that were safe today may be deadly tomorrow. Friends become foes, foes become allies, and outsiders become easily lost and forgotten. Life in Mexico is dangerous, so most choose to have their homes and base of operations north of the Rio Grande where they feel safe.

– Erin Tarn, *100 P.A.*

Bandit Vampire Hunters

As Erin Tarn noted, bandits in Mexico and the American Southwest have a nasty tendency to *play* at being Vampire Hunters. These scoundrels have come up with the perfect scam: to identify, hunt, kill and plunder vampires, their henchmen and servants. It's a scam, because they are still crooks and cutthroats who use the cover of being "Vampire Hunters" to conceal their crimes and victimize monsters everyone hates. After all, nobody cares if vampires and their mortal servants are killed and robbed. They see it as justice and don't care who delivers it to the monsters.

Bandit Vampire Hunters are happy to provide this service on behalf of the local people in exchange for room and board for themselves and their animals, an endless stream of alcohol, free access and run of the town, and the promise that they are allowed to keep all loot possessed by the vampires and their minions. The latter includes horses, livestock, weapons, valuables and possessions (other than land) the monsters and their henchmen may have acquired. This includes stolen goods and property taken from fallen heroes, neighboring towns, and even from the very town the Bandit Vampire Hunters are trying to liberate. Some may even charge an additional fee for their services on top of

everything else, though this is becoming an increasingly uncommon practice.

Most Bandit Vampire Hunters are just that, bandits who make their living, when not "liberating the innocent" from the undead, as robbers and criminals. Moreover, other nefarious individuals such as Bandits, Gunslingers, Highway Men, Raiders, Thieves, Bushwhackers, and other criminals are also likely to ride with Bandit Vampire Hunters. The best of their associates will be Bounty Hunters, Gunfighters, Gunslingers, and Saddle Tramps, and they are in the minority. These Bandit Vampire Hunters also associate with D-Bees, Necromancers, practitioners of magic and others who may be looked upon as unsavory and undesirable in other parts of the country. All are likely to be of selfish and evil alignments. Some are sociopaths and many are wanted criminals up north. Bandit Vampire Hunters and their "associates" tend to be rude, lewd and lawless. The gang seldom has any regard for the people they are supposed to be rescuing, usually take advantage of them, behave as if the law does not apply to them, and will challenge and defy any authority not powerful enough to *make them* behave. (**Note:** Gang members who are not actual *Bandit Vampire Hunters* have their usual O.C.C. Skills and abilities, and do not possess any of the Vampire Hunter skills. They follow the lead of their Vampire Hunter teammates, and those who get reckless pay the price. Usually with their lives.)

On the good side, the majority of Bandit Vampire Hunters really do hate vampires and know a thing or two about destroying them. Many tend to be a little wild, a little desperate and very driven to hurt the undead. All of which can help make up for what they lack in outright vampire hunting skill. In addition, the more injuries and losses a group of Bandit Vampire Hunters suffer at the hands of the bloodsuckers, the more determined they are to make them pay. Some will even fight to their own deaths, or until all the undead and their turncoat underlings are slain, whichever comes first. In fact, most loathe the mortals who serve the undead of their own free will even more than the vampires themselves. Both of these behaviors come from the banditos' sense of "street-family loyalty." If you are part of the gang, nobody but your fellow gang members has the right to mess with you. Take down one or more of their fellow gang members and the rest are fit to be tied and hell bent on bloody revenge.

Most Bandit Vampire Hunters have no love for Werewolves, either, and are happy to hunt down and exterminate them and other low level monsters and werebeasts. However, they draw the line at fighting creatures of magic and other types of demons, including Sub-Demons like the Brodkil. Nor will they tangle with practitioners of magic. They are "Vampire Hunters" after all, not the law. And certainly not real heroes.

In fact, when out in the wild where there are no eyewitnesses, Bandit Vampire Hunters may engage in cattle rustling, stealing horses, hold-ups and robbery, and even kill and rob lawmen, other Vampire Hunters, travelers, adventurers and heroes. Particularly if they think they can get away with it without serious losses or consequences. Speaking of consequences, the one group many banditos of all stripes usually leave alone is *Reid's Rangers*. There are too many Rangers and they have a reputation for hunting down anyone who crosses them to deal out lethal justice. It may be unofficial and unspoken, but Reid's Rangers are "the Law" in Mexico, and nobody questions a Ranger when he's dealing out justice at the end of a rope, firing squad or wooden stake.



There are only a few gangs of Bandit Vampire Hunters who live and operate in Mexico. Most are based up north on the other side of the Rio Grande River, in “civilized country” away from vampires. So it should be no surprise that some bands of *Pecos Bandits* double as Vampire Hunters when opportunities in the North are slow or things get too hot for them with the law or the Coalition States. Few lawmen and gunfighters will pursue a wanted criminal very far into vampire country before turning around and heading home. That goes for the Coalition Army as well.

Bandit Vampire Hunter O.C.C. Abilities:

These sidewinders possess real vampire fighting knowledge, and make up for what they lack with ruthless fighting tactics and pure guts and daring.

1. Lore: Vampires. The comprehensive study of Undead Vampires, specifically, and other types of undead, in general. The focus on Undead Vampires includes separating truth from fantasy, their true powers, abilities, strengths, weaknesses, ways to destroy them, proper disposal of vampire bodies, and their use of henchmen and servants. It also includes methods and strategies for fighting and slaying vampires as well as stories about their origins, the Vampire Kingdoms, vampire society, their behavior, hideouts and lairs. **Base Skill for the Bandit Vampire Hunter O.C.C.:** 40% +3% per level of experience.

2. Vampire Combat: Knows all the vampires’ weaknesses and vulnerabilities, common tactics, methods of attack, defenses against such attacks and tactics, training in the types of weapons and materials that can damage and slay vampires, and so on.

Note: *Resistance Against Vampire Seduction* and *Resistance Against Vampire Mind Control* are not applicable to this O.C.C.

3. O.C.C. Bonuses Applicable Only When Fighting Vampires: +1 on Perception Rolls involving all aspects of the undead, +2 on Perception Rolls to find their hiding places, +2 on initiative, +2 to strike, parry and dodge, +3 to strike when going to impale/stake the heart, +3 to save vs the Horror Factor of vampires, their protectors and summoned animals.

4. Gut Feelings, Hunches and Realizations Involving Vampires: By third level, the Bandit Vampire Hunter develops a sort of sixth sense about vampires and the dangers they represent. These “feelings” only apply to vampires and their minions.

- Bad feeling that something is not right. The Bandit Vampire Hunter gets a bad feeling when he’s walking into a vampire’s trap. It helps him to recognize a potential ambush site up ahead, decide to take a different route back to camp, and similar. **Success Ratio:** 25% +5% per level of experience; +1 to Perception Rolls and initiative when the hero has a “bad feeling.”
- Feeling that vampires are around or exerting control and influence over a community even though he is told otherwise. “I don’t care what the Sheriff said. There are vampires here. I can feel them.” **Success Ratio:** 35% +5% per level of experience.
- Finding and recognizing evidence of the undead’s presence or involvement, attacks on people, location of a bite from which blood was drawn, evidence of the Slow Kill bite, and/or of vampire influence and visitations. **Success Ratio:** 30% +5% per level of experience.
- Hunch that someone is a vampire servant, henchman or assassin. **Success Ratio:** 35% +5% per level of experience.

- Recognizing a Vampire Mind Slave when he sees one: 40% +4% per level of experience.
- Recognizing a Wild Vampire when he sees one: 80% +3% per level of experience.
- Recognizing a Secondary Vampire when he sees one: 50% +3% per level of experience.
- Recognizing a Master Vampire when he sees one: 40% +3% per level of experience.
- Guess where the vampire's lair is located based on his knowledge of the undead and reports of the vampire's activities and other evidence and survey of the area. **Success Ratio:** 20% +3% per level of experience; +25% when he's at the actual suspected location. "Nope, this isn't it. Wait. What about over there? Yeah, this is more like it." It doesn't hurt that the character is a scoundrel himself, and knows where he'd hide or conceal loot.

Bandit Vampire Hunter O.C.C. Stats

Also Known As: Crooked Vampire Hunters and Rogue Vampire Hunters.

Race: Any, 50% are D-Bees of all kinds from across the Americas.

Alignment: Any, but most are Anarchist (35%), Aberrant (20%), Miscreant (25%) and Diabolic (15%).

Attribute Requirements: I.Q. 9, M.E. 10 or higher, and the guts to prey upon vampires and their minions.

Horror Factor to Vampires and Their Underlings: 8 at level one, +1 at levels 4, 8, and 12.

O.C.C. Skills:

Barter (+10%)

General Athletics

Horsemanship: Cowboy (+5%) or Exotic Animals (+5%).

Intelligence (+5%)

Interrogation (+10%)

Land Navigation (+10%)

Language, Native Tongue: American or Spanish.

Language, Other: Any (+15%).

Lore: Vampires (see Special O.C.C. Abilities above).

Pilot: One of choice excluding Power Armor, Robots and Military. Most prefer small, fast vehicles.

Radio: Basic (+5%)

Climbing (+10%)

Swimming (+10%)

Tailing (+15%) or Streetwise (+15%).

W.P. Handguns

W.P. Rifles or W.P. Shotgun.

W.P. Energy Pistol

W.P.: One of choice (any, Ancient or Modern).

Hand to Hand: Basic, but can be changed to Expert (or Assassin if an Anarchist or evil alignment) at the cost of one "O.C.C. Related Skill," or Martial Arts for the cost of three.

O.C.C. Related Skills: Select four O.C.C. Related Skills at level one, +1 additional skill at levels 3, 6, 9 and 12. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

Communications: Any (+5%).

Cowboy: Any.

Domestic: Any (+5%).

Electrical: Any.

Espionage: Tracking and Wilderness Survival only.

Horsemanship: Any (+5%).

Mechanical: Basic Mechanics and Automotive only (+5%).

Medical: First Aid only.

Military: Camouflage and /Recognize Weapon Quality only (+5%).

Physical: Any, except Acrobatics.

Pilot: Any, except Power Armor, Robots and Military vehicles.

Pilot Related: None.

Rogue: Any (+10%).

Science: Math only (+10%).

Technical: Any, except Computer Operation and Programming.

W.P.: Any.

Wilderness: Any (+5%).

Secondary Skills: Select two skills from the Secondary Skills List on page 300 of **Rifts® Ultimate Edition**, and one additional Secondary Skill at levels 3, 6, 9 and 11. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get any bonuses other than a possible bonus for having a high I.Q. All Secondary Skills start at the base skill level.

Standard Equipment: Mega-Damage body armor of choice, 3D4x10 conventional rounds of ammunition for each W.P. weapon plus the same amount of silver bullets for each weapon, four E-Clips for each energy weapon, bow or crossbow with 30 silver-tipped bolts or arrows, silver knife, Vibro-Knife, one silver-plated or wood weapon for each Ancient W.P., 2D4+2 wooden stakes and a mallet, 1D6 cloves of garlic, a six inch (15 cm) wooden cross, a small silver cross (may be worn around the neck on a chain), two canteens, food rations for two weeks, two sets of clothing, a cowboy hat or sombrero, a cloak or poncho, 20 feet (6.1 m) of rope, 1D4 medium-sized sacks, two large sacks, a backback, saddlebag, air filter, gas mask, a pair of sunglasses and some personal items.

Vehicle: One vehicle or riding animal to match Pilot or Horsemanship skill.

Animal Companion: If he has the appropriate skill(s), he has a horse or exotic riding animal.

Money: Starts with 1D4x1,000 credits.

Cybernetics: May have up to 1D4 cybernetic implants of player's choice and one bionic limb or implant.

D-Bee Vampire Hunter Notes

As Erin Tarn notes, many D-Bees find the trade of Vampire Hunter earns them the respect and acceptance that is so hard to find elsewhere. In Mexico, the Yucatan or along the Rio Grande, there are few who would turn down the help of a nonhuman Vampire Hunter. And those who do should be viewed with suspicion for they could be vampire henchmen, servants or sympathizers. Here in the Vampire Lands anyone willing to take a stand against evil and injustice, let alone armed with the knowledge of combating vampires, is welcomed and celebrated. This makes Mexico and Central America, and to a lesser degree, the American Southwest, places where a D-Bee can be a hero of renown, earn the right to be treated as an equal among humans, and be accepted by all. Many D-Bees who hunger for respect and acceptance, or



who have a need to prove themselves or have the simple desire to help people in need, travel to Mexico and learn the trade of Vampire Hunter.

Alignment: Any, but since they have good and noble intentions, most are of good alignment: Principled (20%), Scrupulous (40%), Unprincipled (15%), Anarchist (15%), Aberrant (5%) and other (5%). Most D-Bee Vampire Hunters strive to be the best they can be, and tend to be among the most noble of heroes.

Attribute Requirements: As per race and desire to kill vampires and their minions.

Racial Requirement: Must be a D-Bee – a mortal non-human. See *Rifts® World Book 30: D-Bees of North America* for the stats and descriptions of nearly 100 D-Bees from across North America. Creatures of magic and supernatural beings are not D-Bees.

Horror Factor to Vampires and Their Underlings: As per O.C.C.

Vampire Hunter O.C.C.s Available: A D-Bee can become any one of the following types of Vampire Hunters, with all the corresponding bonuses, skills, special abilities and gear of that O.C.C.:

Bandit Vampire Hunter

Mage Vampire Hunter

Vampire Hunter (see *Rifts® Vampire Kingdoms™, Revised*).

Reid's Ranger Vampire Hunter (see *Rifts® Vampire Kingdoms™, Revised*).

Note: The description for the *Vampire Hunter O.C.C.* starts on page 108 and the *Reid's Ranger Vampire Hunter O.C.C.* (the best of the best) starts on page 110 of *Rifts® World Book 1: Vampire Kingdoms™, Revised*.

O.C.C. Skills: As per chosen Vampire Hunter O.C.C.

O.C.C. Related Skills: As per chosen Vampire Hunter O.C.C.

Secondary Skills: As per the chosen Vampire Hunter O.C.C.

O.C.C./R.C.C. Note: Many D-Bees can select from the same range of occupations (O.C.C.s) as a human, but we're not including them here, because we're talking about D-Bees who are professional Vampire Hunters.

Some R.C.C.s do not allow for the selection of an O.C.C. In that case, use only the R.C.C. skills and natural abilities, which means while the character has devoted his life to fighting vampires and may be considered a vampire hunter, he is NOT a professional with the O.C.C. Abilities of any Vampire Hunter O.C.C., except *Vampire Combat* and *Vampire Lore* with a base skill of 20% +5% per level of experience (+15% skill bonus due to his direct knowledge as a wannabe vampire hunter).

Natural Abilities: As per the D-Bee's race/R.C.C., if applicable.

Attacks per Melee: As per O.C.C. and related skills or R.C.C.

Magic: As per the D-Bee R.C.C. or O.C.C. (Mage Vampire Hunter).

Psionics: As per the D-Bee R.C.C.

Standard Equipment: As per O.C.C. or R.C.C.; some D-Bees may prefer to ride, or are too large and heavy to ride anything but, exotic and monstrous animals rather than a horse.

Animal Companion: As per O.C.C. or R.C.C.

Money: As per O.C.C. or R.C.C.

Cybernetics: As per O.C.C. and R.C.C. limitations.

Mage Vampire Hunter

Any practitioner of magic can elect to fight vampires or any foe, but there are some who have grown up in Mexico and the American Southwest who have been trained – some from childhood – for the specific purpose of fighting the undead. This makes them experts in using magic that impairs, harms and kills vampires. These sorcerers are known as *Mage Vampire Hunters*. Most are heroic and dedicated to finding and annihilating the undead. Those raised from childhood to be a Mage Vampire Hunter usually come from a long, family tradition of Mage Vampire Hunters. Others are often orphans – the soul survivor of a vampire onslaught – and taken in and raised to become their family's avenger. First, however, the young mage must lose the burning hatred and need for vengeance. Such emotions are a recipe for suicide and a waste of talent. No, hate and vengeance must be replaced with commitment and justice.

Mage Vampire Hunters are as skilled at fighting the undead as any professional vampire slayer. They are much more physical than the typical mage, and skilled in a variety of weapons and combat. Their keen focus to battle vampires limits the range of magic available to them, even though they start off with the same training as Ley Line Walkers. It is often said, that this profession is a calling and a lifestyle that, once accepted, can never change. Unlike some vampire specialists, the Mage Vampire Hunter is happy to exterminate any monster that preys upon humans and D-Bees, including werebeasts, demons and creatures of magic. That having been said, Mage Vampire Hunters are more aware than any other O.C.C. that Werecats are the natural enemies of vampires and can make very reliable allies, good travel companions

and even life long friends. These mages are likely to welcome the opportunity to work with Werecats and other Vampire Hunters.

Mage Vampire Hunter O.C.C. Abilities:

Same as the *Bandit Vampire Hunter*, described earlier in this section.

Ley Line Walker O.C.C. Abilities of the Mage Vampire Hunter:

Most Mage Vampire Hunters start out life as Ley Line Walkers and possess the same Special O.C.C. Abilities #1-9 as that O.C.C. See **Rifts® Ultimate Edition**, pages 113-116, for complete details.

1. Sense Ley Line and Magic Energy. Same as the Ley Line Walker.

2. Read Ley Lines. Same as the Ley Line Walker.

3. Ley Line Transmission. Same as the Ley Line Walker.

4. Ley Line Phasing (teleportation). Same as the Ley Line Walker.

5. Ley Line Walking or Line Drifting. Same as the Ley Line Walker.

6. Ley Line Rejuvenation. Same as the Ley Line Walker to *double* the rate of natural healing; instant rejuvenation on a ley line once every 24 hours to heal more.

7. Ley Line Observation Ball. Same as the Ley Line Walker.

8. Affinity with Rift & Ley Line Magic. Same as the Ley Line Walker. **Note:** This ability also makes the Mage Vampire Walker able to sense the presence of a *Vampire Intelligence* with-

in a 500 foot (152 m) radius, but does not enable him to pinpoint its exact location.

9. Ley Line Force Field. Same as the Ley Line Walker.

10. Initial Spell Knowledge of the Mage Vampire Hunter. In addition to the ley line abilities, the Mage Vampire Hunter is a master of spell magic that can be used to stalk, find, fight and destroy vampires, as well as heal and protect the innocent. They tend to avoid dark magic and ritual magic, but can perform rituals if so needed.

The Mage Vampire Hunter starts with the following spells: Armor of Ithan (10), Death Trance (1), Familiar Link (55), Globe of Daylight (2), Lantern Light (1), Lifeblast (15, does 1D6x10 damage to vampires; range is 30 feet/9.1 m per level of experience), Life Source (2+, to help others), Lightblade (20, does 2D4x10 damage to vampires!), Multiple Images (7), Repel Animals (7), See Aura (6), Sense Evil (2), and Turn Dead (6).

11. Learning New Spells. Unlike the true Ley Line Walker and other spell casters, the *Mage Vampire Hunter* is limited in the range of spells he can learn. At each new level of experience, select *three spells* from the list below that have a P.P.E. cost of 14 points, or less, or two with a cost of 15-25, or one spell with a cost of 26 P.P.E. or more.

Available Spell Invocations: This character selects spells that are most suitable in combating and slaying vampires and protecting the innocent. Consequently, the following spells are available for selection: Animate and Control Dead (20), Blinding Flash (1), Breathe Without Air (5), Calling (8), Carpet of Adhesion (10, though vampires can escape by turning to mist), Charismatic Aura (10), Cleanse (6), Climb (3), Concealment (6),



Create Wood (10-20), Desiccate the Supernatural (50), Distant Voice (10), Electric Arc (8, for dealing with minions), Eyes of the Wolf (25), Escape (8), Extinguish Fire (4), Featherlight (10, to help carry weapons and victims), Fire Bolt (7), Float in Air (5), Forcebonds (25), Fuel Flame (5), Globe of Silence (20, to conceal kills and not alert others), Ignite Fire (6), Impervious to Fire (5), Invisibility: Simple (6; to conceal a weapon), Locate (30), Magic Net (7, good for slowing down supernatural opponents), Magic Pigeon (20), Magic Shield (6), Mask of Deceit (15), Metamorphosis: Animal (25), Mystic Fulcrum (5, to pry open tombs), Mystic Portal (60, ideal for getting in and out of lairs), Purification (20), Reduce Self (20, to hide and spy), Restore Limb (80), See the Invisible (4), Seal (7), Shadow Meld (10), Speed of the Snail (50, highly effect against vampires and supernatural opponents), Superhuman Endurance (12), Superhuman Strength (10), Superhuman Speed (10), Sustain (12), Tongues (12), Wind Rush (20), Words of Truth (15), and *any* Healing spells. **Note:** Most of the spells listed above are described in **Rifts® Ultimate Edition**, and those not found there are in the 352 page, **Rifts® Book of Magic**. All are invocations.

Only Ley Line Magic spell invocations and rituals can be learned and/or purchased at any time regardless of the character's experience level. See The Pursuit of Magic on page 190 of Rifts® Ultimate Edition.

12. P.P.E.: Like all practitioners of magic, the Mage Vampire Hunter is a living battery of mystic energy. He draws upon that energy reserve to cast his spells and use magic. **Permanent Base P.P.E.:** 2D6x10+30 added to the character's P.E. attribute number to start. Plus an additional 2D6+2 P.P.E. per each additional level of experience, starting at level two.

Supplemental P.P.E.: Like the Ley Line Walker, this mage can also draw an extra 20 P.P.E. per melee round when on a ley line and 30 when at a ley lines nexus point! P.P.E. can also be stolen from living creatures and people by killing them (hence rituals involving human sacrifices) because their P.P.E. is doubled at the moment of death! However, a character of good or Unprincipled alignment would never do such a thing (except possibly under the most extreme circumstances). People can also willingly give up a portion of their P.P.E. but that's an unusual situation. It's all explained in the section entitled *The Principles of Magic*, page 185 of **Rifts® Ultimate Edition**.

P.P.E. Recovery: For this mage, spent P.P.E. recovers at a rate of seven points per hour of sleep or rest. Meditation restores P.P.E. at 15 per hour and is equal to one hour of sleep for this character when it comes to recovery from fatigue and lack of physical rest.

13. O.C.C. Bonuses. +1D4 on any one mental attribute (I.Q., M.E. or M.A.), +4 to save vs Horror Factor, +2 to save vs possession and mind control (including vampires), +2 to save vs curses, +1 to save vs magic at levels 4, 8, 12 and 15, +1 to Spell Strength (the number others must save against when you cast a spell) at levels 3, 7, 10 and 13. +1 on Perception Rolls at levels 2, 5, 7, 10 and 13; *double* when on a ley line.

Mage Vampire Hunter O.C.C. Stats

Also Known As: Wizard Vampire Slayer.

Alignment: Any, but most are Principled (30%), Scrupulous (30%), Unprincipled (20%), Anarchist (10%) or other.

Attribute Requirements: I.Q. 10, P.E. 12 or higher. A high M.E. is also suggested but not mandatory.

Racial Requirement: None, but 40% are D-Bees of all kinds.

Horror Factor to Vampires and Their Underlings: 10 at level one, +1 at levels 3, 6, 9, 12 and 15.

O.C.C. Skills:

Climbing (+5%)

Math: Basic (+10%)

Land Navigation (+4%)

Language, Native Tongue: American or Spanish at 98%.

Language, Other: Two of choice (+20%).

Literacy: Native Language

Horsemanship: General (+5%) or Pilot: Automobile or Motorcycle (+5%).

Lore: Demons & Monsters (+15%)

Lore: Two of choice (any, +10%).

Wilderness Survival (+5%)

W.P. Knife (includes wooden stakes)

W.P. (Wooden) Staff or W.P. Sword.

W.P.: One of choice (any, Ancient or Modern).

Hand to Hand: Basic; can be changed to Hand to Hand: Expert at the cost of two "O.C.C. Related Skills," or Martial Arts (or Assassin, if an Anarchist or evil alignment) for the cost of three O.C.C. Related Skills.

O.C.C. Related Skills: Select four other skills of choice at level one, and one additional skill at levels 3, 6, 9 and 12. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

Communications: Radio: Basic only.

Cowboy: None.

Domestic: Any (+10%).

Electrical: None.

Espionage: Intelligence only (+5%).

Horsemanship: General and Exotic Animals only.

Mechanical: None.

Medical: First Aid or Paramedic (the latter counts as two skills, +5%) only.

Military: None.

Physical: Any, except Gymnastics and Wrestling.

Pilot: Any (+2%).

Pilot Related: Any (+2%).

Rogue: Any.

Science: Any (+10%).

Technical: Any (+5%).

W.P.: Any.

Wilderness: Any.

Secondary Skills: Select one skills from the Secondary Skills List on page 300 of **Rifts® Ultimate Edition**, and one additional Secondary Skills at levels 5, 9, and 13. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get any bonuses other than a possible bonus for having a high I.Q.. All Secondary Skills start at the base skill level.

Standard Equipment: Ley Line Walker-style clothing or robe, plus cape and/or poncho; many wear a headdress/helmet reminiscent of Native Americans, a set of clothing, a set of traveling clothes, light M.D.C. body armor (seldom wear a full suit and never heavy armor, because it reduces their speed and mobility by half and interferes with magic), knapsack, backpack, 1D4 small sacks, one large sack, canteen, binoculars, tinted goggles or sunglasses, air filter and gas mask, flashlight, 30 feet (9.1 m) of lightweight cord, pocket mirror, 1D6 pens or pencils and note or sketch pad.

Weapons: A survival knife, hand axe, wooden staff (2D6 damage to vampires), 1D6+6 wooden stakes and a mallet (for vampires and other practical applications), one weapon for each W.P. and Mage Vampire Hunters like Techno-Wizard devices and magic items of all kind. The mage and Native American warriors are the most likely to wear and use the magic Bone Weapons of the Bone Werejaguars.

Vehicle or Horse: A reliable horse, robot horse (always if one of Reid's Rangers), or basic vehicle such as a hover vehicle or motorcycle that matches the character's piloting skill.

Animal Familiar: Mage Vampire Hunters almost always have an animal Familiar as per the magic spell. See spell description on page 217 of **Rifts® Ultimate Edition**.

Money: Starts with 2D6x1,000 credits.

Cybernetics: None, because they interfere with spell casting. May consider Bio-System prosthetics to replace lost limbs and organs only.



Native American Vampire Hunters

Many tribes and bands of Native Americans are the unsung heroes in the battle against the undead. They, as much as Reid's Rangers, have been waging war against vampires for generations, especially in the American Southwest and West. More than most of the civilizations in the East and North, they remain aware of the supernatural and spiritual worlds. As such, they know vampires are a very real and present danger. A pox upon the face of the Earth and a threat to all men. All Native Americans, including

the Modern and Renegades, will strike down the undead whenever they have the opportunity. If they believe the danger is too great to handle themselves, they report the presence of the undead to those among them better equipped to deal with such threats. Most notably, the following:

- Mystic Warrior
- Totem Warrior
- Spirit Warrior
- Elemental Shaman
- Fetish Shaman
- Mask Shaman
- Paradox Shaman

All are capable of doing battle with vampires and other evil supernatural beings, malevolent spirits and bad medicine, but the Elemental Shaman and Paradox Shaman are especially driven to keep vampires out of their lands.

A band of Native American Vampire Hunters is likely to have a Paradox Shaman or Elemental Shaman, or Totem Warrior or Spirit Warrior as its leader and include 1D4+1 other Shamans (any, but especially those noted above), 1-2 Mystic Warriors, 1D4 Totem Warriors, 1D4 Spirit Warriors and 1D6+4 Tribal Warriors. In addition, Spirit Warriors, Totem Warriors, Elemental Shamans and Paradox Shamans may hunt vampires on their own, in pairs, and in small groups of 3-6. Such groups are usually entirely the same O.C.C. or comprised of two of the listed O.C.C.s. Native Americans are leery of outsiders, but will welcome most Cyber-Knights, Reid's Rangers, Tundra Rangers, Cyber-Horsemen, Werejaguars and those who they believe are not fools and who possess a heroic and honorable spirit. These plains heroes seldom associate with villains and blackguards such as Bandit Vampire Hunters or Necromancers, even though they can see the potential value of both.

Aside from being rescued by Reid's Rangers, being rescued by or joining forces with Native American Vampire Hunters is the next best thing.

Note: See **Rifts® World Book 15: Spirit West™**.

Alignment: Any, but tend to be Principled (30%), Scrupulous (35%), Unprincipled (20%), Anarchist (10%), and other (5%). Most treat the matter of vampires with life and death seriousness.

Attribute Requirements: As per the respective Native American O.C.C.

Racial Requirement: Must be a Native American; see **Rifts® World Book 15: Spirit West™** for the stats and descriptions of those listed, among others, as well as for Native American magic and magic fetish items and weapons.

Horror Factor to Vampires and Their Underlings: 10 at level one, +1 at levels 3, 6, 9, 12 and 15.

Vampire Hunter Abilities Known per Native American O.C.C.: As listed here.

Mystic Warrior: *Vampire Combat* and *Vampire Lore* with a base skill of 50% +3% per level of experience and all *Gut Feelings* (+10% bonus for each).

Totem Warrior: *Vampire Combat* and *Vampire Lore* with a base skill of 60% +3% per level of experience and all *Gut Feelings* same as the Vampire Hunter O.C.C. This warrior also feels very comfortable with werebeasts, provided they share similar values or seek to destroy the undead and other supernatural menaces. Moreover, a Totem Warrior can recog-

nize a werebeast in human guise, sensing its “animal” nature as its totem. This character also gets along well with Cyber-Knights and other noble warriors and champions of light.

Spirit Warrior: *Vampire Combat* and *Vampire Lore* with a base skill of 60% +3% per level of experience, plus all *Gut Feelings* (+5% bonus for each) and the *Vampire Hunter O.C.C. Bonuses when Fighting Vampires Only*. This character also gets along well with Cyber-Knights and other noble warriors and champions of light.

Elemental Shaman: *Vampire Combat* and *Vampire Lore* with a base skill of 60% +3% per level of experience and all *Gut Feelings* same as the Vampire Hunter O.C.C. This character also gets along well with Elemental Fusionists, Warlocks and other beings with strong connections to one or more of the elements.

Fetish Shaman: *Vampire Combat* and *Vampire Lore* with a base skill of 60% +3% per level of experience and all *Gut Feelings* (+5% bonus) as the Vampire Hunter O.C.C. **Note:** Fetish Weapons created by the Shaman and used by that same Fetish Shaman inflict full damage to the *Dark Weapons* and *Dark Armor* created by Soulcraft Magic and do double damage to *Iron Zombies*, *Iron Guards* and *Soulcrafters*. Fetish weapons given to other people do not have this effect against Soulcraft creations.

Mask Shaman: *Vampire Combat* and *Vampire Lore* with a base skill of 60% +3% per level of experience and all *Gut Feelings* same as the Vampire Hunter O.C.C.; plus the Shaman is impervious to the vampire’s charm, mind control and bite while wearing any of his fetish masks.

Paradox Shaman: *Vampire Combat* and *Vampire Lore* with a base skill of 70% +3% per level of experience and all *Gut Feelings* (+20% bonus on all); plus he is impervious to the vampire’s bite (cannot be turned into a vampire) and +3 to save vs vampire charms and mind control. **Note:** The *Spirit Bow* (page 93 of **Rifts® Spirit West**), whether it fires conventional wooden arrows or energy bolts (range 2,000 feet/610 m for either), inflicts 1D4x10 Hit Point damage to vampires and werebeasts, and does 1D4x10 M.D. to all other supernatural and M.D.C. opponents. While the energy bolts of a Spirit Bow can hurt and seemingly kill a vampire, they only render it unconscious when a vampire’s Hit Points are reduced to zero or below. To permanently slay a vampire, the Shaman must remove its head and burn it and the body separately, as usual.

Any other type of Shaman: *Vampire Combat* and *Vampire Lore* with a base skill of 50% +3% per level of experience only.

Note: Renegades/Modern Native Americans can choose the Vampire Hunter O.C.C. or Reid’s Ranger Vampire Hunter O.C.C. as their occupation. The description for the *Vampire Hunter O.C.C.* and abilities starts on page 108 and the *Reid’s Ranger Vampire Hunter O.C.C.* starts on page 110 of **Rifts® World Book 1: Vampire Kingdoms™ Revised**.

O.C.C. Skills: As per chosen O.C.C.

Secondary Skills: As per chosen O.C.C.

Special Abilities & Totems: As per the Native American O.C.C.

Attacks per Melee: As per O.C.C. and related skills.

Magic: As per the Native American O.C.C.

Psionics: As per the Native American O.C.C.

Standard Equipment: As per the Native American O.C.C. and is likely to include weapons made of wood, the bow and arrow, and fetish items.

Animal Companion: As per the Native American O.C.C., but the vast majority prefer to ride a real horse or other living animal, including exotic and monstrous animals, rather than a robot horse or modern vehicle. The character may also have a totem animal such as a dog or wolf.

Money: As per O.C.C.

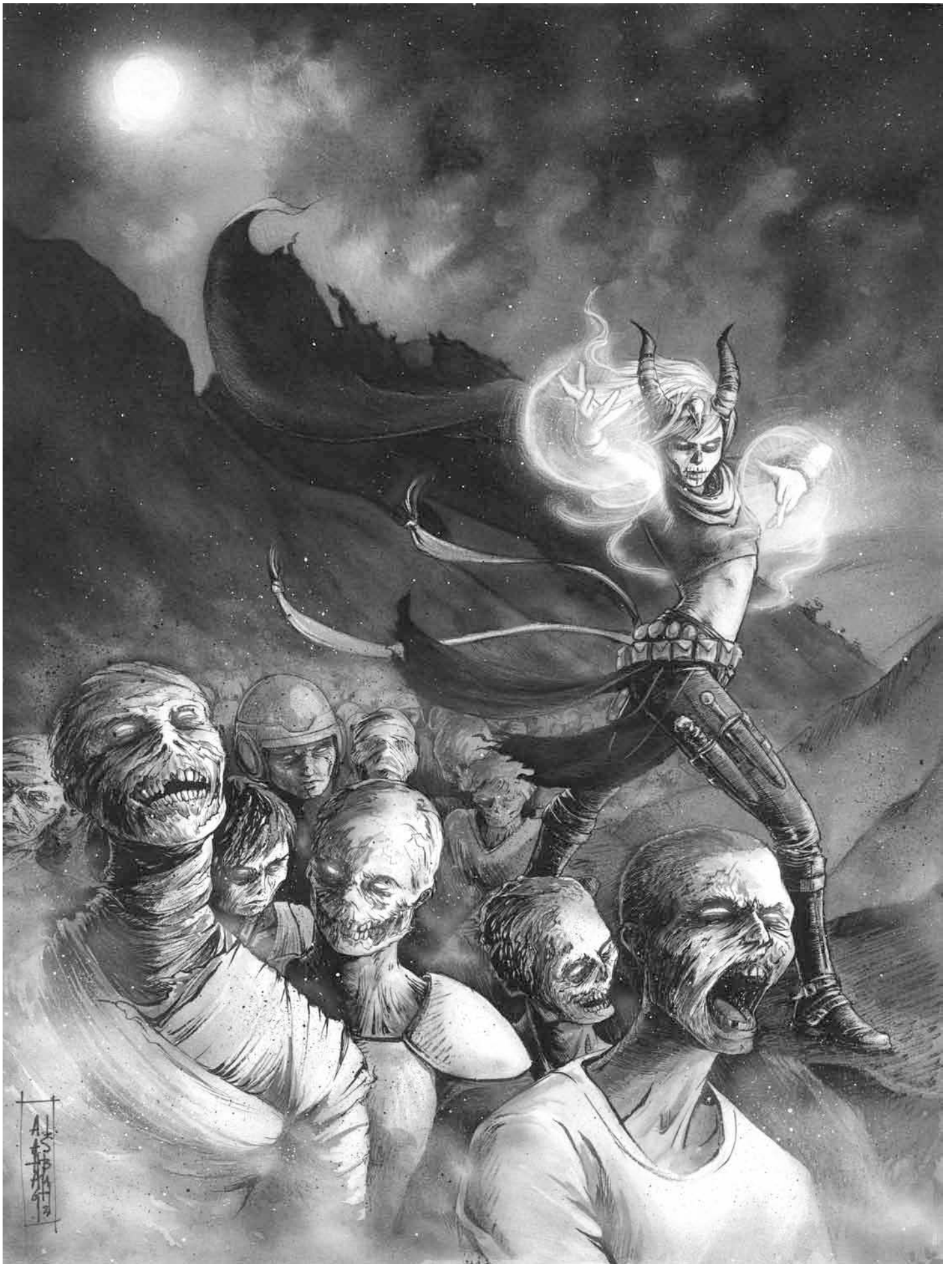
Cybernetics: As per O.C.C., but Native Americans try to avoid cybernetics and bionics as it removes them from the natural and spiritual worlds.

Hero Necromancers of Mexico

Despite the dark and gruesome nature of their magic, *Necromancer Vampire Hunters* hold a solemn and welcomed place among the people of Mexico. They are cheered and revered as heroes and protectors. Their so-called “dark magic” is used to save lives and protect the innocent. It was Doc Reid who first recognized the value of Necromancy and the power that an army of animated dead, armed with simple wooden weapons, could have over vampires. Animated dead are like puppets. They know no fear, have no desire, and do as instructed. Simple instructions like “kill” or “stop the vampire” are perfect. When torn to pieces by a vampire there is no life to mourn, as the skeleton or corpse was little more than a puppet or kindling wood. All of this makes animated dead the perfect front-line troops and defenders against vampires. Doc Reid has even convinced many people of Mexico that they should feel honored and blessed – not distressed – when they see their dead relatives animated, for their ancestors fight to protect and save the living. Strictly speaking, that last part is poppycock. Still, it has worked to make people feel better about seeing the graves of their loved ones defiled and their remains used in combat. Some have even convinced themselves it is a miracle of love.

This tactic has proven so effective that villages and towns already liberated and protected by Reid’s Rangers have agreed to another tactic. Burying the dead in shallow graves and with weapons of wood and silver in their hands, along with a rosary around their neck, wrapped around a wrist or dangling from a pocket. Thus, when a band of vampires threatens the town, the resident Necromancer (probably a Reid’s Ranger or a trusted associate) can raise the dead and send them against the vampire invaders. Some towns even have a night patrol of animated dead and/or mummies or zombies commanded by a Necromancer. Of course, the Necromancer is always well guarded and escorted by at least 2-4 Reid’s Rangers (or other guardians) wherever he goes. The use of *mummies* and *zombies* are even more effective shocktroops than animated dead, as the Necromancer has much more control over them and can send such dead automatons off on their own. (See the description of Reid’s Ranger, **Planktal-Nakton**, for more details about the deployment of mummies and zombies in the coming war.)

This has turned Necromancers willing to use their dark arts to protect the innocent into respectable champions of the community. What they may do behind closed doors, most people ignore



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or turn a blind eye. What sort of problem Necromancers may represent after the vampires are eliminated (if that's even possible), is a concern for another time.

This is an exceptional opportunity for Necromancers of good and selfish alignments who often lament that their profession and craft has an undeserved reputation for evil. For them, this is a chance to do good and prove to the world otherwise. Animated dead, mummies and zombies are also used to clear battlefields and wreckage, haul lumber and supplies, and perform other simple tasks. Animated dead really are like puppets, and mummies and zombies are like simple robots, all of which can be used to protect people, fight and perform menial tasks.

The Necromancers participating in the campaign against the Vampire Kingdoms enjoy the conflict, battles and power it brings them as much as anything else. They, like other outcasts looking for a place in the world, have found Mexico to be a land where they can put down roots, build a life, and hold their heads up high. Indeed, here, among the farmers, ranchers and downtrodden, they are heroes.

Necromancy and Necromancers

The Necromancer appears in a few Rifts® titles, but the best and most comprehensive presentation of the character, his powers and the magic of Necromancy, appears in **Rifts® World Book 18: Mystic Russia**. A good representation of Necromancy spells is also found in the **Rifts® Book of Magic**.

Special Necromancer O.C.C. Abilities:

As per the O.C.C. Includes:

1. Union with the Dead: The ability to attach body parts of the dead to his own body to attain different abilities.

2. Augmentation with Additional Limbs: The ability to attach body parts of the dead to his own body as extra limbs.

3. Animate and Control the Dead: As per this ability or as per the spell of the same name.

4. Impervious to Vampires: Cannot be mind controlled, charmed or turned into a vampire.

5. Horror Factor: Six, +1 at levels 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13 and 15. This H.F. applies to beings other than vampires. For vampires, the H.F. is greater, 11 at level one, +1 at levels 3, 6, 9, 12 and 15.

6. Magic: As below.

P.P.E.: Base P.P.E. is 2D4x10 plus P.E. attribute number. Add 2D6 P.P.E. per each additional level of experience.

Bonuses: +10 S.D.C., +1 to save vs magic of all kinds (in addition to P.E. bonuses), +2 to save vs Necromancy spells, +6 to save vs Horror Factor. O.C.C. Attribute bonuses from physical training and magic: +1 to M.E., P.E., and P.S., and +4 to Spd.

Initial Spell Knowledge: In addition to the special abilities listed above, the Necromancer can select six Necromancy/Bone Magic spells (regardless of level) and six common Spell Invocations associated with Necromancy. The list and description of all available spells are found in the section entitled *Necro-Magic* in **Rifts® World Book 18: Mystic Russia** and in the **Rifts® Book of Magic**.

Learning New Spells: Additional spells and rituals related to Necromancy (see lists) can be learned or purchased at any time regardless of the character's experience level. See the section entitled *The Pursuit of Magic* in the **Rifts® Ultimate Edition**, page 190.

Bone Magic is Necromancy that originates in Russia. It is the ability to enchant bones with magical properties and to use bones as building materials. All Russian Necromancers start with a fundamental knowledge of this magic and two additional spells plus they have two specific bone items. Non-Russian Death Mages can select four additional Necromancy spells. See **Rifts® World Book 18: Mystic Russia** or **Rifts® Book of Magic** for the descriptions of these spells.

Necromancer Heroes and Vampire Hunters

Alignment: Under normal circumstances, the vast majority of Necromancers are evil or selfish. However, thanks to the efforts (and iron fist) of Doc Reid and his Rangers, Necromancer Vampire Hunters of good and selfish alignments are the norm in Mexico: Scrupulous (20%), Unprincipled (30%), Anarchist (30%), Aberrant (10%) and others. **Note:** Heroic Necromancers often run off villainous Necromancers because they ruin their good reputations.

Attribute Requirements: I.Q. 10, M.E. 10 and P.E. 12 or higher.

Racial Requirement: None, 35% are D-Bees of all kinds.

Horror Factor to Vampires and Their Underlings: 11 at level one, +1 at levels 3, 6, 9, 12 and 15.

Vampire Hunter Special Abilities: *Vampire Combat*, *Vampire Lore*, and all *Gut Feelings* as per the *Vampire Hunter O.C.C.* or *Reid's Ranger Vampire Hunter O.C.C.*, depending whether the Necromancer is a card carrying member of the Rangers or not. **Note:** The description for the *Vampire Hunter O.C.C.* starts on page 108 and the *Reid's Ranger Vampire Hunter O.C.C.* (the best of the best), starts on page 110 of **Rifts® World Book One: Vampire Kingdoms™ Revised**.

O.C.C. Skills: As per the Necromancer O.C.C.

O.C.C. Related Skills: As per the Necromancer O.C.C.

Secondary Skills: As per the Necromancer O.C.C.

Attacks per Melee: As per the Necromancer O.C.C. and related skills.

Magic: Necromancy/Bone Magic.

Psionics: As per chance via the character's race.

Standard Equipment: Robe or cloak, leather gloves, box of 100 surgical gloves, a couple sets of clothing, boots, 2D4 large sacks, large satchel or suitcase, box of 50 large zip-top plastic bags, sleeping bag, backpack, utility/ammo-belt, canteen, sunglasses or tinted goggles, air filter or gas mask, infrared distancing binoculars, two hand shovels, one hand axe, Wilk's laser scalpel, food rations for a week, and personal items. Vehicle is limited to non-military means of transportation, and may include a hover vehicle, motorcycle or riding animal.

Weapons: Necromancer Vampire Hunters of Mexico adore Werejaguar Bone Weapons and will want to acquire, wear and use 1D6+6 of them! They'll also find Soulcraft Dark Weapons interesting and desirable.

More traditional weapons include a silver and a wooden knife, sacrificial short sword (usually ornate and gilded in a precious metal), 2D4 wooden stakes, a wooden mallet, a palm-sized mirror, a dozen flares, an energy pistol with 1D6 E-Clips and one or two other weapons of choice. The Necromancer tends to prefer magic weapons and devices over technological ones, including Rune Weapons, Bone Magic creations, Techno-Wizard devices and most other types of magic items, including Dark Weapons. Necromancers find Soulcrafting mag-

ic to be a fascinating but rival form of magic. Though they will use Dark Weapons, Necromancers hate and kill Soulcrafters.

Animal Companion: Seldom has one, other than a riding animal, and most Necromancers prefer to ride a robot horse or vehicle. (The animal prefers it that way too.)

Money: 2D6x1,000 in credits and 2D6x1,000 in tradeable goods.

Cybernetics: None, because they interfere with spell casting. May consider Bio-System prosthetics to replace lost limbs and organs only.

Werecat:

Bone Werejaguar

See the description of the *Bone Werejaguars of Palenque*, their Hunting Magic, Bone Metamorphic Weapons and their stance on vampires in the section about Werebeasts and the Yucatan.

Werecat Vampire Hunter R.C.C.

By Matthew Clements

Most *Werejaguars* and many *Werepanthers* and *Wereocelots* have taken the civil war with the vampires and their Werewolf allies personally. They have honed their supernatural skills for hunting vampires and use some of the specialized weapons that humans and D-Bees use for killing bloodsuckers. *Silver weapons* are also good for putting down their brethren who have sided with the vamps, a duty that such Werecats take on as a solemn and cleansing act. Silver-tipped claws are especially popular, as are simple wooden and silver-plated knives, spikes and stakes that can be worn unobtrusively as a necklace or bracelet and slipped on when a Werecat Vampire Hunter morphs into animal or monster form and prepares to do battle with the undead. Those who have befriended the Bone Werejaguars of Palenque may also have a few *Metamorphic Weapons*, as the Werejaguars are happy to share them with allies. Of course, since a werebeast's bites and physical attacks can naturally harm vampires (as well as other werebeasts), they are the only type of Vampire Hunter that does not have to rely on specialized equipment or magic.

While Werecats who are not hunters of the undead tend not to use weapons or equipment, living off the land in much the same way as their animal cousins, *Werecat Vampire Hunters* often arm themselves with silver-plated knives, machetes, hatchets, wooden javelins and spears, and wooden stakes. Such weapons complement a Werecat Vampire Hunter's supernatural combat abilities to damage the undead. As animalistic predators, Werecats tend to shy away from machines and mechanical weapons such as guns and explosives. They also like to stalk and pick off their prey one by one or attack in ambush, pouncing without warning and killing quickly before the monster can metamorph and escape.

There are many small groups and tribes of Werecats who have become Vampire Hunters. Some even allow humans and D-Bees in their tribe, though some do not. They usually claim a certain territory of jungle and keep it free of the undead. Sometimes they

mount missions and expeditions into vampire or human territory, on the hunt for vampires and their servants and allies. Even more daring are double-agent operations, where a Vampire Hunter infiltrates a group of werebeasts who have joined forces with the vampires, for the purpose of picking them off one by one, and sneaking valuable information about the enemy to his or her vampire hunting tribe members.

The Werejaguar is the most likely to become a Vampire Hunter, the *Werepanther* next, and the *Wereocelot* the least.

In a way, *Werecats* and vampires are *natural enemies*. Instinct, as much as anything, drives these beings to hunt vampires and Werewolves. It is the same instinct that makes all felines see rodents, rabbits and small animals as prey and canines as natural enemies. Think about it. In addition to vampires being a danger to the living and the natural order in general, what do vampires turn into? *Bats*, which are feline prey and playthings, and wolves. In addition to vampires being able to take the wolf form, they can also control canines, which are the natural enemies of cats. This makes the nature of vampires much more aligned to canines, which is why some Werewolves may work with them and *Werecats* take an instant dislike to them. As a result, all *Werecats* see vampires as a rivals or enemies, and never trust them. It is the intelligent part of a *Werecat's* brain and their lust for power or a resentment of humans that leads some *Werecats* to join forces with the undead. Such vampire allies are the exception, however, not the rule.

Special R.C.C. Abilities and Skills for Werecat Vampire Hunters

These skill apply only to *Werecats* who have dedicated their lives to hunting and destroying vampires.

1. Lore: Vampires. Through observation, instinct and the ongoing raids and running battles, *Werecats* know as much about vampires as any Vampire Hunters. *Werecat Vampire Hunters* operate in small hunting parties and share their wisdom and experience with each other. Veteran *Werecat Vampire Hunters* have also been known to travel amongst the scattered *Werecat* communities, teaching the fundamentals to eager apprentices. **Base Skill:** 52% +3% per level of experience. **Note:** See page 109 of **Rifts® Vampire Kingdoms™ Revised** for complete details on this ability.

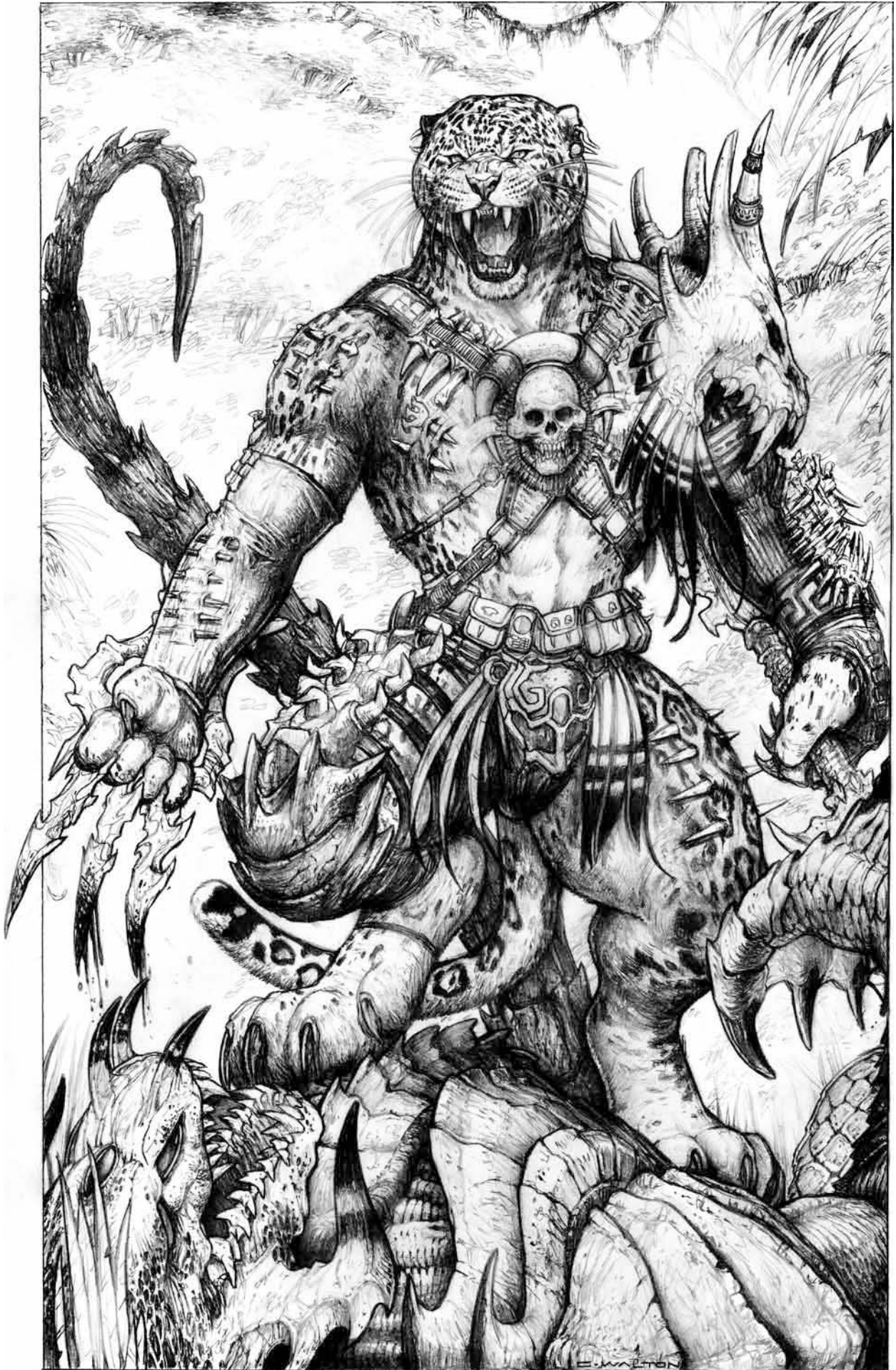
2. Vampire Combat: Even though their supernatural qualities allow them to harm vampires with simple hand to hand attacks, *Werecat Vampire Hunters* still know the basics of staking, using silver and garlic, as well as vampire behavior like shape-changing, mind control, the location of lairs, etc.

3. Resistance Against Vampire Seduction: +1 to save vs vampire pheromone-based trance at levels 1, 3, 5, 8, 11 and 14.

4. Resistance Against Vampire Mind Control: +2 to save vs Mind Control and +3 to save vs Hypnotic Suggestion.

5. O.C.C. Bonuses Applicable Only when Fighting Vampires: +3 on Perception Rolls involving all aspects of the undead (+2 on other Perception Rolls), +3 on initiative, +2 to strike, parry and dodge, +3 to strike when going to impale/stake the heart, +1 to save vs insanity, +4 to save vs the Horror Factor from vampires and similar creatures, their protectors and summoned animals.

6. Gut Feelings, Hunches and Realizations Involving Vampires: Vampire Hunters develop a kind of instinct for the undead after attaining a few levels of experience. **Note:** See page 109 of



Rifts® Vampire Kingdoms™ Revised for complete details on this ability. Success ratios are the same but ALL get an additional +6% bonus.

7. Nocturnal Hunters. Unlike humans and most D-Bees who are active during the day, all Werecats are nocturnal hunters. They can see in total darkness and feel completely at ease stalking undead prey at night. **Bonus:** +5% to Prowl at night and in darkness.

Werecat Vampire Hunter R.C.C.

Alignment: Any, as per the Werecat species. Werejaguars tend to be good or selfish alignments. Most traditional Vampire Hunters are of good alignments and this is true of most Werecat Vampire Hunters as well, though there are even evil Werecats driven to hunt the undead out of revenge or hatred.

Attribute Requirements: None, any Werecat can decide to become a Vampire Hunter. A high M.E. and M.A. are helpful but not required.

Horror Factor: 12 in half-animal half-man form. None in human form.

R.C.C. Skills: As per what is normal for the Werecat species (see the Werebeast section of this book for full R.C.C. details), plus the Special Abilities described and the following:

Lore: Demons and Monsters (+10% with an additional +10% for knowledge about the monsters of Mexico, Central and South America).

Tailing (+20%)

Tracking (people) (+10%, but +15% to track vampires and Werewolves).

W.P. Knife

W.P. Spear

W.P. Targeting or W.P. Sword.

W.P.: One of choice (any, Ancient or Modern).

Secondary Skills: None.

Standard Equipment: Werecat Vampire Hunters typically travel light, like most Werecats. Clothing, if any, is usually limited to buckskin loincloths, belts with pouches, belts and straps, and adornments using feathers, teeth, skulls and bones, or bits of strapped on armor or padding for the shoulders and knees when in humanoid form. They may also carry 1D4+2 cloves of garlic or wolfsbane. For going into civilization, they take human form and wear loincloths or homespun pants and ponchos, carry one or more weapons, and 1D4x1,000 credits worth of gold, gems or silver.

Weapons: 1-4 weapons, depending on size and preference, for each W.P. Sharp, silver claw-caps placed over their natural claws are common Werecat Vampire Hunter gear (adds 3D4 damage to vamps and werebeast opponents) and are a kind of badge of honor amongst their numbers. They can be worn as a necklace or bracelet, or in a pouch to keep out of the way during shape-changing, and tacked onto the claws just before combat. A Werecat Vampire Hunter is usually also armed with a silver-plated knife (1D6 damage), 1 or 2 machetes (2D4 S.D.C./Hit Points), 1D4+2 javelins or 1D6+2 wooden stakes, and one spear. Some use a blowgun with 3D6 wooden darts (1D4 damage) and 2D6 silver darts (1D4 damage; double to vampires and werebeasts) instead of one of the other, more common weapons.

Money: Most Werecats have even less need or interest in money than vampires. On field operations, they sometimes carry

1D6x1,000 credits with them for dealing with local humans, or may capture and trade exotic animals, animal skins, herbs and other natural, jungle goods that humans value.

Cybernetics: None, ever. The supernatural healing powers of Werecats makes them unable to incorporate bionics or cybernetic enhancements.

Reid's Rangers

By Braden Campbell and Kevin Siembieda

The Unspoken War

An excerpt from a letter by Erin Tarn to the Council of Learning at Lazlo; Autumn 108 P.A.

While war rages between the Coalition Army and the forces of Tolkeen, I have learned of an *Unspoken War* between the living and the dead that rages on south of the Rio Grande and Ciudad Juarez. It is a war that will have consequences as great as the current siege on Tolkeen. It is a war few speak about, not even us. But it is time we started a serious dialogue.

We allow ourselves to sleep at night because this Unspoken War is unknown to the people north of Lone Star and is taking place in far-away Mexico. But I ask, how long can we turn a blind eye? How long can we leave these people forgotten and alone? I understand it is a dirty secret no government speaks about in public, for like the threat of the Xiticix insectoids, the danger is so great it is best not to worry the public. But is that who we are as a people? To leave those we know are suffering at the hands of monsters to their own horrific fate? It is certainly not fair to the people of Mexico. Besides, our own reconnaissance teams from Lazlo have confirmed the Vampire Kingdoms are real and a threat beyond measure. We now also know that independent investigations by the Army of the Coalition States and agents of Northern Gun confirm the vampire threat is a grave one.

Since this letter is sent to those who know well of such matters, I do not need to summarize the details of this threat nor speak of the atrocities that take place in the Vampire Kingdoms every day. Instead, I ask that we put this threat at the top of our list right under the Xiticix, and begin to formulate a more decisive plan of action. If nothing else, at least something to help these people and save ourselves from a similar fate in the future. For surely that day is coming.

I understand that the tragic events unfolding at Tolkeen and the Coalition's War of Unity against all non-humans and practitioners of magic are of more immediate concern, but how much longer can we ignore the undead in Mexico? I was told by an Atlantean that whenever vampires are able to establish even one kingdom, it is the first step in global conquest. To have two or more such kingdoms is tantamount to disaster. His companion, a strange D-Bee who I suspect was a Lemurian, but who declined to identify himself or his people, was even more upset. After

pressing me for information and details about the danger and talking about how this situation cannot be allowed to persist, they went off, lost in serious discussion.

As you know, my own research suggests the vampires of Mexico and the American Southwest grow in numbers and aggression. Border incidents are on the rise, not only from lone vampires, but bands of them, both wild and intelligent. I predict it is only a matter of time before there is a major incident somewhere like *El Paso*, *the Pecos Empire* or *Arzno*. (See **Rifts® World Book 28: Arzno** for what does, indeed, unfold.) And if the vampires should make a coordinated push northward, who is to stop them? The Pecos Empire? The skeleton force of the Coalition at Lone Star? Who? We need to be prepared for this eventuality, because it is coming and we are not prepared for it.

Only **Reid's Rangers** have managed to build a small army of guerilla fighters who fight to protect the innocent and defend crossroads to the north. Whatever you may think of *Doc Reid* and his methods, they have single-handedly kept hope alive in the Vampire Lands. It is beyond my understanding how the notorious Doc Reid and his Rangers have survived the retribution of the undead for more than two decades now, but I'm glad they have. While I know many contend Reid's Rangers are "managing" the vampire problem, that assertion is beyond ludicrous. I was the first to read the report you commissioned from Kenneth Reid, and while I applaud this first, serious effort to delve into the vampire problem, there were things left unsaid.

Though my recent visit to Fort Reid was exceedingly short, it was sufficient for me to make some important observations. Doctor Kenneth Reid is both brilliant and insane. He is obsessed with the undead and their destruction, and though a valuable resource, I fear he is also quite unstable, as are many of his top commanders. I suppose fighting monsters such as vampires would unhinge anyone, but that doesn't change the situation. Worse, while Doc Reid has risen to the stature of messiah and has managed to raise an army of warriors, the rate of attrition among his forces is catastrophic. It is only his status as a demigod among the locals that enables him to replenish lost forces by the thousands, with new recruits. However, they are green and half are destined to die in a matter of months after becoming a Ranger. How long can Reid's Rangers press forward like this before they are finally wiped out to a man?

It is the larger than life persona of Doc Reid and his Rangers, and their perceived righteousness, that cause so many to flock to them and join their ranks. Reid's Rangers also inspire others to emulate them and join their crusade. After word began to circulate that Doc Reid was building a permanent base of operations in the *Chihuahuan Desert*, hundreds of people began to travel there. Today that number is said to be in the thousands. The goals of those who arrive are always the same: To study under the masters, to fight at the side of their heroes, and perhaps to one day become the next generation of Reid's Rangers. Over the past nineteen years, "the Rangers" have grown from an initial group of a hundred, led by eight or nine rogues, into a fighting force of several thousand. They are bold, powerful men and women committed to the destruction of the undead and their supernatural kith and kin. They have freed hundreds of tiny communities from the vampires and have saved tens of thousands of lives. The exact number of undead to have perished at their hands must certainly range in the thousands, and thus, every Ranger, whether they be a veteran or a new initiate, has the love

and respect of the people and the enmity of the undead. But this is not enough to sustain Reid's Rangers indefinitely. They need our support. And they need it now. If not with troops, can we at least start with medical supplies, weapons and equipment?

It is true that an increasing number of independent groups of mercenaries and adventurers from the Pecos Empire and New West are heading south to join the Unspoken War, but how much can they contribute? I was heartened to hear that *True Atlanteans* and the enigmatic *Shemarrians* have begun to take part in the Unspoken War. Moreover, there are reports of beings possessing unknown magic and technology who call themselves *Lemurians*, beginning to join the fight in growing numbers. Whether these Lemurians are the same aquatic people we've heard tell about remains unclear at this time. Doc Reid seems to think they'll make valuable allies who could "change the tide in the war." While the same might be said about Shemarrian warrior women, nobody seems to like or trust these evasive and aloof D-Bees.

But is this really a war?

It seems to me, the Vampire Kingdoms have refrained from making a decisive show of power against Reid's Rangers for fear it would galvanize the military powers in the North. Civilizations like us and the Coalition States, who might raise an army if they ever realized the depth of power at the command of the Vampire Kingdoms. This suggests the vampires are not ready for all-out-war with humanity in the Americas. That is very good news for us. It also means we cannot wait until they are ready. If we do, we are the ones doomed to live under the yoke of monsters.

If nothing else, we need to provide Reid's Rangers with more resources and support. We can keep the danger quiet and unspoken, but we must do what we can to escalate the obliteration of the undead. As you know, I am a woman of peace, but on this matter, the mad Doc Reid and I are of the same mind.

– Erin Tarn, *Autumn*, 108 P.A.

Fort Reid

The Home of Doc Reid and His Rangers

Estimated Population: 10,200

- 20% are workers and families who are permanent residents of the town; about half are D-Bees. Level 1D6.
- 25% are humans under the age of 21, mostly peasants who dream of becoming warriors. Those who have finished their training are level 1D4 Reid's Ranger Vampire Hunters.
- 30% are D-Bee warriors who have finished their training and are level 1D4+1 Reid's Ranger Vampire Hunters.
- 12% are humans over the aged 21 or older, many are mercenaries. Level 1D6+2.
- 8% are D-Bees over the aged 21 or older, many are mercenaries. Level 1D6+3.
- 5% are specialists, including Necromancers, Mage Vampire Hunters, Warlocks, Ley Line Walkers, Lemurians, even some Werebeast Vampire Hunters, and other specialized mages and warriors; about half are D-Bees. There is a wide range of experience; level 1D4+4.

Related Data:

- An estimated 1,200-1,500 Rangers wander Mexico and Central America destroying vampires and evil wherever they are found.
- An additional 2,000 Rangers are scattered on missions throughout Old Mexico and the former American Southwest (Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas). A few will even find their way as far north as Canada and as far east as Missouri.
- 5,000 peasants and refugees, mostly human, live in tiny villages and camps scattered around the fort within a two mile (3.2 km) radius.
- There are many small towns, villages and farm communities within a 200 mile (320 km) radius around Fort Reid that have been “cleansed” of vampires, sometimes several times, who are loyal friends and supporters of the Rangers. There are other, similar communities scattered throughout Northern Mexico, but they do not have frequent contact with the Rangers nor do they consider themselves part of the Reid’s Ranger community.

Fort Reid is the largest and most secure human stronghold in all of Old Mexico. It is also the manifestation of its founder’s burgeoning ambition – some would say, madness.

The town itself was carved out of the ruins of Torreon, a pre-Rifts city situated along the banks of the Nazas River that once boasted several universities and an international airport. Torreon was also home to the *Cristo de las Noas*, a seventy foot (21.3 m) tall statue of Christ, and the third largest such statue in Latin America.

Like most of the Mexican interior, Torreon was spared the initial destruction brought on by the *Coming of the Rifts* thanks to a dearth of ley lines. Only with the earthquakes and plagues that followed were the buildings toppled and the original population largely wiped out. The sand and mesquite trees crept back, burying the streets and highways. The dams that held the river in check gave way, and the Nazas returned to its original, mighty flow. All along its shores, herds of dinosaurs made their home, and the Mexican wolf, which had been on the verge of extinction, returned in numbers not seen for centuries. By the year 90 P.A., the area around Torreon had become a pristine, primal desert, dotted only by the broken relics of a former age. It was also filled with *Chupacabras* and packs of *Wild Vampires*. Into this setting came the original Rangers.

After several months of successful campaigning, the group found itself engaged in battle against a particularly large tribe of vampires. Half of the tribe was composed of Secondary Vampires and led the rest of the Wild Vampires in the tribe. They roamed over the territory from dens hidden in the desert, raiding villages and attacking travelers. Though they fought to the best of their abilities and ultimately carried the day, the members of the Vampire Hunter party became separated from one another.

Doc Reid, in particular, found himself alone and without water, wandering aimlessly for days. Wounded and severely dehydrated, he consigned himself to the fact that he would die before his comrades could find him. His head swam with the heat, his lips cracked and bled, and he began to hallucinate, hearing the voice of his long-dead mother berating him for not bringing an extra canteen. That was why, as he crested one final hill, he refused to believe his eyes.

Below him was a valley through which a river flowed, clean and inviting. On the valley floor were ruined buildings in which he could shelter himself from the sun. There was also, rising up from the soil with arms outstretched, a gigantic, white effigy of the messiah. To Reid, it was a sign of destiny as surely as a dove bearing an olive branch in its beak. His life would not come to an end as he had feared, but rather fate had delivered him to a promised land. By the time he was finally located by the other members of this team, he had it all worked out. Here would he end his wanderings and plant his estate. In this valley, upon these ruins, he would found a kingdom, a beacon for those who opposed the undead.

Together the Rangers began to build their fort, clearing out the most intact of Torreon’s buildings. Before long, they were joined by local peasants, refugees and travelers who offered to help the Rangers erect defensive walls in exchange for protection from the vampire hordes. This, in turn, drew others to the ruins, and by the year 95 P.A., Fort Reid boasted a population of more than four hundred. When the original Rangers began to instruct new recruits in the art of dispatching vampires, the population grew again as people from all across Northern Mexico flocked to the site.

While the *Nazas River* provides more than enough water to supply the needs of a sizable settlement, the area outside Fort Reid remains arid at the best of times. Even with extensive use of irrigation ditches and reservoirs, the land simply cannot grow enough food to completely feed the population at the fort. Nor is there much trace of the two other elements essential to vampire slaying: silver and wood. However, such commodities are available in places like Ciudad Juarez and the Cave of Crystals. There was, therefore, no choice but to try and engage in trade of some kind. The question then became, what did Fort Reid have that was worth exchanging?

The reclusive Elementalists at the Cave were happy to accept manpower, agreeing to provide silver to the Rangers if they could keep the area clear of vampires. In Juarez however, where the government refused to even admit they had a vampire problem, a different accommodation had to be reached. The dinosaurs that freely roamed along the Nazas River were in high demand by northern travelers and animal handlers, and so twice a year, brave adventurers from Fort Reid conduct what can only be described as a “dino drive.” They corral together as many of the creatures as they can and, like the cattlemen of yesteryear, walk them slowly over 420 miles (672 km) of open country. Once the caravan arrives in Juarez, the dinosaurs are traded for silver, wood, food, weapons, E-Clips, and anything else that the Rangers need.

Today, Fort Reid is a bustling community of ten thousand plus. A hundred or more new recruits gather in every diner, or bustle about in the streets. Their words are filled with dreams of crushing evil, becoming famous, and the virtues of Reid’s Rangers. A visitor or new recruit might well imagine the town to be a modern-day Camelot, and the men and women within its walls as the knights-errant who travel the land, rooting out injustice or heroic cowboys taking down desperados. This heady feeling of hope is something quite unique to the average people of Rifts Earth, and in particular, Mexico. It is a rare thing for them to dream of a brighter tomorrow, and the presence of the original Rangers at the Fort only exacerbates their fervor. When not off leading a campaign to right some wrong, the likes of *Raoul Lazarious*, *Grizzly Carter*, *Carlotta la Blanca*, *Mii-tar the Destroyer*,



Vyurr Kly, Meetal the Butcher and the others, teach the recruits the art of combat and beguile them with tales of adventure.

The majority of volunteers who come to the fort are farmers and shepherds. Many are mere children, boys in their early teens. Others are young men and women with high ideals and soaring spirits. Few know anything about waging war or slaying vampires. They are given two to four weeks of the most rudimentary combat training, taught the basics of vampire lore, given suitable weapons for the task, and finally, are dubbed “Rangers.” They are then sent on missions that the best trained soldier would be hard-pressed to accomplish. When they die, and they die by the truck-full, a story of bravery and sacrifice is sung in their name. In death they have become titanic heroes, martyrs for a great cause. For their families, their lives and deaths seem to have been given meaning. In their home villages they are remembered as the valiant who fought to free their families from the tyranny of the vampire menace. Their graves are covered with flowers and tokens of gratitude. It was enough that they were members of Reid’s Rangers, there need not be any questions regarding how or why they died. Their deaths also serve to inflame more youths to rush to join the ranks of the Rangers so that their brethren may be avenged.

If Fort Reid is some kind of new Camelot, and the original Rangers are the Knights of the Round Table, then *Doctor Kenneth Reid* surely plays the part of King Arthur. To hear people speak, the man was born to lead his warriors on a noble journey into the pages of history. Indeed, the fame and glory of any who follow him seem assured. At least 60% of those who join the Rangers come just to become one of Doc Reid’s supporters. The would-be heroes trek across miles of open prairie or desert, arriving in the hundreds and from all walks of life. Their dream: To live and perhaps die as one of Reid’s Rangers. It is in this desire, and in the people’s fanatical faith in Doc Reid, that the seeds of destruction may be sown.

The cycle of death perpetuates Doc Reid’s mad delusions of godhood, fuels his crusade against the undead, and drives his quest for immortality. It seems to outsiders, that he seldom considers the consequences of his actions which have condemned so many to the grave. He has come to believe the stories of his own divinity and his destiny to become the savior of the land. Blood must be spilled so that the dream can continue. Not just his dream, but the dream of freedom for millions of people across Mexico. Sacrifices must be made. He accepts this, as do the thousands who so willingly place their lives in his care.

Doc Reid ignores the critics, for how can others, especially outsiders, question his motives? How can they speak of injustice and cruelty when they do not understand, or lack the courage themselves, to make the dream of freedom from the vampires a reality? It is a good dream. A bold dream that Doc Reid holds dear. However, is it a dream born from hope or madness? And what of the methods and motives of some of his lieutenants? Are they part of his plan or something dark and dangerous? Time, as they say, will tell.

Fort Reid Highlights

Designer’s Note: We have used the *City Creation Rules* as found in the **Rifts® Adventure Guide** as the mechanism to design Fort Reid. The basic attributes of the town have been listed below, which are then fleshed out in the pages that follow. Taken

together, they make Fort Reid a believable and memorable setting. We hope it stands as an example of how this creation system enables Game Masters to *quickly create* outposts, towns, and even cities for their players to romp around in.

Orientation: Open and Friendly.

Size: Wilderness Town.

Weapons: Superior.

Medicine: Superior.

Agriculture: Fair.

Real Estate: Bad.

Vehicles & Fuel: Good.

Administration: Fearless Leader.

Alignment: Unprincipled.

Magic: Good Knowledge.

Racial Tolerance: Tolerant.

Trade: Limited.

Threats: Dangerous.

Skill Level: Operators and Drivers.

Overall: Average.

Shelter: Fortified.

Security: Sheriff & Militia.

Power: Hydroelectric.

Special Features: Aircraft hangar, museum, maps, M.D.C. ruins.

1. Outside of Fort Reid lies miles of ruins and rubble. Most of this has been reclaimed by the desert over the past three centuries. The best land lies along the fort’s western edge where the *Nazas River* flows. The river allows for fishing and, thanks to irrigation ditches, some farming as well. Herds of dinosaurs can be found roaming freely for miles and miles along the banks, most typically *Nodosaurus*, including the water-loving *Panoplosaurus* (see **Rifts® Vampire Kingdoms™, Revised** for stats). Still, the land is generally too dry to provide enough food crops for the thousands of people living in the fort. As more and more people arrive annually with dreams of becoming Rangers, the problem of food shortages only gets worse.

2. Protective Walls and the Four Towers. 80% of the fort is surrounded by a wall of salvaged *megacrete* and *M.D.C. steel*; each 20 foot (6 m) section of the wall has 90 M.D.C. Only the riverside along the bank is comparatively open and even 50% of it has sections of M.D.C. wall or S.D.C. fencing topped with barbed wire; the barbs coated in silver and crucifixes hung from it. As the open side of Fort Reid, there are many gates to get to the water. The exterior side of the rugged walls is covered in crosses painted in a variety of colors and designs, and in fact, maintaining these symbols is a favorite daytime chore for young children.

There are four tall watchtowers that face the north, south, east, and west respectively. Huge spotlights, weapon turrets and around the clock lookouts are found atop each of the watchtowers. Along the way up each tower are numerous places for additional troops to position themselves in a fight.

At the main point of entrance there is a smaller, pre-Rifts ruin that serves as a guard tower for the main southern entrance. Guards are stationed at the top, where a larger church bell is used to alert the fort of danger or attackers. The bottom floor of the building is a sort of welcoming area where visitors can check in. The second and third floors are storage areas for weapons and supplies. The fourth floor has a commissary, complete with kitchen, lounge and dining area, where Rangers on patrol and

guard duty can gather and hang out together. There is also a large barracks area where a platoon of 60 men can bunk and even live. These troops are also likely to be the ones to be assigned to defensive positions along the top of the arch. On top of the roof, behind the bell, are several massive tanks of water that supply the water sprinkler system for the front archway into the fort. A water sprinkler system is built along the archway as an extra measure of defense. Though they cannot be seen during the day, there is a massive M.D.C. steel door with silver-etched symbols and designs, that slides out from the wall opposite the bell tower to seal the fort up at night and in emergencies. The bell tower also has a basement level where there is a chapel that can accommodate 200 people. The rest of the basement holds 300 preserved corpses and skeletons clad in pieces of M.D.C. armor (30 M.D.C. on average) and armed with weapons of wood. In case of attack, they can be animated by the dozen Necromancers and dozen Ley Line Walkers assigned to the defense of the main gate.

3. Training Ground. This large, open area is where new recruits are put through their paces. There are also several areas outside the walls of the fort where troops may go to practice.

4. Garage. Jeff Rogers (human Operator, 7th level) is the man in charge of the team that cares for and maintains all of the fort's military vehicles, robots, and power armor suits. A semi-retired adventurer, he is the type of natural mechanical genius who is more comfortable with machines and other Operators than with ordinary people. In fact, Jeff makes his home in a loft above of the machine floor. In addition to his regular duties, he is always interested in souping-up or repairing vehicles brought to him by independent adventurers.

5. Main Armory. When they aren't being repaired or serviced, this is where the robots and power armor are stored. The building is an excavated pre-Rifts parking garage with 3,000 M.D.C. left in total, and is constantly guarded by some of *Lieutenant General Wilding's men*. In fact, only the Lt. General and the nine original Rangers have unrestricted access to the building. A slightly smaller, attached building holds many of Fort Reid's guns, ammo, silver weapons, some magic weapons, and M.D.C. body armor.

6. Stables. Down near the river are a series of low buildings, pens and barns where most of the fort's livestock are housed. This includes most of the horses, camels and various Nodosaurus made available to Rangers on assignment. **Grizzly Carter** makes his home in one of the nearby buildings.

7. Colette Reid Memorial Hospital. Named after Doc Reid's stern, Quebecois mother, this building represents the finest medical facility south of the Rio Grande (the Vampire Kingdoms notwithstanding). Inside are 40 private rooms and nine wards that can each accommodate 20 patients comfortably. Four *Smokeskipper* hovering firetrucks that double as ambulances stand by at all times. Doc Reid is technically the Chief of Staff, but he has now largely retired from practicing medicine to instead focus on his vampire experiments and plotting the war against the Vampire Kingdoms. Instead, two 10th level *Cyber-Docs* run the place. The hospital staff includes eight *Body Fixers* (5-9th level), six holistic doctors (4-8th level), 20 nurses (3-9th level) and 11 paramedics (local volunteers who have a few Medical and Science skills at +15%), as well as a dozen midwives, five psychic healers (5-7th level), and a Ley Line Walker (6th level) whose spell knowledge focuses on healing magic. A Lemurian Healer/Biomancer (5th

level) has recently joined the staff as well. Many of the medical personnel come from humble, local peasant stock.

8. Reid Research Institute. The benign name of this simple, one story, white building belies its true purpose. This is where Doc Reid and his specialized team of vampire researchers study (read: torture) vampires. The concrete building more resembles a small warehouse of some sort or even a bunker that has been painted white. There are no windows and only four doors, though there is faint evidence that several conventional doors and a few windows have been removed and completely sealed off to look like the rest of the walls. Each door more resembles the hatch and airlock of a spaceship than anything else. Unearthing this find was a dream come true for Doc Reid, as it was a pre-Rifts (NEMA) science or medical infectious disease center. As such, it includes a few large laboratories and several research and operating rooms that can be sealed airtight and have doors and systems in place to prevent the escape of infectious disease and biological weapons. Or in this case, vampires that might turn to mist in an attempt to escape. This is where Doc Reid has conducted almost two decades of research and experimentation on vampires. It is also where he engages in interrogation and torture of vampires and their minions. 2D6 vampire "test subjects" are present at any given time.

9. Doc Reid's Home. Across from the hospital is Doc Reid's house. Surrounded by a meticulously manicured lawn, this state-ly, whitewashed building looks like it was teleported here from another time and place. In fact, it is a near replica of the house he grew up in back in Free Quebec, specially commissioned and built for him by local craftsmen. In the basement is his own private, state-of-the art laboratory, including specimen containment chambers for vampires and a jail cell for mortal prisoners who have earned the doctor's personal attention for interrogation.

10. Planktal-Nakton's Home. A deceptively simple looking, single story, adobe building, the home of Fort Reid's most powerful man of magic lies so close to the hospital that many people joke it might as well be attached to it. Oddly, they aren't all that far off, as the Necromancer's home actually contains a large tunnel that leads into the hospital's morgue. Sometimes, if a person dies at the hospital, and the body isn't claimed or identified by a loved one, it is covertly sent to the Necromancer. What he might use the bodies for is something that few like to think about. There are also rumors that either the hospital or Planktal-Nakton's home contains a secret room where three dozen or more preserved corpses, all clad in M.D.C. armor (Main Body 100 M.D.C. each) and armed with weapons of wood and silver, are kept as a platoon of dead that can be animated and sent against vampires or werebeasts. Actually, few people are allowed past General Planktal-Nakton's "sitting room," so rumors abound about zombies, mummies and all manner of dead things that might be kept or reside within.

11. Museum. Artifacts dating back to the late 21st Century, many of them excavated from the remains of *Torreon*, are kept inside a museum. A 9th level Rogue Scholar named *Piedad Munoz* calls this place her home and acts as curator. Every year she selects four apprentices to come and stay with her, and then teaches them how to read and write, and shares with them the basics of pre-Rifts history. The most promising of the students are eventually trained as cartographers and given access to the museum's library of pre-Rifts road maps. They then painstakingly update these by hand and distribute them to the Rangers.

12. Hydroelectric Dam. Spanning the northernmost portion of the Nazas River is a small dam with a hydroelectric facility from which the fort generates almost all of its electrical needs.

13. Raoul & Carlotta's Home. Built out near the edge of town, as the Cyber-Knight and his beautiful companion value their privacy. A tall stone wall surrounds the house, and only those who are invited by the couple ever get to come inside.

14. Sonreindo Demonio Bar and Grill. A large, three-story building, the "Smiling Demon," as it is called in American, is a favorite place to eat and relax. A bar and kitchen are found on the main floor, and upstairs are a total of two dozen comfortable rooms. **Vyurr Kly** lives in the largest of the suites and has a good relationship with the owner.

15. El Cristo de las Noas. Atop a hill outside of the fort towers is the largely intact, pre-Rifts remains of a 71.5 foot (21.8 m) statue of Jesus Christ. At some point during the Dark Age that followed the collapse of human civilization, someone – presumably Warlocks or Elemental Fusionists of some sort or another created a massive 20 story (238 foot/72.5 m) replica of the statue. It towers behind the comparatively small statue and like the original statue, the giant edifice is made of alabaster stone. It stands with arms outstretched and gives many living at and around Fort Reid a sense of security and purpose. At some point in its existence, the original statue has suffered damage. One hand is missing and there are cracks and evidence of blast marks. Though it could be repaired, Doc Reid has decreed that it be left as it was found in deference to its original artists.

According to local legend, the larger statue has stood over the blessed waters of *Nazas River* for more than 200 years. Nobody knows who built giant statue or why, but legend has it that giants made of stone once roamed the area more than two centuries ago. It is also common knowledge that vampires seldom come within two miles (3.2 km) of this place, though they can. Vampires take an immediate dislike of the edifice and feel uncomfortable within view of the thing.

Mii-tar makes his home in one of the nearby restored buildings and finds the statue brings him a sense of peace and hope. A 7th level Air/Earth Elemental Fusionist lives in the shadow of the two statues and functions as their protector. A force of 12 soldiers are constantly encamped around them to protect them from vampire attacks; more when the Fort falls under siege. Their destruction would be a great blow to the morale of the Rangers, not that the vampires seem to realize this.

Notable Equipment at Fort Reid

Standard Issue Weapons:

- L-20 laser pulse rifle.
- NG-57 ion blaster or other energy pistol.
- Choice of 9 mm pistol with two clips of 15 silver bullets each, or crossbow with 24 wood bolts plus 6 arrows with medium explosive arrowheads (2D6 M.D.) and 6 smoke.
- Silver cross medallion.
- Silver plated dagger (does 1D6 S.D.C.). Cavalry troops and officers also get a silver-plated cavalry sword (does 2D4 S.D.C. damage).
- 10 inch (25 cm) wood cross.
- 24 wooden stakes and mallet.
- Conventional water pistols (psychics are given a TW water pistol and rifle).

Note: Additional E-Clips, silver bullets, wood stakes, arrows, crossbow bolts, specialty arrowheads, wooden clubs and spears, wooden staves and knives, and other types of ammunition are all plentiful. Rail guns with silver or wooden ammo are mounted at various points throughout the fort's defenses. Remember, weapons of silver and wood do double damage to vampires.

As a general rule, only officers and experienced Rangers are given TW or other types of magic weapons. Of course, the Rangers, volunteers and allied mercenaries and heroes may acquire and use any sort of conventional or magical weapons, at their own expense or good fortune, as they see desirable.

Standard Issue Equipment:

- Urban Warrior body armor for new recruits (level 1-3).
- Choice of Bushman, old-style Dead Boy, Crusader or Gladiator for veterans (levels 4+). Some of the new NG Ride Armor is also available.
- Portable language translator.
- General equipment: Flashlight, compass, utility belts, backpack, sleeping bag, 2 canteens, food rations for two weeks, short-range radio, handcuffs, pocket mirror, two disposable air filters/masks, handkerchief, boots, poncho and clothing. A place to sleep (barracks), and food and medical care are supplied to all Rangers.

Equipment Available on Assignment

Vehicles: Virtually any *basic vehicle* (car, truck, motorcycle, ATV, live horse) is available, as are more exotic fare, including hover vehicles, hovercycles, robot horses, Nodosaur, NG Sky Kings, and even a few dozen jet packs. Fort Reid also has a dozen NG hover firetrucks, a handful of NG giant robots, three Coalition Mark V APCs and 11 CS Sky-Cycles, but their numbers are limited, so they are issued only on an assignment basis. **Note:** Approximately two-thirds of the more experienced Rangers (5th level and higher) ride robot horses; preferred for their M.D.C., speed and versatility. The rest ride an exotic animal or vehicle. Only 10% of the Rangers of lower experience have a robot steed; most ride a traditional horse or motorcycle.

Weapons: A wide range of the weapons listed in **Rifts® Ultimate Edition**, **Rifts® Black Market**, **Rifts® Northern Gun™**, and **Rifts® New West™** are available, especially Northern Gun and Black Market weapons. Wilk's weapons are a bit less common, but a great deal of guns and equipment have been stolen from the Coalition and given to Reid's Rangers, as well as purchased through Black Market channels (see **Coalition War Campaign™** for CS guns and gear).

Conventional water weapons, bows and arrows, crossbows and bolts, wood weapons of every variety, and silver-coated weapons are abundant. Techno-Wizard (TW) water weapons and vampire round (wood flechette) rail guns have a limited availability, as do most magic items. (In other words, the individual character needs to acquire his own magic weapons and specialty items.) Triax, Naruni and alien weapons are scarce, but a few can be found in the fort's armory.

Though Lemurians have recently joined Doc Reid's crusade, they keep most of their Biomancer weapons, armor, vehicles and riding animals among their own people. They have shared a few things with Reid's Rangers, but weapons and armor remain rare in the hands of non-Lemurians.

Coalition States Armor & Combat Vehicles

The weapons and war machines of the *Coalition States* have gone missing, lost in combat, theft and raids, in unprecedented numbers during the years of war against the Kingdom of Tolkeen. Some of the gear captured by Tolkeen Resistance forces, Cyber-Knights, mercenaries, Black Marketeers, Pecos Bandits and heroes alike, has found its way to Reid's Rangers. Much of it donated at no cost, some sold to the Rangers at low prices or in trade for rare magic items and exotic creatures, including were-beasts, dinosaurs and others.

The Pecos Empire is one of the best sources for illegal Coalition military goods. They have an ongoing campaign of raids and theft targeting the CS, especially in the *States of Lone Star* and *Arkansas* (formerly Fort El Dorado). Moreover, a good number of Pecos Bandits and mercenaries consider themselves to be "vampire hunters" with connections to Reid's Rangers or the people of Mexico. Where better, then, to ditch (donate) or sell (at very low prices) illegal CS military contraband than to Reid's Rangers located in a territory the CS is not likely to go looking for stolen gear? The Coalition Army is fierce about tracking down stolen military ordnance and executing those who have it in their possession. However, they never go deep into the Vampire Lands. Many CS troops won't even cross the Rio Grande. This has been a boon to Reid's Rangers. For Pecos Bandits who simply want to put the hurt on CS forces, giving Coalition gear to the worthy Rangers is an easy decision.

Most of these stolen goods are weapons, body armor, radios, food and supplies, but they include combat vehicles as well. This is what Fort Reid currently has available to operatives sent on special missions. Most of the CS items have been repainted and given other cosmetic features, animal skulls attached to shoulders and such, etc.

- 3 Mark IX EPC Personnel Carriers
- 1 CTX-50 Line Backer Assault Tank
- 17 CS Command Cars
- 13 CS Skull Patrol Cars
- 9 CS Scout Rocket Cycles
- 2 IAR-4 Hellraiser Robots
- 4 UAR-1 Enforcer Robots (50% have a reduced M.D.C. of 170).
- 2 CR-004 Scout Spider Walkers (each as a reduced M.D.C. of 200).
- 1 Spider-Skull Walker (has a reduced M.D.C. of 397).
- 11 Mauler Power Armors
- 22 Old Style SAMAS Power Armor (50% have a reduced M.D.C. of 195).
- 4 Smiling Jack SAMAS Power Armor (50% have a reduced M.D.C. of 150).

Some Notable Robots & Power Armor

The most precious and limited resources are the extremely expensive Mega-Damage robot vehicles and power armor suits. Other than those acquired by individuals, Fort Reid has at its disposal the following items available to Rangers and allies on special assignment:

Northern Gun and Other Robots & Power Armor:

- 4 NG Behemoth Explorer Robots
- 3 NG Beachmasters
- 3 NG Big Foot
- 1 NG Bulldog
- 5 NG Gunbots
- 4 NG-V7 Hunter Mobile Guns
- 1 NG-M56 Multi-Bot
- 8 NG-V10 Super Labor Robots
- 1 NG-Wolverine
- 2 Supertitan Combat Robots
- 9 Titan Fireman Robots
- 8 Titan Reconnaissance Robots
- 7 Titan TR-001 Combat Robots
- 5 Titan TR-002 Explorer Robots

- 12 NG Firefighter Power Armor
- 3 Blue Hawk Power Armor
- 4 Forester Power Armor
- 2 Mantis Power Armor
- 40 NG Gladius Power Armor
- 43 NG Samson Power Armor (25% have an M.D.C. of 200).
- 10 Triax X-10 Predator Power Armor
- 56 Triax T-21 Hopper Power Armor (20% have an M.D.C. of 120).
- 36 Flying Titan Power Armor

Armor Note: Fort Reid has been in the process of trying to acquire some additional, newer Northern Gun robot vehicles and power armor, as well as some Naruni Enterprises force fields and weapons. A good portion of the new robots, power armor and vehicles they hope to acquire will depend greatly on the kindness of other nations like *Lazlo*, *the Pecos Empire* and allies such as the *Atlanteans*, *Lemurians*, *Archie Three* (always secretly via third party operatives) and even the *Splugorth* (again, in secrecy, probably via a third party acting on their behalf, or by allowing the heroes to luck into such goods via a shipwrecked Horune Pirate vessel, a raid on a Horune or other monsters' shipment, Black Market agents, and even from an "anonymous friend," and so on). The *Splugorth* and Vampire Intelligences see each other as hated rivals and have no love for each other, but any intervention from the *Splugorth* must be done in secret, lest they incur the wrath of the vampires and other forces best left undisturbed. Likewise, if the Coalition States should catch wind of Doc Reid's all-out war against the Vampire Kingdoms, the nation might (and that's a big *might*) secretly allow some shipments of weapons, food and medical supplies to "get captured" by Reid's Rangers.

Equipment Note: Other robots, vehicles, weapons and equipment may be owned by the individual Rangers, either brought in with them when they joined (typical of ex-mercenaries) or purchased with their own money.

Medical Facilities: Medical facilities at the fort are excellent, with a fully equipped, up-to-date hospital, and a staff of Body Fixers, Cyber-Docs, holistic doctors, Psychic Healers, and nurses. The standard field equipment is a bit limited but sufficient to give patrols a portable Bio-Scan, Robot Medical Kits (both), and first aid kits.

Leaders of Reid's Rangers

Anyone who makes it to Fort Reid, whether they are simply passing through or have made the pilgrimage to become a vampire slayer, is certain to meet up with at least one of several important people who call this place home. Most notable of all, of course, are the nine original Rangers. The power and influence that these figures have over the common people cannot be overstated. Everywhere they go, the people lavish them with love and humble generosity. They get the best food, the best accommodations, and the most ardent attempts to satisfy their every desire. Even acts of cruelty and mischief are dismissed and ignored; the famous heroes of Reid's Rangers need make no excuses for their actions. They have absolute freedom. Every door is opened for them, every favor given at the slightest whim. Every man and woman adores them, and every child aspires to be like them. They may ride where they want and do as they please. The Vampire Kingdoms themselves fear them and have placed fabulous bounties on their heads.

Sadly, as with most legends, the inspiring tales of shining heroes, pure of heart, are not entirely true. The original Rangers include fanatics, despots, rogues, murderers, and glory-hounds. They each have their own motives for joining or forming the Rangers, but it is the heady nectar of fame and glory that keeps them together. The original, founding members of the Rangers are as follows:

- Kenneth "Doc" Reid**, famous leader and megalomaniac.
- Planktal-Nakton**, a Necromancer of great power and a leader.
- Sir Raoul Lazarius**, General of the Rangers and a Cyber-Knight.
- Carlotta la Blanca**, a leader, dragon hatchling, and companion to Sir Lazarius.
- Mii-Tar the Destroyer**, a leader and monstrous D-Bee.
- Vyurr Kly**, famous hero of Eagle Peak and a Psi-Stalker.
- Meetal the Butcher**, survivor of Eagle Peak, and a Psi-Stalker.
- Robert "Grizzly" Carter**, legendary hero, said to be an immortal Elf.
- Pequita the Faceless One**, mysterious shape-changing mage.

The original Rangers rarely gather together as a single combat unit anymore. Even though they have known each other for two decades now, the truth is that many of them never really got along with one another. Instead, two or three of them will lead a band of newer Rangers and volunteers on heroic missions or extended training exercises. The following are the preferred selection of allies commonly selected by the founding members.

Sir Raoul Lazarius and Carlotta are almost *always* together. They, in turn, will occasionally work closely with Vyurr Kly, Mii-Tar, Pequita, and Planktal-Nakton (or any combination thereof), and, of course, Doc Reid.

Grizzly Carter and Meetal the Butcher frequently work side by side. They have been known to enlist the aid of Vyurr Kly, Mii-Tar, and to a lesser degree, Raoul Lazarius and Carlotta.

Until recently, Doc Reid and Planktal-Nakton seldom participated in combat missions as they were far too busy maintaining operations at the fort and planning overall strategy for the Day of

Reckoning. The two are unlikely best friends, respect and trust each other completely, and often work together.

While Sir Lazarius is the field general who will soon be leading armies against the vampires, Planktal-Nakton might be thought of as the general of the army that is Reid's Rangers. However, to keep the peace, the Necromancer treats Sir Lazarius as his equal and often defers to the Knight's superior experience in the field.

Doc Reid is the supreme leader and the glue that holds these unlikely comrades and heroes together. They, like the rest of the Rangers and people of Mexico, revere him as a genius and messianic figure who has carried them to greatness.

The Birth of Reid's Rangers

Doctor Kenneth Reid began his life as a brilliant and talented doctor of cybernetics. However, there has always been a dark, yet altruistic side to the doctor which has driven him to live on the edge of danger. In the Coalition State of Free Quebec, he abandoned his regular practice to establish an illegal Body-Chop-Shop and quickly made a name for himself as the "Safe Doctor." Doctor Reid's intention was to service the poor who needed cybernetic prosthetics and organs but could not get authorization through proper channels. He has always pictured himself as a swashbuckling champion of the downtrodden and hero of the people. Unfortunately, in addition to being egocentric, Doc had a taste for the good life, money, and power. This led to his involvement with the Black Market and elite members of criminal organizations. The Body-Chop-Shop prospered and grew, but all of it was illegal under CS law, especially the empowerment of the underclass.

Though aware that the CS was looking for the criminal known as the "Safe Doctor," Reid's ego made him confident they'd never find him. Always challenging himself, he expanded into the area of *bionic augmentation*. He became enthralled with using bionics in unconventional and new ways, added bionics to his own body, and eventually subjected himself to partial bionic reconstruction. Shortly afterward, the Coalition State authorities raided his expansive Body-Chop-Shop operation. He had been sold out by a Black Market client who he had crossed a few months earlier. The CS planned to make an example of him, but somehow, Doctor Reid managed to escape, avoiding Coalition troops, assassins and bounty hunters.

The man simply disappeared.

It wasn't until four years later that a man now known as Kenneth "Doc" Reid resurfaced. It was during these years that he befriended the Necromancer, *Planktal-Nakton*. The master of Necro-Magic had grown disillusioned with the Federation of Magic and had fallen into a deep melancholy. He viewed the Federation as too weak and indecisive to fight the Coalition and craved adventure, glory, and power. The two men became instant friends.

Fate drew the pair to the **Pecos Empire** for a short period. The vampire problem of the southwestern territories intrigued Doc Reid and an interesting scheme was hatched. They gathered a few compatriots from the Pecos Empire – the inhuman juggernaut Mii-Tar the Destroyer, Vyurr Kly the Hunter, and Meetal the Butcher – and traveled to New Mexico.

A dramatic battle that liberated a village from a powerful tribe of vampires drew the attention of the Cyber-Knight *Sir Raoul*

Lazarious and his companion, the beautiful, *Carlotta la Blanca*. Raoul needed purpose and direction in his life and Doc Reid gave it to him. None could dispute the nobility and valor of a campaign against the undead. Nor could one be accused of brutality or bloodlust in a battle against hell-spawned monsters. Raoul and Carlotta loved the idea of banding together with other champions in savage combat against vampires. The pair joined the group and would eventually become its military leaders in the field of combat.

One morning, the legendary *Grizzly Carter* stood in their camp. He had apparently snuck past the sentry, made coffee and, with a fresh pot of the brew in hand, began to suggest strategies for “their” next vampire assault. He never asked to join the group, he simply appeared one day and never left. No one is exactly sure when *Pequita the Faceless One* joined the group, as even she has forgotten which face she first used to approach the Rangers.

As tales of the group’s acts of heroism and success against the vampires spread across Mexico, other heroes asked to join the team. As did some of the people tired of living in fear and under the yoke of the vampires. They offered their help in subtle ways, providing food, supplies and information about the vampires and their activities. And some begged to be trained as vampire hunters so that they could join their crusade. The seeds of being a fated savior were sown on that day, and the group’s adventure indeed became a crusade.



Doc Reid Today

Kenneth Doc Reid’s search for power and glory has been rewarded in dramatic fashion. Doc Reid and his vampire hunting Reid’s Rangers are renowned throughout Mexico, the Pecos Empire, the Coalition States of Lone Star and Arkansas, and the

American Southwest. Their tales of heroism, narrow escapes and crusade against the Vampire Kingdoms to free the people of Mexico have even spread north into the Colorado Baronies and Tolkeen in Minnesota, to the ears of the Cyber-Knights and as far east as Chi-Town and Lazlo. Reid’s Rangers are the heroes of the age, and Doc Reid and his Founding Eight, living legends. Other than vampires, Doc Reid and his Rangers represent the power in Northern Mexico, from the Rio Grande to the borders of the Vampire Kingdoms.

Doc Reid is also quite mad.

In addition to the good doctor’s obsession with destroying vampires and supernatural forces of evil, he is also convinced of his own divinity as “the Savior of Mexico.” His close friendship with the Necromancer Planktal-Nakton has introduced him to new ideas about life and death, and made him utterly ruthless in his crusade against the undead. He is fascinated – nay, obsessed – with vampires and the supernatural. Doc Reid believes he has uncovered every secret there is to know about the blood-drinking demons and has spent the last twenty years conducting horrific experiments upon them. While these experiments have made the doctor the foremost authority on vampires (Vampire Lore 98%), they have also revealed a dark and demented side to Doc Reid that unnerves even Sir Lazarious and Grizzly Carter, the two most seasoned and hardened warriors among the Rangers.

As stated previously, Doc Reid perceives vampires as inhuman monsters that do not warrant the same humane treatment one would give an animal. As a result, his experiments are akin to those performed by the Nazis during World War II. Typical “experiments” include torture to determine how much pain a vampire can endure before it is driven insane, amputating limbs to observe or demonstrate the vampire’s regenerative powers, and inflicting damage by sunlight, water, silver, etc., in order to study their effects. He has forced starvation upon vampire subjects – a process that drives the creatures mad and returns them to an animalistic state, performed dissections on living vampire subjects as callously as one might dissect a frog, and has repeatedly engaged in a seemingly endless list of different trials and tests that go beyond the pale. The doctor delights in the torture of the undead, defending his actions with quips such as, “Nothing I might do to these monsters is comparable to the suffering and horror they have inflicted upon mankind since the dawn of time.”

As for Doc Reid’s duties as the *spiritual leader* of the Rangers, he is unequalled. For all intents and purposes, he *is* a living god. The Rangers and uneducated wilderness folk hang on his every word. There is no man, woman or child who would not sacrifice his own life to save Doc Reid’s. His words and spirit radiate hope, confidence, grandeur, wisdom, glory and freedom. He can seduce, entice or incite an audience even faster than Emperor or Joseph Prosek. He is the heart and soul of the vampire hunters who flock to him. A hero. A national treasure.

As an administrator and commander of men, however, Doc Reid sometimes leaves much to be desired. While he can breathe life into words and ideas, he feels little true compassion toward the men and women who die for him or his cause. Nor does he feel deeply for the people he claims to liberate. They are all just parts of the puzzle. The different elements of this illusive thing called immortality. He uses the emotions and dreams of the people to mold them like a sculptor molds clay, but, like the artist, it is his all-important vision that shapes them. The people, like clay, are only the medium used to reveal the artist’s vision. Such is the

distorted perception of Doc Reid. Consequently, he has little time for matters of administering law, judgment, or justice. Nor for the day to day business of running the Rangers. Their organization, assignments, targets, the conduct of his troops, and so on, are left in the hands of his lieutenants; other leaders of questionable sanity and leadership such as *Planktal-Nakton* and *Raoul Lazarious*.

For years, Doc Reid has seldom left the fortress that Fort Reid has become, consumed in his horrible research, speech-making (keeps morale high) and the duties of a deity in which he plots the future of “his people.” This arrangement is encouraged by his Rangers, who would rather have their leader safe at home than risking his life on the field of battle. Still, the mad doctor has enjoyed going on the occasional reconnaissance mission, investigation of unusual activity, and even combat raids every once in a while.

If confronted with accusations that one or several of the Rangers are guilty of a crime, atrocity, injustice, negligence, or cruelty, Doc Reid will lend a patient and concerned ear. Then, after having listened to the complaint/charges, he frowns and make a fatherly and wise statement like, “Why must some men tarnish what is good by succumbing to corruption? I thank you for your honesty and strength of courage to tell me of this matter. I will take care of it.” Unfortunately, the matter is turned over to one of the doctor’s trusted commanders, who may forget about the incident entirely or severely punish those responsible; there is seldom a middle ground. Such matters generally fall under the jurisdiction of Sir Raoul Lazarious, Carlotta la Blanca, or Lt. General William Wilding, all of whom care more about killing vampires than fairness or justice. Planktal-Nakton only involves himself in matters he thinks which are important or are important to Doc Reid. Doc Reid always looks to his original Rangers for their opinions, guidance and rectification of most matters. He never believes anything terrible about the Original Eight. NEVER. Doc Reid trusts their word over anyone else’s.

If there is anyone who believes in Doc Reid’s divinity and destiny more than the doctor himself, it is *Planktal-Nakton*, his best friend and advisor. The two men are like brothers, and the Necromancer watches out for his friend at all times, and never lets him travel without accompanying him. It is also the Necromancer who personally selects the doctor’s ever-present bodyguards. Over the years, a few of these guardians have perished in the line of duty, but the basic type of O.C.C.s remain consistent. Of course, all are trained Vampire Hunters devoted to Doc Reid and the cause. At present, the doctor’s personal guard includes a 5th level Psi-Stalker Ranger who goes by the name Kat, a 6th level Dog Boy (a runaway from the CS) known as Clem, the 10th level Combat Cyborg known only as JR and who has been one of Doc’s guards for 14 years, Lex the 6th Level Mage Vampire Hunter, and Rain, a 9th level Mystic who has also served as Reid’s protector for years.

The moment Doc Reid has been waiting for is soon to arrive, the Day of Reckoning. All-out-war against the Vampire Kingdoms. He is much more prepared than most outsiders or the vampires realize, and tens of thousands will stand at his side to liberate Mexico from the tyranny of inhuman monsters. It is a war that will attract heroes from across the land. Though the Rangers and their allies will be able to deal the vampires several devastating blows and topple two of the kingdoms almost immediately, this is not a war that will end quickly or easily. The streets of many towns and villages will be covered in blood and tens of thousands

of people will perish in its wake. Nor is there any certainty that it will be Reid’s Rangers and humanity that will stand triumphant when it is over.

Doc Reid is a tall, slim man with black hair and brooding features that he frequently covers with a surgical mask or bandana. It is difficult for many to guess the doctor’s age due to his cybernetic augmentations and facial coverings, however his boundless energy and passion for destroying vampires also make him seem much more youthful. He is immediately recognized if for no other reason than his four arms. Doc is a partial conversion cyborg of medium build with the obvious extra arms, though really three of the four are bionic, and each has concealed weapon systems (see Bionics, in the stat block below).

Doc Reid Stats

Real Name: Kenneth Emanuel Reid.

Also Known As: “The Four-Armed Devil” and the “Mad Butcher” by vampires and their loyal minions; “Doc Reid, Champion of the People” and “Doc Reid the Savior” by the people of Mexico.

Rank: Founder and Leader of Reid’s Rangers. Everyone, even General Lazarious, defers to Doc.

Heritage: Human of mixed heritage: Mexican and French-Canadian descent. His father’s mother was Mexican. She fled the Vampire Lands and traveled as far northeast as she could manage, the Coalition State of Free Quebec. One of her daughters, Colette, married Charles Denton Reid, an ex-adventurer turned merchant with ties to the Black Market.

Alignment: Anarchist with delusions of godhood and aspirations to be a beloved hero and champion of the people. Doc started out Miscreant, but over the years has developed genuine love for the people of Mexico and a twisted sense of purpose and destiny.

Attributes: 1.Q. 22, M.A. 29, M.E. 11, P.S. 22 (Augmented), P.P. 20 (bionic), P.E. 13, P.B. 9, Spd 69 (bionic; 40 mph/64 km). **Note:** Having submitted to partial bionic reconstruction, Doc Reid cannot be transformed into a vampire.

Height: 6 feet (1.8 m). **Weight:** 188 lbs (85 kg) including bionic limbs.

Hit Points: 67. **S.D.C.:** 30.

P.P.E.: 7

Horror Factor to Vampires: 17

Awe Factor: 15 (+2 to the people of Mexico) due to reputation and legendary stature.

Age: 63, but looks to be in his fifties.

Experience Level: 12th level Cyber-Doc; 10th level Reid’s Ranger Vampire Hunter with partial bionic conversion.

Disposition: Friendly, warm, cheerful, attentive, enthusiastic, and charismatic, even when engaged in torture or plotting against you. Despite his selfish and cruel tendencies (at least toward vampires), he is very kind and compassionate to the poor and downtrodden – “his people.” But he also considers himself to be a god and above the law of any city-state or nation. Thus, he quickly becomes disenchanting, intolerant and mean to those who do not treat him with the utmost respect and adoration. Those who dare to question his motives and decisions are immediately viewed with dislike and distrust. Doc Reid exhibits great callousness, cruelty and undisguised contempt for his enemies, be they vampires or mortals. The ends (his ends) always justify the means.

Doc Reid loathes vampires and is committed to their complete and total eradication from the Americas. He is responsible for countless atrocities upon the creatures, which he sees only as horrible demons and the very antithesis of life itself. As such, vampires are below animals and receive no mercy, no compassion, nor humane treatment of any kind. Doc Reid and his Rangers are utterly ruthless and merciless in their dealings with the monsters. He insists it is not hatred, but cold scientific fact that vampires are horrible monsters, plain and simple, that should be given no quarter nor the slightest bit of sympathy, lest they use it against us. He has preached this so long, well and hard that Rangers and any who listen to him (which are many) have come to agree. Those who truly know anything about vampires may disagree with some of Doc Reid's methods and experiments, but must agree with his assessment that vampires are a cancer that must be cut out and destroyed. And one does not worry if the destruction of cancer is humane.

Insanity: At this point, Doc Reid is convinced he is the savior of Mexico, and quite probably a god. There are millions who would agree. He is obsessed with liberating "his people" and annihilating the vampires. Part of his motivation is born in the madness of his messianic ego and need to acquire immortality through his deeds and the fame and glory they bring. Doc lives for the adoration of millions, which is the driving force behind his altruistic and compassionate crusade to free Mexico of its demonic overlords. In his particular case, his delusions of godhood have made him a better, more caring person toward people of every kind, even as they have made him convinced him that he is indestructible and cannot die until his crusade is done. Should he perish along the way, he'll die happy as a martyr whose demise, he is certain, will be the final act to unite and inspire others to finish his good work.

Skills of Note (includes I.Q. bonus): All the skills of a Cyber-Doc and Reid's Ranger at 95%, including Chemistry, Chemistry: Analytical, Cybernetics, Computer Operation, Electrical Engineering, Forensics, Horsemanship: General (rides a robot steed), Language: American, Quebecois French, and Spanish (A bionic speech translator enables him to understand and speak all nine of the major languages spoken in America at 95% but drops to 78% when four or more people are speaking. Doc has also programmed a dozen other languages into the device, including ancient Maya, Brazilian, and other tongues with an equivalent skill and understanding of 63%), Literacy: American and Spanish, Literacy: French 80%, Lore: Demons & Monsters, Lore: Vampires, Math (all), Medical Doctor, M.D. of Cybernetics, Pathology, Pilot Automobile, Pilot Hovercraft, and Streetwise, all at 98%, unless stated otherwise. He also knows W.P. Knife at 12th level proficiency, W.P. Energy Pistol at 10th level, and W.P. Energy Rifle and W.P. Sword at 7th level proficiency.

Combat Skills: Hand to Hand: Basic at 12th level proficiency.

Attacks per Melee: Eight due to his additional set of limbs.

Bonuses (including attribute bonuses): +3 on Perception Rolls, +9 on Perception Rolls involving vampires, +1 on initiative (+2 additional when dealing with vampires), +5 to strike, +7 to parry, +6 to dodge, +11 S.D.C. damage (does 1D4 M.D. from a power punch with any of his bionic limbs), +4 to roll with impact, +4 to pull punch, Critical Strike on a Natural roll of 19 or 20 and from behind, kick attack (1D8 S.D.C.), and Judo flip (1D6 S.D.C.), +10 to save vs the Horror Factor of vampires,

96% likelihood of instilling trust or intimidation (M.A.), +8% skill bonus (I.Q.).

Magic: Only myth and lore.

Psionics: None.

Weapons: Blade weapons are among the doctor's favorites, including a set of 12 silver-plated scalpels (1D6 S.D.C. damage each), a pair of wooden throwing knives (1D6 S.D.C. damage), and a matched set of a silver-handled Vibro-Knife and Vibro-Sword, each of which has a four inch silver spike at the end of the handle so they can be used against vampires (1D6 normal S.D.C., double vs vampires).

Additional vampire hunting weapons include: A compound bow and three dozen arrows, large silver cross medallion, motorized water pistol with a half gallon (1.9 liter) capacity, four vials of holy water and a dozen stakes (hammers them in with a bionic hand).

Other weapons of choice are his bionic arsenal and the NG-E4 plasma ejector, Wilk's laser weapons, and a Wilk's laser scalpel.

Body Armor: LE-B1 light espionage bionic body armor, 135 M.D.C., which is worn when involved in covert operations. MI-B2 medium infantry armor, 230 M.D.C., which is worn when faced with combat situations. Each has a large silver cross painted on the chest. He also has a Naruni N-F40A Superheavy Force Field (110 M.D.C., 8 hour duration per E-Clip) for emergencies, a gift from a grateful merchant Grizzly Carter and some Rangers rescued.

Bionics & Cybernetics: Doc Reid designed his own bionic frame shortly before he was forced to flee from Quebec. As a result, it contains a few features that one cannot normally find in a partial conversion cyborg. Foremost is the unique construction of his additional pair of arms, which actually have a second, retractable arm inside each of them. What only a few Rangers know is that one of his natural arms was torn from his body by a vampire, so his left arm is also bionic. Each hand has a battery of weapons and special bionic systems.

Bionic Arms: Lower Right Arm: Wrist needle and drug dispenser in the main right arm. Holds four doses of each of the following: 1. Antibiotics, 2. Tranquilizer/sleep drugs, 3. Truth serum, 4. Paralysis drugs, 5. Poison (6D6 S.D.C./H.P. damage). A computer & calculator are also built into the bionic right arm and each of the fingers of the bionic right hand have silver-plated, extendible, scalpel-like blades.

Lower Left Arm: Retractable Vibro-Blade (2D6 M.D.) is built into the lower left arm along with a laser finger blaster (1D4 M.D.), a silver blade in one finger, and shooting knuckle spikes that fire four silver spikes (can fire one at a time or simultaneously; range 100 feet/30.5 m). The small, concealed, secondary arms that can retract from the two lower bionic arms (right and left) have no built-in features, but are great when performing surgery or engaging in hand to hand combat.

Upper Left Arm: Synthetic skin to make it look as if it is flesh and blood, but it is really bionic also. It has a silver-plated wrist spike used for stabbing and slashing, Garrote Wrist Wire, DNA Analyzer (finger), Fingerjack, and a Laser Finger for cutting and surgery. It has an Augmented P.S. of 22 same as the other two arms, but does not have the smaller, retractable arm.

Bionic Legs: Concealed laser rod in right leg: 3D6 M.D., 3,000 foot (914 m) range. A secret compartment in the left leg

contains a small wood crucifix, two vials of holy water and six wooden stakes. A secret compartment in the right leg contains an RMK and an IRMSS robot medical kit along with a first aid medical kit and a Wilk's laser scalpel.

Other Bionics: Bionic Lung and Air Filter, Clock Calendar and Radiation Detector, Cyber-Disguise Type AB-2, Loud-speaker, Headjack, Language Translator, Molecular Analyzer and Modulating Voice Synthesizer. Note that the eyes and ears are normal.

Money: Doc Reid is not interested in personal wealth, although he has a tidy sum of 50 million in gold, artifacts and credits socked away for his retirement. Fort Reid is a prosperous military community with equipment, weapons, robots, bionics, and medical facilities worth a small fortune.

“Diablo,” Doc Reid’s Robot Horse

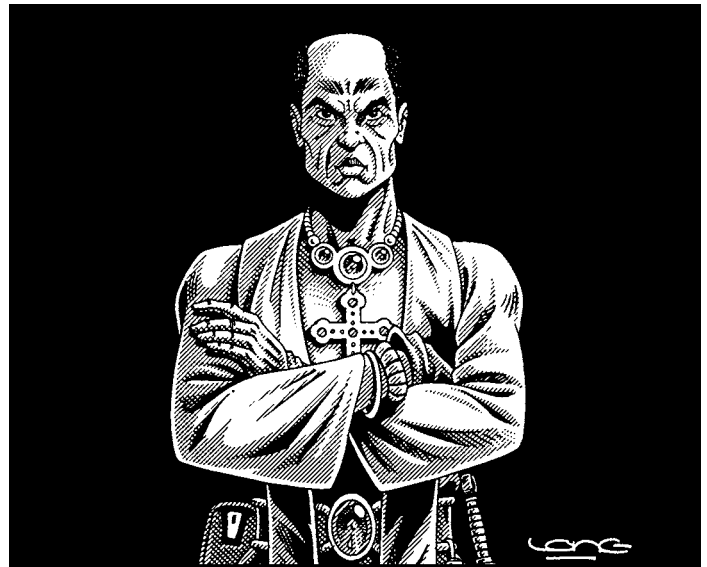
Diablo is an Arabian robot horse from Bandito Arms. It has a jet black hide and glowing red eyes that gives it a demonic appearance. **Speed:** 180 (192 mph/307 km). **Robot Armor/M.D.C. by Location:** Head: 100. Legs (4): 90 each. Main Body: 300 M.D.C. **Weight:** 1,400 lbs. (630 kg). **Intelligence:** Simple, equal to an I.Q. of 9. **Attributes:** P.S. 28, P.P. 22, P.B. 17, Spd 180. **Alignment:** Not applicable; completely loyal to Doc Reid. **Skill Program:** Responds like a well-trained real horse (without the fear response), and has voice recognition and response capabilities (can talk to its rider). **Power Source:** Nuclear, 15 years. **Optics:** Advanced robot system. **Sensors:** Bio-Scan Medical Survey Unit and Micro-Radar. **Weapons:** 1. Chemical Spray (mouth), basically same as Combat Cyborg except the spray is holy water. 2. Heavy eye laser (3D6 M.D.; 1,600 foot/488 m range). **Combat:** Three attacks per melee. **Damage:** Restrained hoof strike does 1D4 M.D., full hoof kick (front legs) 1D6 M.D., rear leg kick 1D6 M.D., rear leg power kick 2D6 M.D. (counts as two attacks), and head butt and bite inflict 6D6 S.D.C. **Bonuses:** +3 on initiative, +2 to strike, +5 to dodge when running (+2 to dodge from a standing or slow trot), and +1 to roll with impact. See page 162 of **Rifts Vampire Kingdoms™ Revised** for more details, or page 195 of **Rifts New West** for full information on robot horses.

Planktal-Nakton

The Necromancer and Second-in-Command

In many areas, it is Planktal who wields power within Reid’s Rangers and the loose-knit kingdom the Rangers have inadvertently created. He is loyal to Doc Reid and always respectful and subservient to him. At first this was done for the sake of appearance and personal gain, but over the years, he and Doc Reid have become the closest of friends. Though the mage knows he is a significant force within Reid’s Rangers, Doc Reid is what holds the Rangers together and is the spiritual center that appeals to the people and wins their blind support. Somehow, Doc Reid has so completely captured the hearts and minds of the people that they believe everything he tells them and are ready to follow him to Hell and back. That’s a good thing in this case, because to win their freedom and bring an end to the Vampire Kingdoms, they will suffer mightily.

A case in point is the people’s acceptance of Planktal-Nakton, a Necromancer. He is the second most trusted and beloved mem-



ber of Reid’s Rangers, and his popularity continues to grow. But Doc Reid had to vouch for him in the early years, and Planktal-Nakton had to prove himself, before people could accept him at all. Now, after two decades of using armies of mummies, zombies and animated dead to protect the people from a much darker and immediate menace, Planktal-Nakton and all the Necromancers under his command are celebrated heroes. He most of all.

Under the PR mastery of Doc Reid, the Necromancer has complete freedom to wreak havoc upon the vampires and at the same time, help build an empire. He and the Rangers, the Necromancers and the fighters under his command are able to slaughter vampires in the most vile of ways and be praised as heroes. (And Planktal-Nakton so loves to kill.) Likewise, he can send thousands to their doom in the name of freedom and still be heralded as a force for good. And in many respects, it is Planktal-Nakton who holds the reins of power within the Rangers. It is everything he could ever want, and he owes it all to Doc Reid.

Here again, Planktal-Nakton was a malevolent force that has become nobler and more heroic because of Doc Reid and their cause. Whether it is because of the ugliness of war or the love and trust of the people, many of the less savory members of the *Original Eight* have become more virtuous. What started out as a personal quest for power has become a true calling. Planktal-Nakton has grown to care about the people of Mexico and it has become his mission to destroy the undead and set people free. It is a cause he is even willing to die for.

When it comes to Doc Reid, the mad genius is one of the few people to ever call Planktal-Nakton a friend and truly mean it. It is an unconditional friendship cherished by the Necromancer. That friendship has given cause for both men to risk their own lives to save the other. If ever there were brothers in spirit, it is these two.

Planktal-Nakton’s magic education was initially in the ways of the Ley Line Walker, but at an early age, it took a twist toward Necromancy. Whenever possible, the mage will perform a blood sacrifice, whether the ritual is necessary or not. Presently, he tries to limit the victims of his blood sacrifices to incapacitated (staked) vampires and their mortal henchmen, but in the past he used humans and D-Bees as well as animals. The mage is fascinated with death, dying, and murder as it relates to magic and power (P.P.E. doubles at the moment of death). Vampires

are especially interesting to him, as they defy one's conventional understanding of life and death. He is drawn to them because they are harbingers of death and undeath. Vampires also offer a large amount of P.P.E. when slain, making them ideal for blood sacrifices.

The Necromancer is not one to be trifled with. The enemies of Planktal-Nakton have a nasty habit of mysteriously dying. He is an excellent strategist, but takes no chances, eliminating potential opposition and troublemakers when they come to his attention. He is the administrator, judiciary, and the law at Fort Reid.

The Necromancer Planktal-Nakton Stats

Second-in-Command and Administrator of the Rangers

Other Duties: Advisor, friend and protector of Doc Reid, he is also judge and arbiter of disputes and punishment of Rangers who commit crimes.

Rank: General in Reid's Rangers, and famous hero of Mexico.

Real Name: Unknown, even to Doc Reid.

Heritage: Planktal-Nakton is a powerfully built, African-American male with dark, ominous looking eyes. He radiates an aura of authority, strength, cunning and power.

Alignment: Aberrant with his own twisted code of honor and justice. There are even flashes of true goodness. (It is remotely possible that one day he could become Unprincipled alignment.) However, for a long time he was Diabolic evil and did terrible, terrible things. It would seem that his friendship with Reid and decades of facing true evil (the vampires) have changed the dark mage. That and experiencing acceptance and love from the people of Mexico has enabled the Necromancer to develop an empathy for others, and with it, a sense of compassion, justice and equity. Planktal-Nakton's justice may be harsh and unforgiving at times, but it is sincere and honest.

Attributes: I.Q. 18, M.A. 10, M.E. 17, P.S. 18, PP. 14, P.E. 21, PB. 12, Spd 11.

Hit Points: 98. **S.D.C.:** 30.

M.D.C.: Via body armor or magic only.

Height: 6 feet, 5 inches (1.9 m). **Weight:** 227 lbs (102 kg).

Age: 58

P.P.E.: 191. **I.S.P.:** 68, Minor Psychic.

Horror/Awe Factor: 11 (+5 to vampires and their minions) when people realize who he is.

Experience Level: 13th level Necromancer and Vampire Hunter.

Disposition: Strong, quiet and confident, he is also secretive and cunning. Always cool and intelligent under fire, the mage is a fast thinker and quick to size up a situation and find solutions. His strong and commanding (some would say demanding) demeanor gives him an air of being sinister and dangerous even to the casual observer under the most pleasant of circumstances. He is loyal to Doc Reid because the doctor has given him true purpose and power, and he was the first to become a true friend. Planktal-Nakton often conspires with Lazarious and Carlotta, whom he enjoys manipulating. *Lieutenant General William Wilding* is his right-hand man (or hatchet man) as it was the Necromancer who arranged for the Lt. General to become head of security at Fort Reid. He has learned to trust Grizzly Carter and Pequita the Faceless One. He greatly underestimates the other famous Rangers, thinking of Vyurkly and the others as bumbling fools when compared to him.

Insanity: Though Planktal-Nakton is a changed man, he remains sadistic, manipulative and cruel. He still loves to inflict pain and death, and one must wonder what he might do if he didn't have the vampires upon which to sate these desires. Once obsessed with death, the Necromancer now embraces life and the destruction of "deathbringers" (not realizing he is such a being himself). While he has learned some measure of compassion, Planktal-Nakton continues to manipulate people to get them to do what he needs or desires, even those whom he now calls friends, including the original Rangers, Sir Lazarious and Carlotta in particular, as well as Lt. General Wilding, his dutiful henchman, most of all. Even now the mage tends to see most people as inferior and pawns.

Skills of Note: In addition to all the Special Abilities of a Necromancer and a Reid's Ranger Vampire Hunter, he has the O.C.C. Skills of a Necromancer plus Computer Operation, Horsemanship: General, Intelligence, Interrogation, Land Navigation, Literacy: American, Lore: Demons & Monsters, Lore: Vampires, Languages: American, Spanish and Dragonese, Math: Basic, Pilot: Hovercraft, Skin/Prepare Animal Hides and Wilderness Survival, all at 98%, Prowl 89%, Streetwise 80%, and W.P. Handguns and W.P. Knife at 13th level, and W.P. Sword and W.P. Energy Rifle at 9th level proficiency.

Combat Skills: Hand to Hand: Basic.

Attacks per Melee: Six.

Bonuses: +4 on Perception Rolls involving vampires and Dark Magicks, +2 on all other Perception Rolls, +2 on initiative, +1 to strike, +2 to parry, +2 to dodge, +2 to roll with impact, +5 S.D.C. damage, +4 to save vs Horror Factor, +2 to save vs psionics, +6 to save vs magic (O.C.C. & P.E. bonuses), +3 to save vs poison, +4% on all skills (I.Q. bonus), Critical Strike on a Natural roll of 19 or 20, kick attack (1D8 S.D.C.), and Judo flip (1D6 S.D.C.).

Special Necromantic Powers: All, including Union with the Dead, Augmentation with Additional Appendages (both fully described in **Rifts® Mystic Russia**) and Animate and Control Dead (36 skeletons/corpses; costs 10 P.P.E., lasts for 90 minutes, range of 460 feet/140 m.). Is also impervious to vampires – he cannot become one and is immune to their mind control.

Magic: 191 P.P.E.

Spell Invocations of Note: Banishment (65), Control/Enslave Entity (80), Constrain Being (25), Create Mummy (160), Create Zombie (250), Death Trance (1), Exorcism (30), Fear (5), Globe of Daylight (2), Horrific Illusion (10), Life Drain (25), Magic Net (7), Sanctum (390), Sickness (50), Soul Twist (170), Spoil (30), Tongues (12) and Turn Dead (6).

Necromancy/Bone Magic Spells: All Necro-Magic/Bone spells levels 1-10, including *Command Vampires* (100), *Divining Tombs & Graves* (10+), *Funeral Pyre* (35, dead remains burn to ash in 1D4 minutes) and *Greater Animated Dead* (50 P.P.E., same as Animate and Control Dead except the number of dead, the range and duration are all doubled, have 50% more S.D.C. and a Spd of 14). See **Rifts® Book of Magic** or **Rifts® Mystic Russia** for complete spell descriptions.

Bone Magic: See **Rifts® Book of Magic** or **Rifts® Mystic Russia** for complete details.

Other Spells: (All require x2 P.P.E. than what's listed to cast) Blind (6), Call Lightning (15), Domination (10), Energy Disruption (12), Fire Bolt (5), Impervious to Fire (5), Invul-

nerability (25), Negate Magic (30), Speed of the Snail (50) and Summon Lesser Being (425).

Magic Scrolls: Three Summon and Control Rain, one Time Hole, two Teleport: Superior, two Metamorphosis: Animal, and one Remove Curse.

Psionics: Minor Psychic with Alter Aura (2) and Mind Block (4), with 68 I.S.P.

Weapons: **Magic:** A pair of Thornhead Demon claws (+2 to initiative, +1 to strike & parry, inflict 2D6 M.D. per strike, grant Planktal-Nakton 2D6+12 M.D.C. and make him impervious to all S.D.C. weapons except for silver). A bone scepter he crafted himself (can cast Repel Animals, Negate Poison, and Turn Dead three times daily; inflicts either 3D6 S.D.C. or 2D6 M.D. per strike, and has 50 M.D.C.).

Conventional weapons: Silver-plated Falchion (1D8 S.D.C.; handle is gold-plated and gem-studded, worth about 12,000 credits), .357 Magnum (4D6 S.D.C. normal damage) loaded with silver bullets (holster contains 32 additional silver bullets and has a quick-loader device), JA-11 Juicer variable energy rifle, and a gem studded silver cross is worn around the neck (worth 10,000 credits). Additional vampire slaying equipment may be taken on vampire combat missions, including stakes, water pistol, holy water and an extra silver crucifix.

Mummies and Zombies: See below.

Body Armor: May wear light Urban Warrior armor under robes and into combat; uses magic for his primary protection.

Bionics & Cybernetics: None.

Money: The Necromancer has a fortune in gold, gems and pre-Rifts artifacts (namely a huge library of books and video/audiocassettes) worth 35 million credits. In addition, the mage has a 15 million credit line with the Black Market, 6 million in Universal Credits and connections within the Federation of Magic that could bring him additional revenue if he ever decided to call upon them.

Planktal-Nakton's Army of Dead

Over the last several years, Planktal-Nakton and the Necromancers who serve under his command have been busy creating a Dead Army. Most of their creations have been secreted away and stored in warehouses and at strategic locations. While everyone knows Reid's Rangers utilize animated dead, Mummies and Zombies (as per the magic spells), Doc Reid and his Necromancer General have been careful to conceal their *Army of the Dead*. This has been easy since neither mummies nor zombies require food, water or living quarters. Thus, after they are created they have been stored, standing up, waiting for their command at several strategic locations. One quarter are kept at Fort Reid, the rest are located closer to the northernmost Vampire Kingdoms of Ixzotz and Muluc, waiting to be unleashed.

Mummies and zombies have been used in small numbers by Planktal-Nakton and Reid's Rangers for years, typically squads of 6-40, not as an actual massed army. The Necromancer and Doc Reid are keeping that little surprise for when they launch their war against the Vampire Kingdoms. Nobody suspects Reid's Rangers of having more than a few hundred mummies or zombies, which is exactly what the two men want.

The following have been created by and are under the direct control of General Planktal-Nakton or one of his trusted lieutenants; often a Mage Vampire Hunter or fellow Necromancer.

Mummy Army of 3,866

Planktal-Nakton personally commands a legion of 1,200 of these mummies. The remaining 2,666 have been placed under the command of a small handful of his trusted field commanders who will use them as infantry troops in coordinated attacks.

Necromancers in Reid's Rangers may also create and control mummies of their own. However, Necromancers not under General Planktal-Nakton's direct command are not allowed to create and control more than 36 mummies. To do otherwise is treason and punishable by death. This is put in place to prevent Necromancers from going rogue and building their own mummy armies. Those under his direct command may lead as many as 500.

Mummies are killing machines used as shock troops by the Rangers, especially when hitting a town occupied by many vampires and/or their henchmen. The problem with mummies is that they are dumb as a rock and are basically attack dogs unable to make choices or decisions. If you want to clear the streets of *everyone* or wipe out an entire army or town, mummies are the killing machines to get the job done. Issuing an order such as, "kill everyone on the street," or "kill anyone found outdoors," will send mummies shambling down the streets and alleys slaughtering everyone. That will include vampires, werebeasts, humans, D-Bees, children, heroes and even Reid's Rangers. Unless Planktal-Nakton or one of his lieutenants are present to order, "Stop!" "Wait." "No." "Turn back," the mummy will kill everyone it encounters.

As mindless machines of destruction, mummies execute most commands with *lethal force*. Tell a mummy or group of mummies to "stop him/her/them," and they will do so with by killing. The same is true when guarding a position or supply depot. A simple command like, "Kill everyone who enters" is excellent because a mummy understands that order. Saying, "Don't let anyone enter," or "don't let anyone leave," or "stop people from stealing the supplies," to a mummy, means the same thing: "*Kill everyone who enters.*" The only time that is different is when there is someone the mummy identifies as its *maker* or *leader/commander*. That individual can issue specific commands, like "Grab him." "Hold him and don't let go," and so on. Even then, the person who commands mummies must be careful. Issuing a command to "stop him," will cause most mummies to stop the individual by killing him. *Stop* and *grab* are two very different things to a mummy. Stop means kill. Grab means grab, hold and not let go until told to do so. "Bring him to me," will see the mummy *forcibly* retrieve and drag or carry the targeted victim to its master. A person who struggles too hard to escape is likely to get injured, knocked out, beaten into submission and possibly killed. Moreover, the mummy will not care if the person in its clutches talks to others along the way, screams, shouts, or disposes of weapons or valuables while being dragged to the master. The mummy's order is to "bring," that is all. If the mummy gets confused, it brings (or kills) whomever it thinks is desired by its master. Anyone who gets in a mummy's way, attacks it or tries to stop it from its appointed task is fought until they relent, they are killed, or the mummy is destroyed. Again, mummies always use lethal force unless commanded to do otherwise.

Issuing a command such as, "capture him, but don't hurt him," or "but don't hurt anyone else," is relative to a mummy. It's an

automaton designed to kill, “hurt” is an abstract term that means “try not to kill” or “don’t fight back.” The first interpretation is dangerous to the victim and all who encounter the mummy. The second is dangerous for the mummy; it could be destroyed because it does not fight back as per its order to not hurt anyone. Yelling a command like, “watch out” or “be careful” means nothing to a mummy. “Free all prisoners” might have mummies without supervision free those in chains by chopping or tearing off the hand, foot or limb in chains, though there is a 50/50 chance they’ll try to cut, break or pull the bonds that hold the prisoners out of the wall first. If held by a captor or armed gunmen, the mummy will free the captives by killing or chasing away their captors.

Mummies are, generally, smart enough to be able to recognize a specific person when their master points to him/her and even when shown a photograph, video or 3D hologram. However, being dumb as a rock, they may mistake someone who looks similar, especially if dressed the same (i.e. in a uniform or armor), for their target.

As simple, dead creatures raised by magic, mummies can recognize vampires. They can also recognize werebeasts in animal and half-animal/half-man form, but will be fooled by werebeasts when they are in human form. Thus, mummies can be given an order such as kill all vampires or werebeasts, and ignore humans and D-Bees. If shown what one looks like, they can also target specific monsters, demons, D-Bees, soldiers in a particular uniform or armor, and animals. (“Kill all who look like this or that.”) However, a mummy is not a vampire detector. In a large crowd (10 or more people), a mummy gets confused and has difficulty identifying a vampire from mortals; at least until a vampire shows its true nature by baring its fangs, uses supernatural strength, or acts aggressive or unafraid. As killing machines, mummies tend to zone in on targets that are not afraid or confrontational, instinctively sensing a likely threat. Similarly, mummies can be ordered *not* to attack people in a particular uniform or wearing a particular symbol such as a crucifix, but all others are fair game.

Weapons and Combat: Mummies may be slow (three attacks per melee and a Spd of 7), but they are relentless and do not stop until their mission is accomplished. This is especially effective against a standing army, a defensive position or straight-up fight against vampire henchmen and mortal troops; the mummies mowing down everyone they encounter. They don’t have emotions, don’t feel pain, don’t know fear, and have no desires or needs. They are strong, with a P.S. 20, but are not supernaturally strong. They can also be given a melee weapon, even an M.D. melee weapon, but few are assigned any weapon of great value.

Most mummies are given a sliver-plated knife (does 1D6 Hit Point damage) or short sword (2D4 Hit Points), a wooden club (2D4 Hit Point damage) or a wooden spear (2D6 Hit Points) and a sack of 3D6 wooden stakes (1D6 damage). Add +5 to Hit Point/S.D.C. damage to all weapon attacks due to the mummy’s P.S. damage bonus of +5; double damage to vampires. **Note:** Mummies can *not* drive, ride a bicycle or ride an animal. In fact, animals instinctively fear and flee from mummies. They are incapable of aiming and firing guns or operating computers and even simple machines. They barely have the intelligence to open doors, use stairs or follow a human into an elevator. They have no strategy or tactics and lack cunning or guile. The only way they can be used to wait in ambush is to have their master/controller place them at a location and order them to attack when he says so.

Or the mummies could be given a command to kill all who enter a clearly designated *kill zone*. A mummy will NEVER attack or harm its maker. Never.

Armor: Since they can only be hurt by fire and explosives, fewer than 25% are clad in any sort of body armor. When they are, the armor is non-environmental suits that have 1D6x10 M.D.C. for the main body and 2D6+10 M.D.C. for legs, arms and helmet.

Vulnerabilities: Only fire (does double damage) and explosives (full damage) can hurt mummies. M.D. energy blasts, lightning, and punches do no damage, though they may damage their S.D.C. wrappings. If more than 60% of the mummy wrapping is destroyed, the creature is vulnerable to sunlight and will avoid it if possible. Sunlight on the remains of an unwrapped mummy does 3D6 damage every melee round it is exposed to it. Mummies can also be lured into traps and immobilized. Though the creatures will try to climb out or smash through whatever barrier is holding them at bay, they can be stymied. **Note:** Mummies are impervious to the vampire’s mind control, Horror Factor/fear, and charm and cannot be turned into a vampire, as they are already dead.



Zombie Army of 1,484

Planktal-Nakton personally commands a legion of 1,484 zombies. They are deployed as infantry companies in coordinated attacks. **Note:** This massive number of zombies (and mummies) were created over the years by the Necromancer General and the Necromancers who serve him during secret rituals.

Necromancers under his direct command may create and command as many as 24 zombies. Necromancers not under General Planktal-Nakton’s direct command are not allowed to create and control more than 10 zombies.

The Create Zombie ritual gives pseudo-life to a “voodoo” style zombie – a dead servant – not the brains and flesh-eating variety of walking dead. Zombies cost much more P.P.E. to create than other animated dead, and may require the extra energy of a ley line nexus and/or a ritual with willing participants giving up their P.P.E. for the creation of this dead servant. Another source of P.P.E. is blood sacrifices. In the latter case, Necromancers of Reid’s Rangers prefer to use vampires, their henchmen, and other monsters as the victims to be sacrificed, though other enemies, livestock and other animals can be substituted.

The advantages of creating and commanding zombies are many. They are much more intelligent than mummies or animated dead, both of which are barely more than puppets. Zombies can read and talk, are able to follow detailed commands and instructions, discern between friend and foe, can drive a car, use weapons and tools, and have more S.D.C. than a mummy (150 S.D.C. vs 70). The trade-off is they are vulnerable to a variety of weapons and have fewer attacks per melee (two). Like the mummy, it will only obey its maker and those designated as having authority over it.

Regenerative capability. Arguably the biggest advantage is that a zombie that seems to be slain (its 150 S.D.C. reduced to zero or even when blown to pieces), can regenerate to walk again and instinctively senses and seeks out its master/creator regardless of the distance between them.

Intelligence and ability to follow orders. Unlike mummies, zombies are simpleminded and direct, but intelligent. A mummy must have its master tell it every little thing and cannot be given an assigned task, unless it is simply to kill or retrieve a person. *Zombies*, on the other hand, can be given simple instructions such as, “Load the truck with this cargo, then drive it to address X, unload the cargo wherever the manager tells you and come back here when you are done.” Or, “Go find Alex and tell him I need him.” Or, “Find this person (shows an image) and bring him to me (or kill him, hide him, etc.)” Likewise, zombies can drive a car or truck, operate simple machinery, be shown how to build a fence, pick a crop, dig a ditch, and all types of things a mummy cannot do. When told to, “Kill all vampires and werebeasts, but do not harm women or children,” or “civilians,” they can discern between targets and do as they are told. This means they can be sent to a particular address to kill the people there or to capture or kill a specified target, to start a fire or smash a generator, steal a vehicle or a particular item, and so on. However, zombies are not capable of stealth, deception or subterfuge. They take reasonably direct and simple action to achieve their assigned mission, and are slow and ponderous in their movements.

Though they have no desires or emotions, zombies can speak. Again, only as directed and they keep matters simple and direct. “Lord Planktal-Nakton requests you come with me,” or “give me X or die,” and so on. A zombie will NOT answer questions and cannot be interrogated as they don’t feel pain, at least not like we do. Nor are they afraid, and they do not think beyond the simple task at hand. Like a dog, a zombie functions in the moment and their memory is very short-term, forgetting what they did just yesterday. However, they will remember where they are supposed to return or rendezvous, and if a captor allows them to escape, they are easy to follow to that location.

Likewise, a zombie cannot be threatened or forced to take someone to its master. The zombie ignores the demand, standing silent and motionless even if beaten. If a zombie agrees to lead a rival or enemy to its master or a rendezvous point, it is only because its master has given it instructions to do so. Beware as there is some ulterior motive or a trap in place.

Like mummies, a zombie can tell the difference between a vampire and a living person, so telling it to hunt and kill vampires is a feasible command. It can also recognize obvious werebeasts in animal and half-animal/half-man form, but will be fooled by them when they are in human guise. Most other monsters must be identified with a drawing, photo or physical specimen to show them. Broad commands like, “kill all demons and protect the

townspeople,” are viable. In this instance, the zombies will attack all beings that appear to be an obvious “demon” and protect those who appear to be ordinary townspeople. This means enemy shape-shifters and those clad in armor or concealing clothing may escape the zombies’ notice.

Zombies in Body Armor: 25% of Planktal-Nakton’s zombies are clad in *Coalition Dead Boy armor* (old and new styles) that was purchased, stolen or rebuilt. Half of the Coalition Dead Boy zombie armor has been repainted, but not all, as the classic CS armor breeds fear in many people, vampires and their henchmen included. Zombies do not need full environmental armor protection like the living, so many of the suits have breaches, blast marks and holes in them, but still offer M.D.C. protection to the zombies.

15% of the zombies are clad in other types of common body armor like the Gladiator (70 M.D.C. new), Crusader (95 M.D.C. new) and other full suits of armor with 2D4x10 M.D.C. remaining.

25% of the zombies are clad in whatever “patchwork” non-environmental, M.D.C. body armor is available. Most of them are suits salvaged from slain enemies and pieced together as “patchwork” armor with an average main body M.D.C. of 1D6x10, helmet 1D4x10, forearms 4D6 and legs 6D6.

The remaining third wear no armor at all.

Limited Invulnerability: The zombies themselves have 150 S.D.C. and are impervious to poison, disease, psionic attacks (other than fire) and most ordinary S.D.C. weapons. Punches, kicks, clubbing and stabbing attacks, bullets, etc. do NO damage. They are also resistant to M.D. weapons and regenerate in 48 hours after the creature seems to have been slain! See Vulnerabilities, below. **Note:** Zombies are impervious to the vampire’s mind control, Horror Factor/fear, and bite. There is no such thing as a zombie vampire; they are already dead and cannot be turned into a vampire.

Weapons and Attacks: Zombies sent to battle vampires are armed with a silver-plated machete (inflicts 2D6 S.D.C. damage), a wooden club (2D6 S.D.C.), or a wooden spear (2D6 damage), and 2D6+12 wooden stakes (1D6 damage); double damage against vampires. A zombie *may* also be armed with a shotgun or pistol with silver ammunition. Zombies only have two attacks per melee round and when they fire a weapon they are -4 to strike, which is why a shotgun with scatter shot is better than any sort of precision weapon. Only 20% have any sort of gun.

When dispatched against M.D.C. opponents, the zombies are armed with a Vibro-Sword (2D6 M.D.) and some may be given an M.D. gun of some sort. Zombies are fearless, but slow and have two attacks per melee round. See page 223 of *Rifts® Ultimate Edition* for the complete spell description and zombie stats.

Vulnerabilities: *S.D.C. energy blasts* do half damage. High-tech M.D. weapons such as lasers, ion blasts, particle beams, explosives, etc. also do *half damage*, but inflict M.D. as *S.D.C.* point for point. **For example:** An M.D. energy blast does 3D6 M.D. and the dice roll shows 13 points of damage, so reduce the damage *by half* to inflict 6 S.D.C. points of damage to the zombie; always round down.

S.D.C. explosives do one quarter their normal damage. *M.D. explosives* do half damage and inflict M.D. as S.D.C. point for point. **Note:** If a zombie is blown to bits (or chopped into peices), it will reform and rise again after 48 hours!

Magic. Zombies are vulnerable to most forms of magic weapons, including TW devices, Rune Weapons, Dark Weapons, and magic energy spells. They cannot be affected by illusions, charm/mind control magic, or any attack on the mind or emotions (impervious to psionic attack), nor can they be turned away with the Turn Dead spell.

Normal S.D.C. fire inflicts full damage. M.D. fire does full damage as S.D.C., point for point. Magic fire and magical weapons of fire do 50% greater damage to zombies as S.D.C. damage, point for point. However, zombies are smart enough to try to put the fire out when their clothing or flesh catches fire.

Weapons made of or coated in silver, be they blade or bullet, do full damage even if an S.D.C. weapon.

Zombies are difficult to lure into traps and ambushes, as they are likely to recognize such ploys and avoid them unless the creatures are distracted or the trap is well disguised.

Advantages of a Dead Army

Zombies, mummies and animated dead have their limitations as a combat force. Against a fast, mobile enemy, including most high-tech opponents with power armor, robots, flyers and hover vehicles, zombies and mummies are not very effective. Against a low-tech foe and predominantly ground forces, like vampires and werebeasts, however, they are devastating, especially when deployed in large numbers or used to lay siege or slaughter everyone.

One of the things that make zombies, mummies and animated dead so effective against vampires is that vampires have no sway over them. As animated “dead” they feel no pain, no fear, nor emotions. The dead do not tire or need food or water. Most importantly, they cannot be controlled by vampires or turned into one. They fight until destroyed, and zombies regenerate in 48 hours to fight again. When deployed in large groups, these dead warriors fight well as a group. When the paltry two attacks of one zombie are used up, it is smart enough to step aside to let another *zombie* attack. Mummies are relentless and pile on their enemies, fighting until their target or they themselves are destroyed. As for zombies, kill it and it returns to life 48 hours later to fight again.

The only way to permanently destroy a zombie is to sever the head and bury the head and body separately, or perform an *exorcism* on the creature. There is one other way to stop *zombies* that very few know about: find and destroy its creator! Kill the creator of the zombies and all of the zombies under his direct control will stop fighting after 96 hours and return to their inanimate, dead state of being. However, they continue to follow their last order until that period of time elapses. On the other hand, zombies created by the slain mage but who will have been placed under the control of one of his lieutenants/associates, will continue to serve that particular master for another 1D4x10+40 years. To stop them, their master by proxy must be slain or each zombie destroyed as usual.

Mummies are a different story. Slay the creator of mummies, and the cursed dead things continue to function indefinitely, always trying to fulfill the last order of their master, as best they can, and killing everyone who gets in their way.

Animated dead immediately stop functioning the moment the mage who animated them in the first case is slain or rendered unconscious; they immediately stop and drop into a heap.

Protect the creator(s) and unleash the dead, and you have a lethal force against vampires. Warriors who feel no pain nor fear, and cannot be mind controlled by vampires. Warriors who are already dead so there is no loss of human life when they are destroyed. And because these dead warriors are little more than robots, they fight without hesitation until they are, indeed, destroyed. When the living troops fighting with them perish, a Necromancer can animate them to join the ranks to fight on in death.

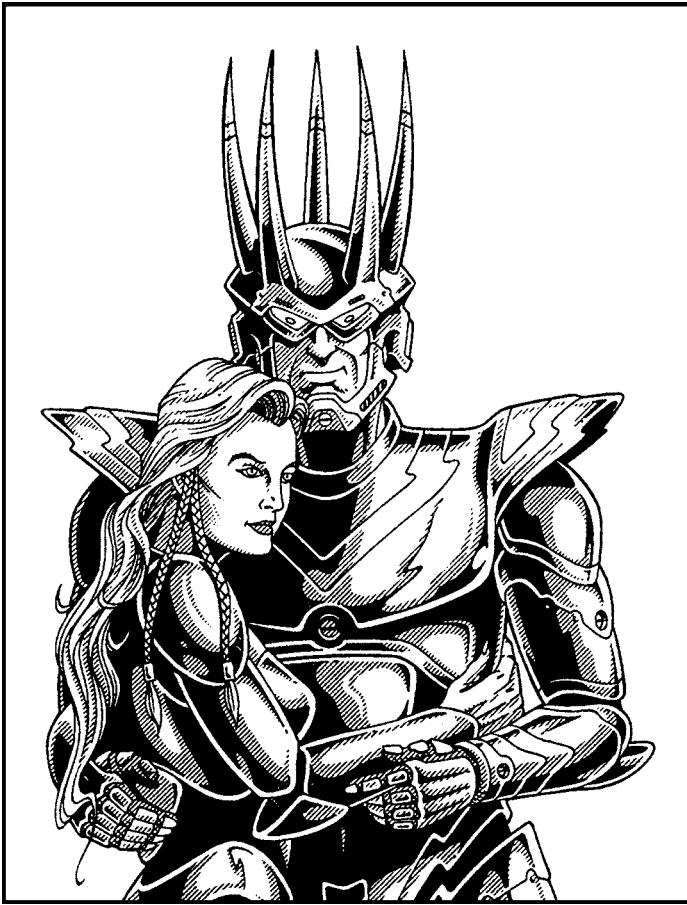
Sending a sea of mummies and zombies and/or animated dead into the streets of a vampire-held town is extremely effective. The Dead Army slaughtering vampires and their servants, and unleashing havoc upon them. An onslaught assisted by the vampires’ own arrogance and overblown sense of invincibility. There is no city within the Vampire Kingdoms that has defensive walls or fortified military positions. This grants the Dead Army and human attackers easy access to their enemy. There are no gun towers or standing armies either, because the undead don’t believe humans would ever dare attack them within their own Kingdoms. And if they did, the supernatural demons would make mincemeat of them. The latter is most certainly true of combat forces unfamiliar with battling vampires, but not of *Reid’s Rangers* and the forces they now lead. Against warriors who know how to fight vampires – who to target, how to incapacitate the enemy first (stake) and finish them off later, how to find their lairs and strike during daylight hours, and skillful use of weapons, magic and dead automatons – the vampires face a very real threat. And since the vast majority of vampires fight with tooth and claw in melee combat, they and their henchmen are very vulnerable to the Army of Dead. Meanwhile, mortal servants of the undead are quite terrified of battling an army of dead. (G.M.s, take the Horror Factor into account. You might even want to add a point or two for having to face large groups of them.) Most civilians will run for their lives, screaming in terror.

Collateral damage to property and innocent civilians can be high when using an Army of Dead, especially at the hands of mummies. Such losses, however, are acceptable to everyone in order to be freed from the oppression of the undead. The war against the Vampire Kingdoms is likely to be the bloodiest ever fought on North American soil.

When not deployed in combat, zombies, and to a lesser degree, mummies and animated dead are useful in hauling supplies and other support functions.

Sir Raoul Lazarious

Cyber-Knight Raoul Lazarious seems to be everything a classic hero should be, with one exception: Raoul is really a maleficent force disguised as good. In his own way he tries to help people, but his motives are to achieve personal reward in the way of glory and power. Two things his association with Reid’s Rangers have earned him in spades. He genuinely believes himself to be superior to the common man and the greatest warrior to ever live. He expects others to hang on his every word and obey his whims and commands. His advice is always the best. His opinion the only correct one. People can either do things the right way (his way) or the wrong way. Those who question his ability and authority are considered fools who deserve whatever fate befalls them, since they are not wise enough to listen to his words or to enlist his aid without question. Those who openly question or



defy him are seen as a challenge to his superiority. They are either treated with disdain, mocked, put in their place via humiliation, or beaten and/or destroyed in any number of ways. It is fortunate then, that Sir Lazarious commands a mixed force of experienced, but mostly green troops (under fourth level) who practically worship him.

A typical example of his petty ego is an incident at a village near El Paso. The village was threatened by a band of Wild Vampires who swore to destroy them. As luck would have it, a platoon of Reid's Rangers, led by the famous Sir Lazarious, heard of their plight and arrived that very morning. The village elders questioned the Knight's battle plans and refused to allow the Rangers to have their way with the village women as a reward (payment). The great hero snorted and rose ever so slowly, saying, "My dear man, you question my strategies and my motives, yet it is you who called for our aid. Then, you refuse the hand of friendship from the great Sir Lazarious, General Supreme of Reid's Rangers?" The village chief tried to explain that the "price" of the women was too high and that they merely questioned the "wisdom" of the proposed plan, asking only for reassurances and clarification. Sir Lazarious smiled sarcastically, showing his displeasure, shrugged and said, "How can a general of a hundred battles make a . . . a farmer understand military tactics? As to your other criticism, can there be a fair price placed on one's life? Sir, I will be in my tent, should you change your opinion." With this, the noble Knight departed for his tent.

Raoul and his army stayed the day, enjoying the hospitality of the villagers' food, drink and company, but still the elders would not agree to his conditions. Shortly before dusk, Lazarious and his men rode out of town. From a hilltop they watched the vampires descend upon the village, killing everyone present. After the

carnage, a tear rolled down his cheek. He turned to his captain and said, "We have witnessed an atrocity this night. And by all that is holy, these simple farmers shall be avenged!"

The atrocity, you see, was not his, but the massacre perpetrated by the marauding vampires. The next night he found the vampire band responsible and destroyed every last one, suffering only four casualties. Of course, he was heralded as a hero. In his own twisted mind he had punished the villains, destroyed the evil, and avenged the innocent. Too often, such has been the way of Sir Raoul Lazarious and the men who serve under him. That callousness has changed some over the years as more and more raw recruits filled with ideals of true heroism have joined the ranks of the Rangers. In the early days, many of the fighters under the Cyber-Knight's command were rogues and mercenaries two steps away from banditry. In recent years, with the eyes of so many people upon him, Sir Raoul Lazarious has tried to *appear* more humane and compassionate. In combat, however, he is utterly ruthless, devoid of mercy and quick to make decisions that cost innocent lives without hesitation if it means winning the battle and destroying vampires.

Sir Lazarious is a big man with bulging muscles and a long mane of golden hair streaked with silver. His voice is deep and authoritative, his demeanor regal and haughty. In combat he is precise and measured.

Sir Raoul Lazarious Stats

General and Supreme Commander of Reid's Rangers

Name: Raoul Lazarious.

Also Known As: The Sword of Vengeance.

Rank: General in Reid's Rangers and famous hero of Mexico.

Heritage: Human of Caucasian ancestry, but may have some Native American in him. Family originates from the Montana area of the New West.

Alignment: Aberrant.

Attributes: I.Q. 13, M.A. 15, M.E. 24, P.S. 25, P.P. 23, P.E. 19, P.B. 19, Spd 22 (15 mph/24 km). He can maintain his full running speed for two minutes per P.E. attribute point; half that speed for 10 minutes per P.E. point.

Hit Points: 54. **S.D.C.:** 87.

M.D.C. by Location via Cyber-Armor Alone (A.R. 17):

Shoulders (2) – 13 each

Back – 40

Forearms (2) – 15 each

Upper Legs (2) – 20 each

Chest – 75

Note: Cyber-armor is a living part of him, and regenerates 1D6 M.D. per hour.

Combat Armor by Location: General Lazarious wears a custom suit of M.D.C. armor that is predominantly gold in color with silver accents and design elements; real silver.

Helmet – 100

Arms (2) – 35 each

Legs (2) – 50 each

Main Body – 140

Height: A tall man at 6 feet, 7 inches (2 m). **Weight:** 320 lbs (144 kg), all muscle.

Age: 34

P.P.E.: 17. **I.S.P.:** 69; considered a Major Psionic.

Experience Level: 11th level Cyber-Knight.

Disposition: The success of Sir Lazarious in combat and the worship of his adoring public have only served to make this man more arrogant and confident than ever. Despite his genuine leadership abilities and skills in combat, the Cyber-Knight will consider and do anything to win. That means he is willing to fight dirty, use trickery and deception, and cheat as necessary. When he loses a fight, he seeks a rematch and hungers for revenge.

He believes his way is the best and only way of doing things and he belittles and mistreats those who challenge his decisions. Lazarious treats most people in a condescending manner. A bully in knight's clothing, he reinforces his own feeling of superiority by humiliating and denigrating his defeated opponents.

Sir Lazarious has his own very twisted code of ethics that keeps him loyal to *Doc Reid* and the ideals behind the Rangers. However, he is a petty, unhappy man who always wants more. He is envious of *Planktal-Nakton* and doesn't like sharing the limelight or power base with him. Though he'd never admit it, he likes the Necromancer's style and considers him to be one of his few equals and an ally, so the two men work very well together. Lazarious loves *Carlotta*, whom he thinks is the most beautiful and mystical creature on Earth, but he is a jealous lover who doesn't like it when other men pay too much attention to her. *Lieutenant General Wilding*, in charge of security at the Fort, is another friend and ally, though hardly an equal. They rode together for years and the Lieutenant General has always bowed to the Cyber-Knight's authority, so he is a useful "friend." The rest of the Rangers have proven themselves worthy teammates, but Lazarious has little true respect for any but *Vyurr Kly*. He despises *Grizzly Carter* for being too soft and a buffoon, and marvels that he has survived all these years. *Little Meetal* shows more courage than her late mother, Meetal the Butcher, but he has little use for her. *Mii-Tar the Destroyer* and *Pequita the Faceless One* are considered capable warriors and loyal companions, but too weak and emotional to ever amount to anything more than his associates.

Insanity: Sadistic and a bully, he is obsessed with winning and needs to test himself constantly on the field of battle. Obsessed with fame and glory and consumed with a lust to topple the Vampire Kingdoms, but not to save lives, rather to be the one responsible.

Skills of Note: Anthropology 85%, Athletics (General), Body Building, Boxing, Climbing 98%/95%, Detect Ambush 85%, Escape Artist 85%, Gymnastics, Horsemanship: Cyber-Knight 93%, Intelligence 80%, Language: American, Spanish, Euro, Gobblely, and Dragonese, all at 98%, Literacy: American 85%, Lore: Demon/Monsters 95%, Lore: Vampires 98%, Paramedic 98%, Pilot Robots & Power Armor 90%, Preserve Food 84%, Prowl 45%, Radio: Basic 95%, Robot Combat: Elite (NG Samson Power Armor), Swim 98%, Track Animals 75%, Track (humanoids) 80%, Wilderness Survival 85%, Wrestling, and W.P. Archery, W.P. Energy Pistol, W.P. Energy Rifle, W.P. Spear and W.P. Sword, all at 11th level.

Combat Skills: Cyber-Knight. Hand to Hand: Martial Arts and Cyber-Knight Zen Combat. Automatic kick attack (2D6 S.D.C.), body flip/throw (1D6 S.D.C.), leap kick (3D6 S.D.C. and a Critical Strike), Paired Weapons, Critical Strike on a Natural roll of 18-20, pin on roll of 18 or higher. Can also en-

tangle, crush squeeze (ID4 S.D.C. damage), back flip escape, and climb rope 89%. Sense of balance is 90%.

His Cyber-Knight Zen Combat gives him no penalty to strike a target while moving, and grants him a +4 to automatic dodge against technological attacks. He is also +2 to initiative when attacked by guns, +4 to initiative if attacked by artificial intelligences or robots, and is +2 to strike & parry and +1 to dodge when fighting multiple opponents.

Attacks per Melee: Seven.

Bonuses: +3 on Perception Rolls, +5 on Perception Rolls involving vampires, +3 on initiative, +6 to strike, +10 to parry and dodge, +7 to roll with punch/impact, +3 to pull punch, +10 S.D.C. damage, +5 to save vs psionic attack, +2 to save vs magic and poison, 45% chance to impress/charm.

Magic: None; only Lore skills and personal experience.

Psionics: Psi-Sword, Psi-Shield (lasts 60 minutes and has 80 M.D.C.), Meditation, See the Invisible, Sixth Sense, Summon Inner Strength, Sense Evil, Resist Fatigue, and Mind Block (0). **I.S.P.** 83; Major Psionic.

Weapons: His Psi-Sword (3D6 M.D.) is his favorite weapon in general, but he wields a saber halberd pole arm (3D6 S.D.C. damage, 6D6 damage to vampires as it is silver plated), a silver-plated broadsword (1D8 S.D.C.; double to vampires and werebeasts), Vibro-Sword (2D6 M.D.), and still favors a long bow, NG-202 rail gun (with wood flechettes; used only with power armor), Triax TX-30 ion pulse rifle, plasma grenades (5D6 M.D.; has 1D4+2 at any given time) and two #3 fusion blocks (4D6x10 M.D., 10 foot/3 m blast radius). Wears a Talisman of Invulnerability given to him by Planktal-Nakton (can be activated three times a day for 30 minutes at a time). He sometimes dons a suit of NG Samson power armor, an old favorite, for reconnaissance into known enemy/vampire territory and for heavy combat, otherwise wears the custom armor described. Both suits of armor are gold and silver in color.

Bionics & Cybernetics: Cyber-Armor and a suit of custom M.D.C. armor worn over it (both are stated out above), underwater eye (Bio-System), oxygen storage cell (30 minute supply), toxic filter, and gyro-compass.

Money: Carries 3D6x1,000 in gold and/or gems on him at all times, as well as 150,000 in credits. Another 1.7 million in gold, silver, gems and artifacts, along with a cool million worth of credits, is hoarded away back at his quarters at Fort Reid.

The Rangers of the Lazarious Company: General Lazarious commands an entire army of 5,000 troops plus his Army of Dead, but his hand-picked Special Forces Company is one of the most elite forces in the Rangers. These troops are all experienced soldiers loyal to their commander.

Platoon Leader: Sir Raoul Lazarious.

Second in Command: Carlotta la Blanca.

The 62 Soldiers:

2 Bursters, 7th and 9th level.

2 Combat Cyborgs, 7th and 8th level.

2 Crazies, both 9th level.

1 Dog Boy, 8th level, mutant bloodhound.

4 Headhunters, 6th level each.

3 Juicers, all 8th level each.

1 Ley Line Walker, 9th level.

2 Mage Vampire Hunters, 6th and 8th level.

1 Mystic, 10th level.

- 2 Necromancers, 5th, 7th, 8th and 9th level.
- 2 Psychic Healers, 7th and 9th level.
- 1 Techno-Wizard, 6th level.
- 1 Simvan Scout, 10th level Simvan warrior.
- 4 Wilderness Scouts, 9th level each.

Armored Squad: Seven power armor pilots 1D3+4 level, one SAMAS pilot (9th level) and the rest pilot a selection of Northern Gun power armor.

Vampire Hunter Platoon (Reid's Rangers): 24; half are 4-6th level, the rest 7-9th level.

“Silver” – Robot Horse

Lazarious' favorite vehicle is a large, robot war horse with a faux gray hide, named Silver. **Speed:** 110 (75 mph/120 km). **Robot Armor:** 450 M.D.C., 2,000 lbs (900 kg). **Intelligence:** Simple, equal to an I.Q. of about 9. **Alignment:** Not applicable; completely loyal to its rider. **Skill Program:** Responds like a well-trained real horse (without the fear response), and has voice recognition and response capabilities (can talk to its rider). **Power Source:** Nuclear, 15 years. **Optics:** Advanced robot system. **Sensors:** Bio-Scan Medical Survey Unit and Micro-Radar. **Weapons:** Eye laser (1D6 M.D.; 2,000 foot/610 m range) and kick/stomp attacks. **Combat:** Four attacks per melee. **Damage:** Front kick 2D6 M.D., rear leg kick 4D6 M.D., stomp 1D6 M.D., leap kick 4D6 M.D. and a 50% chance of knocking opponent down (loses one attack, but counts as two attacks), and head butt and bite inflict 1D4x10 S.D.C. **Bonuses:** +2 on initiative, +1 to strike, +2 parry, +3 to dodge when running, and +1 to roll with impact. See page 162 of **Rifts® Vampire Kingdoms™, Revised** for more details, or page 199 of **Rifts® New West™** for full information on robot horses.

Carlotta la Blanca

Carlotta la Blanca is a creature of magic. A Snow Lizard dragon in disguise, living out a lifetime in human form. She and Lazarious, dragon and human, are deeply in love with each other, and although she is ultimately more powerful than Lazarious and will live centuries after he is dead, Carlotta is very affectionate and submissive toward him. She obeys his every command and satisfies his every desire. She would fight to the death to protect her most beloved or offer her life for his, such is the bond between them. Note that the feeling is mutual and Sir Lazarious would never betray or abandon his lady love, nor ask her to jeopardize her life without good reason. No one knows how the two met nor why a dragon would be so submissive to a fragile human.

This ice dragon is capable of anything. Carlotta is truly Anarchist, with leanings toward Aberrant evil, like her mate. She is as conniving and treacherous as she is beautiful and has lured many men to their doom. She is one hundred percent loyal only to herself and her love, Raoul Lazarious. Regardless of her relationship with the Cyber-Knight, Carlotta does not relate well to humans or D-Bees. Under the influence of Sir Lazarious, she sees most people as lesser beings to be used and led like sheep. She shuns her own kind, preferring the company of her Cyber-Knight above all others. If not for Lazarious, she might live as a hermit or become the scourge of an entire countryside. Carlotta secretly looks for a fountain of youth or source of immortality so that she



may keep Sir Lazarious at her side forever. (**Author's Note:** No, becoming a vampire is not an acceptable option for immortality.)

Surprisingly, few people realize that Carlotta is a dragon. Most believe she is a powerful D-Bee, an alien sorceress, or cyborg. Few have made the connection between her and the nameless dragon that is known to frequently join Sir Lazarious on missions. Some have even decided that “the dragon” is Carlotta's Familiar or pet. To maintain her secret, she and Lazarious disappear for hours or days at a time (Lazarious finds both Carlotta the woman and Carlotta the dragon to be equally wondrous). Carlotta the woman will often wander off or go on reconnaissance alone, or with Sir Lazarious, so that she may revert to her dragon form and save her metamorphosis for when she must associate with humanoids. Everyone who travels with her learns that Carlotta can take care of herself, so none of Reid's Rangers, except for the newest recruits, ever worry about her when she wanders off alone in hostile territory. **Note:** All the original Rangers know that Carlotta is a dragon and keep her secret. This knowledge sometimes makes Carlotta quite nervous.

In her human guise, Carlotta is a beautiful, platinum blonde vixen with hair that flows below her waist, a voluptuous figure and sparkling blue eyes as deep as the ocean. Many men desire her, a fact that she has often used to seduce information from the foolhardy or to distract the enemy.

Carlotta la Blanca Stats

A Captain of the Rangers and Consort to Sir Lazarious

Real Name: K'ri-Ota.

Also Known As: The White Lady.

Heritage: Snow Lizard Dragon (hatchling).

Alignment: Anarchist with leanings toward Aberrant.

Attributes: I.Q. 19, M.A. 18, M.E. 21, P.S. 29, P.P. 16, P.E. 22, P.B. 27, Spd 26 (18 mph/29 km running).

M.D.C.: 470, and regenerates 1D4x10 M.D. per melee round.

Horror Factor: 10 in her natural dragon form.

Height: 5 feet, 11 inches (1.8 m) as a woman, 15 feet (4.6 m) as a dragon hatchling (30 feet/9 m long).

Weight: 125 lbs (56 kg) as a woman, 8 tons as a dragon.

Age: 108; barely a toddler by dragon standards.

P.P.E.: 97. **I.S.P.:** 72.

Experience Level: 8th level Dragon Hatchling.

Disposition: Regrettably, she has picked up on the attitudes and behavior of Sir Lazarious, which means she tends to keep to herself (associating mostly with Sir Lazarious), is quiet, but cocky, arrogant and mean. She is cold and distant to all but Doc Reid, Sir Raoul Lazarious and Planktal-Nakton. She is extremely protective and possessive of Lazarious and is constantly at her lover's side; he is her security blanket.

Carlotta finds Planktal-Nakton fascinating and she and her consort both consider him a friend, yet she is always wary of the powerful Necromancer. The dragon is also fond of Doc Reid, who she thinks is a mighty warrior and cute, but her only true friend is Raoul Lazarious. She finds all the other Rangers, and humanoids in general, to be naïve, weak and annoying.

Insanity: Nothing serious, but she is fascinated with owning or protecting anything white, especially if it is beautiful or exotic. This is possibly a side effect of her being a Snow Dragon that hatched in a desert environment. She is also terribly suspicious of, and competitive toward, other women or species, and can be murderously jealous towards women who flirt too much with Sir Lazarious.

Skills of Note: Computer Operation 85%, Horsemanship: General 60/40%, Land Navigation 64%, Language: American and Spanish at 98%, Track Animals 60/70%, Math: Basic 90%, Pilot: Hovercraft 75%, Radio: Basic 90% and Sing 70% (professional quality).

Natural Dragon Abilities: Nightvision for 200 feet (61 m), see the invisible, turn invisible at will, impervious to cold, can metamorph into whatever form she chooses; takes 7 seconds and lasts for 14 hours. Also, Bio-Regenerate 1D10 M.D.C. per melee round, teleport 36%, has Frost Breath (does 3D6 M.D., 100 foot/30.5 m range). Can also become a snowstorm (see **Rifts® Ultimate Edition**, page 163, for exact details).

Combat Skills: Hand to Hand: Dragon (special). Physical attacks inflict Hit Point damage to vampires. Frost breath (3D6 M.D. to a four foot/1.2 m area, range 100 feet/30 m).

Attacks per Melee: Six.

Bonuses: +4 on Perception Rolls involving vampires, +3 on all other Perception Rolls, +2 on initiative, +3 to strike, +5 to parry, +4 to dodge, +16 S.D.C. damage, +3 to roll with impact, +2 to pull punch, +5% I.Q. skill bonus, +3 to save vs psionics and insanity, +6 to save vs magic and poison, +3 to save vs Horror Factor. Has a 50% chance to invoke trust or intimidation, and an 83% chance of invoking charm or to impress.

Magic: Magic Skills: Read Magic, Recognize Enchantment 85%, Recognize Magic Circles and Enchantment, Use Scrolls. Carlotta can also use Techno-Wizard devices intuitively and her knowledge of spells has increased considerably. **P.P.E.:** 97 plus 50 P.P.E. in her Bracelet Talisman.

Spell Knowledge: Aura of Power (4), Befuddle (6), Blind (6), Blinding Flash (1), Call Lightning (15), Carpet of Adhesion (10), Charm (12), Chromatic Protection (10), Circle of Flame (10), Cleanse (6), Cloak of Darkness (6), Cloud of Smoke (2), Concealment (6), Create Water (15), Create Wood (10 or 20), Detect Concealment (6), Energy Bolt (5), Eyes of Thoth (8), Frostblade (15), Globe of Daylight (2), Heal Wounds (10), Implosion Neutralizer (12), Lantern Light (1), Lifeblast (15), Magic Net (7), Mystic Alarm (5), Orb of Cold (6), Turn Dead (6) and Wave of Frost (6). **Note:** Spells not found in the pages of **Rifts® Ultimate Edition** are described in the **Rifts® Book of Magic**.

Psionics: Astral Projection (8), Clairvoyance (4), Object Read (6), Presence Sense (4), Sense Evil (2), Sense Magic (3), and Telepathy (4). **I.S.P.:** 72.

Weapons & Special Equipment: Some personal items like a hair brush, makeup kit, pocket mirror, canteen, wine skin, and food items. Her favorite "gun" is a Triax TX-500 cyborg rail gun (though any rail gun will do in a pinch), with one normal ammo-case containing six belts (6D6 M.D. per 30 round burst, 13 bursts per belt, range 4,000 feet/1,219 m), and one case of anti-vampire rounds. Also carries a dozen wooden stakes, a silver crucifix, and a silver dagger. Carlotta like to wear a suit of customized, non-environmental Crusader body armor to help perpetuate the belief that she is mortal.

Techno-Wizardry & Magic Items: Psionic mind shield that makes the wearer impervious to psionic mind control/influence, a P.P.E. powered Wilk's 447 laser rifle (30 blasts, 2D6 M.D., range: 2,000 feet/609 m) and Wilk's 320 laser pistol (10 shots, 1,000 foot/305 m range). Two talismans from Planktal-Nakton: A pendant of Shadow Meld (can be used 3x per 24 hours), and a bracelet that is a P.P.E. battery containing 50 P.P.E.

Bionics & Cybernetics: None.

Money: Carries a million credits' worth of gems on her at all times (you know how dragons tend to hoard valuables), and has another 8 million credits' worth of gold, gems and a few magic items hidden at a secret place known only to her and Sir Lazarious. She has little trust in credit cards, but does have four cards with 250,000 credits each.

Pequita the Faceless One

Pequita is a living enigma. Some claim she is a shape-shifting D-Bee from an alien world. Others insist she is a powerful supernatural being – a shape-shifting angel, perhaps – that has no earthly form. And that's the reason she changes her appearance once or twice every day, because a flesh and blood body is so alien to her that she is unable to hold onto the human form and must remake herself at least once every day. It is presumed by her name and her preference for the female form, that she is female or identifies with them. Whether Pequita is her real name or not, is anyone's guess. Most people believe she is some sort of avenging supernatural being of immense power. Some even whisper that she is a goddess come to Earth to destroy vampires. These stories cast the Faceless One in a shroud mystery that makes her seem frightening and the least approachable of the Original Eight Reid's Rangers. This is reinforced by the fact that Pequita is a loner who keeps to herself and has little to say in public, letting

the other Rangers speak for her, or expressing herself through her actions. As a result, people keep their distance and some fear her.

The truth is much less thrilling. Pequita is no deity nor avenging spirit. Rather, she is a human-like D-Bee from another dimension. A D-Bee with the ability to take any humanoid face and form. She arrived on Rifts Earth quite by accident and has not the slightest idea of how to return to her own world. After studying the people and politics of Rifts North America, Pequita decided to play up her shape-shifting abilities and created a wild backstory that would make people afraid of her and stay away. She's the one who started the rumors that she is really a supernatural creature of immense power. To complete the deception, she uses magic (she is a Ley Line Walker) and changes her face and body once to several times a day, sometimes in front of people, to help sell the tall tale. Her kind are feared and slaughtered back home, so she likes that people keep their distance, yet as one of the Original Eight Rangers, is accepted and treated as an honored hero. Over the years, the deception is something she wears like a comfortable set of favorite clothing. It is who she has become.

A mere mortal, Pequita the Faceless One's true, natural appearance is that of a homely looking human female with a long face and small, round, sunken eyes. When she shape-changes she may alter just her face or hands, or her entire body. She can transform into any humanoid form with one head, two arms, two hands, two legs and two feet.

Pequita, known as the Faceless One, is something of a loner amongst the other Rangers. She was the last of the original Reid's Rangers to join up with the group, and her ever-changing appearance makes it a bit difficult for her to cultivate long-term relationships with people. Pequita is a dedicated Vampire Hunter who enjoys her work and her status as one of Reid's Rangers more than she values her actual friends and compatriots amongst those at Fort Reid.

Pequita's moniker comes from her ability as a shapeshifter. She is a member of an unknown race that can change form at will, and uses her inconstant appearance to her advantage, taking on a new guise frequently to keep the other Rangers and their enemies on their toes. Sometimes she works with Lt. General Wilding and his "Peace Officers" to uncover potential weak links amongst the Rangers' Vampire Hunters, and once even uncovered a human "agent" who was trying to infiltrate the fort in service to undead masters within the Vampire Kingdoms.

Pequita the Faceless One Stats

One of the most notorious of Reid's Rangers and a Special Operative

Real Name: P'Kweet Tarl.

Also Known As: The Faceless One and as the Avenging Goddess. In Spanish she is *Sin Rostro*; "faceless."

Heritage: A shape-changer from another world. Though there are other types of shapeshifters, as far as she knows, she is the only one of her species on the planet.

Alignment: Anarchist, with very strong leanings toward Miscreant evil.

Attributes: I.Q. 11, M.A. 21, M.E. 28, P.S. 15, P.P. 13, P.E. 8, P.B. 8, Spd 15. **P.B. Note:** Though her natural P.B. is 8 (average on the low end of the spectrum). when Pequita shape-changes she can increase her Physical Beauty to as high as 14 and as low as 4.

Hit Points: 39. **S.D.C.:** 24.

M.D.C.: By armor or magic only.

Height: 6 feet (1.8 m) is normal for her, but can vary her size from as small as 3 feet (0.9 m) to 10 feet (3 m). **Weight:** Always 170 lbs (76.5 kg), so if she makes herself very tall, she'll be very thin. If she makes herself very short, she'll be plump in appearance.

Horror Factor via Reputation: 10 to mortals and 17 to vampires; everyone is convinced she is some kind of avenging supernatural being or demigod.

P.P.E.: 249. **I.S.P.:** None.

Age: She can look any age from 8-80. She usually picks the appearance of a twenty-something female, but is really 216.

Experience Level: 9th level Ley Line Walker.

Disposition: Pequita's time with Reid's Rangers and heroes has not changed her alignment. She remains distrustful of other people, self-serving and utterly ruthless, especially when it comes to her self-protection and getting what she wants. She can pretend to be gregarious and playful, but no matter how friendly or kind she may seem, Pequita is driven by selfishness, fear, hate, greed and envy. The true Pequita is deceptive and secretive.

Pequita loves being a Reid's Ranger, if for no other reason than it gives her freedom and power she has never known. Although considered one of the Original Eight, Pequita was the last to join their ranks and she has never become very close to any of them. She associates with all the heroes, but keeps her distance and seldom reveals anything true about herself or her feelings. For example, Doc Reid and the other top Rangers know she is neither a god or supernatural being, but they know very little about her past. Of the Original Eight, Pequita feels most comfortable around Doc Reid, Plantal-Nakton, Sir Lazarious and Carlotta, though she sees the dragon as a rival and threat. It's sad, but she doesn't consider any of the Rangers her friends, not really. To her, they are a means to an end. A source of power and opportunity to slaughter vampires.

Insanity: Obsession: Hates vampires. For reasons Pequita will not share, she loathes vampires, enjoys destroying them and can hardly wait till she and the Rangers topple the Vampire Kingdoms. This is one of the reasons she fights among Reid's Rangers and treats most of the Rangers as true comrades: they serve a common cause. She dislikes authority in general, is a free spirit who needs freedom and thrives on anarchy (which is why she's done so well among the Rangers) and is slightly paranoid. The latter is due to decades of oppression on her native planet, where shapeshifters are hunted like vermin and exterminated.

Natural Abilities: Bio-Reneration (special): Known to only Doc Reid and a few of the Original Eight, Pequita has incredible powers of regeneration. She recovers lost S.D.C. and Hit Points at a rate of 2D6 points an hour, and if she loses an appendage it will grow back in time. Small appendages like an ear, nose, finger or toe regenerate in 1D6 hours. Medium-sized appendages like a hand or foot, knee or elbow, in 2D6+20 hours, and large limbs like an entire arm or leg or shattered ribs, grow back/heal within 1D4+2 days.

Shapeshifting (special): Being a shapeshifter means the character can assume any humanoid form, look any age, alter her size/height (though her physical mass remains the same; e.g. short and fat or tall and skinny). Attributes remain con-

stant, and though Pequita elects to use a female gender and name, she can transform into either gender.

Pequita cannot grow a tail, wings or additional appendages. However, she can control the process to the point that she can be covered in fur, hair or be completely hairless. Skin can have any texture and color, the eyes any shape and hue, and her apparent age can be an elderly grandmother or as young as an eight year old child. The transformation takes only 30 seconds for a general transformation, a minute to copy another person. The appearance and body shape can be the general appearance of a particular race, a blend of racial features or an accurate representation of a specific individual. However, to imitate a specific person requires practice and either having that person standing in front of her or a set of detailed photographs. **Note:** Although the shapeshifter may be an identical twin in physical appearance, the voice, inflections, mannerisms, special abilities, skills, etc., remain those of the shapeshifter. To successfully *imitate* a specific person, the creature must know as much as possible about the subject to complete the disguise, otherwise only those least familiar with that person will be fooled. Pequita loves deception and excels at undercover operations, disguise, infiltration and espionage.

The appearance selected can be maintained as long as the character desires and changed at will. Pequita changes her appearance to keep up the facade that she's a supernatural being with no face of her own, and because she finds it fun to startle and unnerve people.

Skills of Note: All Ley Line Walker O.C.C. abilities, Anthropology 60%, Biology 65%, Climbing 75%/65%, Disguise via physical transformation 84% (+2% per level of additional experience), Disguise skill 75%, Impersonation 72%/58%, Horsemanship: General 66%, Land Navigation 64%, Language: Gobblely and Dragonese/Elven 98%, Language: Spanish 75%, Lore: Demons/Monsters 65%, Lore: Vampires 86%, Math: Basic 85%, Pilot Hovercraft 85%, Running, and Wilderness Survival 65%. W.P. Blunt at 9th level and W.P. Energy Rifle at 7th.

Combat Skills: Hand to Hand: Basic. Kick attack (1D6 S.D.C.), Critical Strike on Natural 19 or 20.

Attacks per Melee: Five.

Bonuses: +3 on Perception Rolls involving vampires, +2 on initiative, +2 to strike, +3 to parry and dodge, +2 to pull punch, +2 to roll with impact, +2 S.D.C. to damage. Also +2 to save against magic, +2 to save against possession or mind control, +7 to save vs psionic attack and insanity, and +3 to save vs Horror Factor (plus amulet +2). Has a 65% chance of invoking trust or intimidation.

Magic: P.P.E.: 249. Spell strength 14 (victims need 14 or higher to save). In addition to the usual Ley Line Walker abilities, Pequita knows the following spells and rituals. **Spells:** Animate/Control Dead (20), Armor Bizarre (15), Armor of Ithan (10), Blinding Flash (1), Chameleon (6), Charismatic Aura (10), Charm (12), Circle of Flame (10), Energy Bolt (5), Escape (8), Featherlight (10), Fire Ball (10), Fool's Gold (10), Forcebonds (25), Ignite Fire (6), Levitation (5), Light Healing (6), Purification (20), Reduce Self (20), See Aura (6), See the Invisible (4), Sense Magic (4), Speed of the Snail (50), Superhuman Speed (10), Swim as a Fish (6), Teleport: Lesser (15), Thunderclap (4), Tongues (12), Turn Dead (6) and Wind Rush (20).

Psionics None.

Weapons: Neural mace, silver-plated war hammer (1D8 S.D.C., 2D8 to vampires), six wood stakes and a mallet, L-20 pulse rifle (2D6 or 6D6 M.D.; 50 shot clip), six frag grenades (2D6 M.D.), and four plasma grenades (5D6 M.D.). **Magic Items:** Amulet of Protection Against the Supernatural (+2 to save vs Horror Factor and +1 to save vs possession). **Scrolls:** One Anti-Magic Cloud, two Mystic Portal, one Restoration and one Fly as the Eagle (1).

Body Armor: Urban Warrior (50 M.D.C.) or Line Walker concealed armor (44 M.D.C.), or via magic.

Bionics & Cybernetics: None.

Money: Pequita has lived a long time and has gathered and lost a fortune more than once. Currently, she has accumulated 850,000 credits' worth of ancient artifacts, 5 million in magic items, and 280,000 in Universal Credits.

Robert "Grizzly" Carter

Rowbyr Kertri is an Elf from another world, where he was a Ranger of a different sort and a master of the longbow. During one of his early adventures, he and his companions came upon the ruins of a mysterious and magical, multi-dimensional tower and fell victim to its enchantments. One moment he was on his homeworld, the next he was on a strange, alien planet. No way home, Rowbyr became an adventurer in this new land of *Rifts Earth*.

Having appeared at the Calgary Rift a few short years before the place became dominated by monsters, he worked his way southward and made his home in the old American States of Wyoming, Colorado, Arizona and New Mexico. The longevity and handsome youthfulness of the Elven race creates the illusion of immortality, thus the full name of "Robert 'Grizzly' Carter the Immortal." Over two hundred years of heroics and tall tales have made Grizzly Carter such a beloved folk hero that many to the east believe he is a purely mythical character.

Grizzly Carter the Immortal is a good and noble champion of the people, and has made a career of wandering the savage lands of the western plains to help relieve the suffering of all races. His many exploits include comparatively simple acts of charity and heroics, such as finding a child lost in the wilderness, healing the sick, killing a crazed animal, helping dig a well or rebuild a barn, to providing food for the hungry. The most flamboyant exploits involve combating monsters and madmen. From time to time, Grizzly Carter has joined groups of other like-minded heroes, but has mostly been a lone wolf. His association with Reid's Rangers has been his longest involvement with a group; almost nineteen years.

The Elf has the accumulated wisdom of over three centuries and is incredibly self-reliant and resourceful. He knows and understands people and the evil that too often drives them. He is happy to see the wickedness that has dominated too many of his associates among Reid's Rangers, soften and change for the better. He'd like to think his good example may have had a positive influence. Though he had planned to leave the Rangers, he now believes it is his destiny and duty to stay among them and make certain that the organization continues its dream to create a better world safe from monsters and tyrants of all kinds. He recognizes the madness in his old friend Doc Reid and the dangerous ambi-

tion of the likes of Sir Lazarius, Carlotta, Pequita and Lt. General Wilding. Planktal-Nakton is another story. For a long while, Grizzly Carter saw the Necromancer as a force for evil. However, he sees genuine changes in the man and now regards him as a necessary evil with potential for great good. He hopes that goodness prevails, but still worries that someday he will be forced to destroy his teammate to protect the innocent. While Robert agrees that the time has come to take the battle to the Vampire Kingdoms, he is not at all certain any of them will survive the challenge.

Despite his nickname, “Grizzly” Carter is a tall, handsome Elf with jet black hair, sharp features and pointed ears. He is well kempt and dresses in simple clothing more similar to the style of the handmade garments he remembers from his home world.

Robert Carter Stats

Legendary Folk Hero and a Commander in Reid’s Rangers

Real Name: Rowbyr Kertri.

Also Known As: “Grizzly” Carter and as the Green Ranger because he likes to wear green-colored garments.

Heritage: D-Bee/Elf from another dimension.

Alignment: Scrupulous.

Attributes: I.Q. 14, M.A. 19, M.E. 21, P.S. 19, P.P. 22, P.B. 20, P.B. 26, Spd 16.

Hit Points: 59, **S.D.C.:** 50, **M.D.C.:** By armor or magic.

Height: 6 feet, 6 inches (1.9 m). **Weight:** 210 lbs (94.5 kg).

Age: 390, but looks 39. He came through a Rift and has made his home in the western Americas for over 250 years.

P.P.E.: 23. **I.S.P.:** 67.

Experience Level: 13th level equivalent to a Wilderness Scout and Reid’s Ranger Vampire Hunter.

Disposition: Cool, intelligent, careful, thinks before he acts. He is reserved, quiet, keeps to himself, but can be quite outgoing and cheerful. He is generous to a fault, not only sharing his food and possessions with the needy, but donating most of his money to the poor, buying them food, candy, clothing, medical treatment and supplies. He is a team player who is always quick to lend a hand when needed.

Carter likes Little Meetal and has taken it upon himself to be her mentor and protector. He is also deeply fond of the irascible rogue Vyurr Kly and the gentle giant, Mii-Tar the Destroyer. He views Lazarius as a dangerous warmonger and gloryhound. Carter knows that Carlotta is a young dragon and that Pequita is a shapeshifter, and is not particularly fond of either. Planktal-Nakton has won his grudging respect. Grizzly Carter also realizes that his friend Doc Reid is both brilliant and insane. All in all, he remains with the Rangers because of their vast potential to do good and to keep an eye on the evil forces that may threaten that good.

Natural Abilities: Nightvision 90 feet (27.4 m), average life span 600 years, youthful appearance.

Skills of Note: Speaks and reads Dragonese/Elven, American and Spanish, all at 98%. Boat Building 95%, Carpentry 95%.



Reid’s Rangers: Robert “Grizzly” Carter, “Little” Meetal the Butcher, Vyurr Kly the Hunter, Mii-Tar the Destroyer.

Climbing 98%/98%, Cooking 98%, Fishing 98%, General Athletics, Holistic Medicine 98%, Horsemanship 98%, Hunting, Identify Plants 98%, Land Navigation 98%, Lore: Magic 90%, Lore: Native American 95%, Lore: Vampires 98%, Pilot Hovercraft 75%, Pilot Jetpacks 80%, Pilot Motorboats 98%, Pilot Sailboats 98%, Prowl 90%, Running, Skin and Prepare Animal Hides 98%, Swimming 98%, Track Animals 98%, and Wilderness Survival 98%. W.P. Archery and Targeting, W.P. Knife, and W.P. Sword at 13th level proficiency; W.P. Energy Rifle at 9th level.

Combat Skills: Hand to Hand: Expert. Kick attack (2D6 S.D.C. plus P.S. bonus), Paired Weapons, Judo body throw, Critical Strike on a Natural roll of 18-20 or knockout/stun on a Natural roll of 18-20, Critical Strike (triple S.D.C. damage) or knockout from behind.

Attacks per Melee: Six in hand to hand combat, nine with a bow and arrow.

Bonuses: +3 on Perception Rolls (increase to +5 when dealing with vampires and demons), +2 on initiative, +6 to strike (+8 using a bow and arrow), +10 to parry and dodge, +7 to damage, +2 to pull punch, +7 to roll with impact. Also +3 to save vs psionics, +3 to save vs magic, 55% chance of evoking trust or intimidation, 80% chance to impress or charm, +20% to save vs coma/death, and is +5 to save vs Horror Factor.

Magic: None, only what he knows via Lore.

Psionics: Minor Psionic, powers are limited to Bio-Regeneration (6, self) and Psychic Purification (8). **I.S.P.:** 67.

Weapons: Pair of silver-plated throwing knives, pair of animal skinning knives, pair of magical clawed gloves (can be mentally regulated to inflict 2D6 S.D.C. or 1D6 M.D. each and does 4D6 H.P. damage to vampires), Wilk's laser scalpel (for skinning animal hides), and a Wilk's 457 laser pulse rifle (3D6+2 M.D. per single shot, or 1D6x10 per triple burst, 40 shot clip).

Favorite weapon is a longbow given to him by his father upon the start of his first adventure. Any arrow fired from it will inflict one additional die of damage than it otherwise normally would (e.g. a simple wooden shaft would do 3D6 S.D.C. instead of its usual 2D6 S.D.C.), and inflicts double damage to dragons of all types. He carries two quivers of arrows with the following types of heads:

Special Combat Quiver

- 2 High-tech flares, burns for 60 seconds.
- 2 High-tech tracer bugs: radio signal, 8 mile (12 km) range.
- 4 High-tech smoke, fills a 20 foot (6 m) area.
- 4 High-tech tear gas, affects everyone in a 10 foot (3 m) area.
- 2 High-tech neural disrupters, works the same as a Neural Mace.
- 2 High-tech light explosive, 1D6x10 S.D.C. damage.
- 6 High-tech high explosive, 3D6 M.D.
- 6 Magically endowed for double range, silver tipped.
- 6 Magically endowed for double range, high explosive (3D6 M.D.).
- 8 Magically turns into magic fire bolt, 4D6 M.D.
- 6 Magically turns into magic lightning bolt, 6D6 M.D. plus double normal range.

Standard Quiver

- 24 hunting arrows, 2D6 S.D.C. damage.

24 silver tipped, 2D6 normal S.D.C. damage or 4D6 to vampires.

12 wood with sharpened tips (2D6 S.D.C., double against vampires).

Magic Scrolls: Two Teleport: Superior, two Healing (restores 4D6 Hit Points) and one Repel Animals.

Body Armor: His preferred armor is the NG Explorer (70 M.D.C.) and he loves flying via the Falcon 300 jet pack (120 mile/192 km range, -20% Prowl) made for the armor. The suit is usually worn under a green tunic and skirt as is the tradition of his homeworld. After losing his right arm and leg in combat (restored by magic), the warrior is happy to have acquired a Naruni N-F50A Superheavy Force Field (160 M.D.C., 6 hour duration per E-Clip), a gift from a grateful Naruni merchant he and some Rangers rescued from a Splugorth Slaver and some Horune Pirates.

Equipment of Note: He loves speed and has a hovercycle, a CS Rocket Bike and two fine riding horses; prefers to ride a horse whenever possible. His black steed is named Midnight-Two; 45 Hit Points, +4 to dodge, average speed is 33 (22.5 mph/36 km), but can reach a maximum speed of 58 (40 mph/64 km) and maintain that speed for two hours. His second and favorite horse is a grey mare called Flash that is fast and has great stamina; 41 Hit Points, +5 to dodge, average speed is 33, but can reach a maximum speed of 62 (48.5 mph or 77 km) and maintain that speed for four hours.

Special Horse Armor (Barding): Lightweight super plastics affording 45 M.D.C. protection and a magic talisman purchased from a mage that can create the Armor of Ithan around the horse (3 uses, last eight minutes each).

Bionics & Cybernetics: Bio-System prosthetic right hand.

Money: The Elf has given a fortune to the poor because he has little need for money in the wilderness. Still, he has amassed a nice nest egg in the way of weapons, artifacts, and magic items; about five million credits' worth. He also has 135,000 in Universal Credits.

Little Meetal

Little Meetal is the daughter of Meetal the Butcher. She is an idealistic, female Psi-Stalker who dreams of becoming a great warrior and champion of the people, like her mother before her. And so far, she has accomplished just that. It does not hurt that she was originally trained by her mother or that *Robert "Grizzly" Carter* has taken it upon himself to be her mentor and protector. Little Meetal is the spitting image of her mother and shares her same fighting spirit. She is less of a lone wolf, but has her mother's fiery personality, though it prompts her to act in the heat of emotion without thinking through all her options.

Truth be told, Little Meetal is much more the hero and a natural leader than her mother was. Many of the new recruits look up to her and admire her to the point that they would follow her to challenge the jaws of death. The Psi-Stalker is astute, observant and an excellent judge of character, and has a head for strategies and tactics.

On the very first mission on which she accompanied her mother as a first level Reid's Ranger, Meetal the Butcher was slain by vampires. The teenager watched in horror from a distance as a quartet of vampires ambushed her mother and literally tore her to

pieces. By the time she and other Rangers could rush to Meetal the Butcher's side, the hero was dead. Bearing witness to such a gruesome death of a parent might have scared off most people, but it has only served to galvanize and inspire Little Meetal. According to legend, she has hunted down and slain three of the vampires responsible. Only one of the four remains at large. In tribute to the memory of her mother, she took the name Meetal, wears the same armor and uses the same weapons.

The young Psi-Stalker is only 19 years old and has a free-wheeling, devil-may-care attitude that worries some of her colleagues, but inspires the other young recruits. She is fearless in battle and likes to throw herself into everything she does, including dancing and partying after a successful mission. She loathes vampires, finds Werewolves fascinating and distrusts Necromancers only because her mother hated them. She is proud to be a Reid's Ranger Vampire Hunter and is something of a poster-child to new recruits and those with dreams of becoming a hero.

Little Meetal Stats

A fresh, new hero and Lieutenant in Reid's Rangers

Real Name: Deema M'zz

Also Known As: Meetal's Ghost and the Avenging Daughter.

Heritage: Psi-Stalker.

Alignment: Scrupulous.

Attributes: I.Q. 15, M.A. 12, M.E. 20, P.S. 19, P.P. 22, P.E. 20, P.B. 13, Spd 27 (18.5 mph/29.6 km).

Hit Points: 54, **S.D.C.:** 59.

M.D.C.: 54 when her Hit Points become supercharged. Body armor provides additional protection (customized Crusader armor with a main body of 95).

Height: 5 feet, 7 inches (1.7 m). **Weight:** 135 lbs (60.7 kg) of muscle.

Age: 19.

P.P.E.: 7. **I.S.P.:** 115.

Experience Level: 5th level Wild Psi-Stalker and seems destined for great things.

Disposition: Tough, independent, self-reliant, bold and brave – sometimes beyond reason. Little Meetal takes unnecessary risks to rescue innocent people and to kill a vampire. Combat and success seem to come easy for her and this has made her a bit overconfident. Like many young adults, Little Meetal thinks of herself as invincible and destined for greatness. Indeed, if she survives the war against the Vampire Kingdoms she could become a great leader of the people.

Unlike her mother, Little Meetal is a team player with a natural talent for inspiring and leading others, be it charging into combat, rescuing people in need or doing the right thing. She is a true hero who would make her mother proud.

If she has any fault beyond her overconfidence, it is her blind faith in Doc Reid and the surviving members of the Original Eight. (**Note:** Even though Little Meetal is the descendant of one of the Original Eight, most people, including the other Seven, treat her as if she is one of them. For all intents and purposes, she is Meetal the Butcher.) Meetal is closest to Robert "Grizzly" Carter, who is a father figure to the young lady. She has no memory of her father, who was killed by Werewolf servants of vampires when she was just a toddler. Little Meetal is completely loyal to Doc Reid and the Rangers.

Insanity: None, though her lust for the destruction of vampires borders on the obsessive. She seeks to honor her mother by taking her name and carrying on her crusade against the undead. In fact, Little Meetal claims that she can feel the presence of her mother at all times and that she speaks to her in her dreams.

Skills of Note: In addition to all the Special O.C.C. Abilities of a Reid's Ranger Vampire Hunter, she knows the following skills (a blend of Ranger and Psi-Stalker): Breed Dogs 70%/50%, Detect Ambush 60%, Body Building, Climbing 65%/55%, Detect Ambush 50%, Dowsing 65%, Escape Artist 50%, General Athletics, Gymnastics, Horsemanship: Cowboy 88%/68%, Horsemanship: Exotic 60%/40%, Identify Plants and Fruit 60%, Land Navigation 70%, Lore: Vampires 85%, Pilot Jet Pack 66%, Prowl 60%, Running, Surveillance 70%, Swimming 70%, Tracking (People) 55%, and Wilderness Survival 80%. W.P. Archery and Targeting, W.P. Chain, W.P. Energy Pistol, W.P. Energy Rifle and W.P. Knife, all at 5th level proficiency.

Magic: None.

Psionics: In addition to the usual psionic powers possessed by all Psi-Stalkers, Meetal has the powers of Mind Block (4), Clairvoyance (4), Commune with Spirits (6), Empathy (4), Telepathy (4), and See Aura (6). **I.S.P.:** 115, Master Psionic.

Combat Skills: Hand to Hand: Expert. Kick attack (1D6 S.D.C. damage), Paired Weapons, Critical Strike on a Natural 18-20.

Attacks per Melee: Six.

Bonuses: +4 on Perception Rolls involving vampires, +3 to all other Perception Rolls, +2 on initiative, +6 to strike, +7 to parry and dodge, +3 S.D.C. damage, +2 to pull punch, +5 to roll with impact, +10% to save vs coma, +3 to save vs poison, +6 to save vs magic and Horror Factor, +5 to save vs mind control.

Weapons: Uses the same ones as her mother, the NG-Super laser pistol, NG-E4 plasma ejector (6D6 M.D., 20 shot clip, 1,600 foot/488 m range), Vibro-Knife (1D6 M.D.), two wood knives (2D6 damage to vamps, 1D6 normally), six wooden stakes and a mallet, nunchaku (1D8 normal S.D.C. or 2D8 to vampires; usually hidden in boot), wood crucifix, silver crucifix hanging around her neck, pocket mirror, two smoke grenades.

Little Meetal's favorite weapon is the longbow Grizzly Carter designed for her mother, and she has two quivers of arrows with the following types of heads:

Special Combat Quiver

4 High-tech flares, burns for 60 seconds.

4 High-tech smoke, fills a 20 foot (6 m) area.

4 High-tech tear gas, affects everyone in a 10 foot (3 m) area.

2 High-tech neural disrupters, works the same as a Neural Mace.

6 High-tech light explosive, 1D6x10 S.D.C. damage.

6 High-tech high explosive, 3D6 M.D.

4 Magically endowed for double range, silver tipped.

6 Magically endowed for double range, high explosive (3D6 M.D.).

4 Magically turns into magic fire bolt, 4D6 M.D.

2 Magically turns into magic lightning bolt, 6D6 M.D. plus double normal range.

Standard Quiver

12 hunting arrows, 2D6 S.D.C. damage.

24 silver tipped, 2D6 normal S.D.C. damage or 4D6 to vampires.

12 wood with sharpened tips (2D6 S.D.C. damage).

Body Armor: Explorer body armor (70 M.D.C.) with the Falcon 300 jet pack (120 mile/192 km range, -20% Prowl).

Riding Animal: A rare, trained Gryphon; it was her mother's. Gryphons are creatures of magic that are half eagle and half lion. Name: Stratos. Size: 4 feet (1.2 m) tall, 7 feet (2.1 m) long, 210 lbs (94.5 kg). M.D.C.: 66. Horror Factor: 13. Attacks per Melee: Three. Mega-Damage: Claws inflict 2D6+4 M.D., bite 1D6 M.D. Bonuses: +2 on initiative, +6 to strike, +6 to parry, +6 to dodge in close combat, +9 to dodge in flight, +7 to save vs magic and poison, +2 on all other saving throws. All bonuses are accounted for. Natural Abilities: High animal I.Q. (about equal to a human I.Q. 5), P.E. 24, P.B. 18, P.S. 20, P.P. 20, super keen-vision like a hawk, 180 degree arc for peripheral vision, track by sight 54%, prowl 66%, fly 88 (60 mph/96 km). **Note:** Stratos is very gentle and obedient to Little Meetal, Grizzly Carter, Vyurr Kly, and Mii-Tar the Destroyer (it loves to play with the giant), as well as playful with children. Stratos has a good understanding of American (level of understanding is 60%) and Spanish (level of understanding is 75%), and a few words in Dragonese (25%). It hates vampires, which is a plus since, as a creature of magic, Stratos' physical attacks inflict Hit Point damage to them (point by point conversion).

Bionics & Cybernetics: None.

Money: Little Meetal has inherited her mother's possessions, has 115,000 in Universal Credits saved and always carries 1D6x1,000 in gems and silver, plus an extra 12,000 credits on her at all times. The rest of her money she spends on people in need.

Vyurr Kly the Hunter

Vyurr Kly is a Psi-Stalker. All Psi-Stalkers are human mutants that evolved after the Great Cataclysm. For years, Vyurr Kly has been the life of the party with a playful demeanor and generous spirit. In truth, he is an alcoholic who masks his pain with drink and frivolity. The more he drinks, the more Vyurr Kly becomes increasingly silly and wild. His actions often deteriorating into brawls, malicious pranks, name-calling, and the breaking of things. He'll try to do so in a friendly, playful way and usually pays for any damage he has caused, but there is an edge to his "fun" and he is a surly drunk with increasing frequency. Even when sober, Vyurr Kly is not the laid-back and carefree fellow he used to be. The weight of the things he has witnessed and done have taken their toll on him. To deal with the horror, Vyurr drinks and insists people take life and themselves far too seriously. He likes to make merry, joke around and is intolerant of unnecessary rules, laws, authority and protocol, which is why he tries to avoid civilization. A down to earth fellow, Vyurr Kly is often known to say, "Polite words, money and fancy clothes don't make one man better than another. It might make 'em prettier, but not better." It is no wonder then that he usually picks a fight or plays pranks on the wealthy and authority figures, even within the Rangers.

Vyurr Kly may play the fool and be sarcastic, but so far, his drinking and other issues have not noticeably affected his fighting skills. Even during the most relaxed moments, Vyurr Kly is alert and ready for action. He may be carefree, but so far has

never been careless. When it comes to battle, the Psi-Stalker is as serious a warrior as they come. He is observant, cunning and quick to action. He is a skillful and thinking combatant who seldom takes foolish chances and tries to anticipate his opponent five moves ahead. He works well in a team or as a lone operative. His lightning reflexes and speed make him a whirling dervish on the battlefield, attacking here, then running there to engage another foe or to aid an ally. Unlike Sir Lazarious, Vyurr Kly does not find combat challenging or pleasurable. Fighting is simply all he has ever been good at. He doesn't know what else to do but fight. And in the Vampire Lands, a capable warrior is worth his weight in silver.

Vyurr Kly often says that his idea of the good life is laying back and enjoying good booze, good company and good fun brawling and breaking windows. He teases that he has become too close to "a bunch of goody-two-shoes and their good habits have rubbed off on me." *Grizzly Carter* and *Mii-Tar the Destroyer* are both dear friends, and they are rather like the Three Musketeers. Vyurr Kly adores the effervescent *Little Meetal*, along with many of the young Rangers, whom he enjoys regaling with stories of adventure and triumphant battles. However, Vyurr Kly is haunted by the faces of the many Rangers who have perished; so many that he cannot begin to count them all. He is especially haunted by the death of Meetal the Butcher, whom he was unable to rescue. Unlike Doc Reid and many of the others, he feels the loss of each Ranger like a hidden wound.

He sees Doc Reid's "the Reckoning" as his last great adventure and prays he dies in heroic battle so that he might finally know peace within a painful world he can no longer bear.

Vyurr Kly the Hunter Stats

Famous Hero and Commander in Reid's Rangers

Real Name: Vyurr Kly Vurr.

Also Known As: *El Cazador* – "the hunter" and the Hero of Eagle Peak.

Heritage: Psi-Stalker.

Alignment: Vyurr started his career as a loveable rogue of Anarchist alignment, but has become a more heroic Unprincipled alignment.

Attributes: I.Q. 9, M.A. 13, M.E. 24, P.S. 21, P.P. 26, P.E. 25, P.B., 7, Spd 44 (30 mph/48 km).

Hit Points: 74. **S.D.C.:** 58.

M.D.C.: 74 when his Hit Points become super-charged. Additional protection through body armor only.

Height: 6 feet (1.8 m). **Weight:** 157 lbs (72 kg).

Age: 53.

P.P.E.: 6. **I.S.P.:** 154.

Experience Level: 10th level Wild Psi-Stalker (Wilderness Scout).

Disposition: The only thing that keeps this worn out and shattered warrior fighting is the knowledge that his friends and the people of Mexico need him. He fights for the greater good, and for that reason he resists the temptation to give in to his devouring death wish. Always a secretive individual who keeps his deepest thoughts and emotions to himself, nobody recognizes the depths of his despair. Disguising it with his wild, cheerful, but sarcastic and often disrespectful, rowdy and mischievous antics.

Although a resourceful and experienced warrior, Vyurr is not a leader. He realizes this and actively avoids the mantle of responsibility and leadership, staying in the background or playing the clown, rather than leading good men to their death. Instead, on the battlefield he does everything he can to save lives, which is why he is such a respected hero. He stays with the Rangers out of a sense of duty, bound by the hype and reputation he has created for himself as a hero of renown.

He thinks of Sir Lazarious as a pompous windbag, Carlotta as a snooty bitch, and Planktal-Nakton as the devil himself. As for Doc Reid, he's probably the man Mexico needs right now, and Vyurr can't help but to like him. And even after all these years, he can't bring himself to trust Pequita. Not that he has ever openly expressed any of these feelings to anyone; Vyurr Kly is too savvy for that.

Insanity: The warrior suffers from chronic depression and alcoholism, and is developing a death wish. The only thing that keeps him going is the knowledge that so many people count on him and that there is one last, great war to fight. If Little Meetal should die, it might break him and he might seek death by making a heroic last stand against impossible odds.

Skills of Note: All the Special Abilities and O.C.C. Skills of a Reid's Ranger Vampire Hunter, plus Body Building, Boxing, Climbing 92%/82%, Concealment 48%, Detect Ambush 75%, Escape Artist 75%, General Athletics, Gymnastics, Language: American, Spanish and Euro at 98%, Gobblely and Dragonese at 75%, Palming 55%, Pick Pockets 60%, Prowl 80%, Running, Streetwise 52%, Swimming 90%, Tracking (people) 98%, and Wilderness Survival 98%. W.P. Blunt, W.P. Paired Weapons and W.P. Sword, all at 10th level, W.P. Energy Pistol and W.P. Energy Rifle at 8th level.

Combat Skills: Hand to Hand: Assassin. Entangle, knockout/stun on a roll of a Natural 17-20, kick attack (1D6 S.D.C.).

Attacks per Melee: Eight.

Bonuses: +3 on Perception Rolls involving vampires, +2 on initiative, +8 to strike, +12 to parry, +12 to dodge, +10 S.D.C. damage, +6 to roll with impact, +3 to pull punch. Also +5 to save vs poison, +20% to to save vs coma, +6 to save vs Horror Factor, +9 to save vs magic, +6 to save vs psionics, and +5 to save vs mind control.

Magic: None.

Psionics: In addition to the usual psionic powers possessed by all Psi-Stalkers, Vyurr Kly has the powers of Mind Block (4), Object Read (6), See Aura (6), See the Invisible (4), Sixth Sense (2), and Total Recall (2). **I.S.P.:** 157, Master Psychic. Furthermore, he only needs to roll a 6 or higher to save against a psionic attack.

Weapons: Magic Items: Pair of magic flaming swords (4D6 M.D. each), a magic talisman with three Globe of Daylight spells (last 27 minutes each), and a rare amulet of Turn the Undead (vampires, zombies and mummies are held at bay).

Conventional Weapons: Morning star with silver-plated spikes (2D6 normal S.D.C. or 4D6 to vampires), matching pair of silver-plated daggers, dozen wooden stakes and a mallet, Coalition C-14 Fire Breather assault rifle with a dozen extra grenades and six extra E-Clips.

Body Armor: Bushman body armor with a main body of 90 M.D.C. Overtop, he sometimes wears a poncho which is actually a blanket gifted to him by the Rarámuri Indians of the Chihuahuan Desert. It originally had 125 M.D.C., but over the

years it has become tattered and worn so that it now only offers 20 points of protection. When it is destroyed, he'll have to go and get a new one.

Equipment of Note: Multi-optics helmet, dosimeter, portable motion detector and RMK robot medical kit. TK-engine converted hover cycle is his main ride (210 mph/336 km, requires 10 I.S.P. per 50 miles/80 km of travel).

Bionics & Cybernetics: Not that you can tell, but Vyurr Kly lost his left arm in combat. Doc Reid replaced it with a cybernetic Bio-System limb and it works as well as the real limb. His left eye is also a Bio-System replacement and there are three barely noticeable, thin scars running down the left side of his face where a vampire clawed him.

Money: Vyurr Kly lives for the moment and any money he acquires is spent. Not on himself, mind you, but to help others and to make people happy by throwing festivals, parties and buying rounds for his comrades, as well as paying for funeral services and helping out families who have lost their breadwinners. Equipment, medical treatment, food and shelter are provided by Doc Reid and the people of Mexico, so there is little need for cash, at least from Vyurr Kly's perspective. He carries 11,000 in credits on him and a small bag of gold worth 9,000 credits. He has a modest savings, compared to the other Original Eight: 50,000 in credits and 20,000 in gold kept at Fort Reid.



Mii-Tar the Destroyer

Mii-Tar the Destroyer is a massive and intimidating D-Bee warrior from another world. The initial sight of Mii-Tar is a terrifying one. The gargantuan alien towers 12 feet (3.6 m) tall and is as broad as a barn. Wide plates make up much of his body, and it can be difficult to tell where Mii-Tar begins and his armor ends.

His obviously non-human features are unnerving, as are his incredible strength and physical endurance. However, it quickly becomes evident that the giant is a gentle and loving creature with a high regard for other life forms. With the possible exception of Robert "Grizzly" Carter and Little Meetal, Mii-Tar is the most noble, honorable and dedicated of all the Rangers. He is a true hero, with high ideals and the courage to challenge the impossible. It is this code of morality coupled with a sweet naiveté that is both admirable and dangerous.

Mii-Tar sees only the good in people and the beauty in the world. He is a dreamer and an eternal optimist. This means Mii-Tar gives people a great deal of latitude. He trusts his friends and allies implicitly and generally dismisses “lies” about them (rumors of misconduct or evil acts). For example, he will readily admit that Vyurr Kly is lazy, rowdy and drinks too much, but he will excuse this by citing innumerable incidents where Vyurr Kly risked his life without hesitation to save others, and a long list of other acts of kindness and selflessness. In regard to Planktal-Nakton or Sir Lazarious, Mii-Tar can only speak for what he has personally seen and both men, though a bit cold and merciless, have acted as heroes in his eyes.

Now, while Mii-Tar may be naive and easily duped (average I.Q. coupled with his trust in others), he is not stupid. He has his concerns about Doc Reid’s sanity and has made a point to ignore rumors of dishonorable acts by some of the Rangers, including Sir Lazarious, Carlotta, and Lt. General Wilding, for fear of what he may discover if he looked into the accusations. However, if Mii-Tar believes there is some terrible injustice being perpetrated, especially against innocent people, he will fight to protect the innocent and right the wrong, even if it means combating an old friend. The gentle giant agrees with Doc Reid’s plan to lay siege to the Vampire Kingdoms, and now believes his friend is a visionary and a genius rather than a madman. He is especially delighted to have such noble new friends as the Lemurians join them in the impending war.

Mii-Tar Stats

Famous Warrior and Commander in Reid’s Rangers

Real Name: Mii-Tar Uole.

Also Known As: The Destroyer, the Giant Ranger and Monster Ranger.

Rank: Commander.

Heritage: Unknown D-Bee; one of fewer than a dozen that have survived on Rifts Earth. Arrived, like so many D-Bees, as an unwilling victim. In his case, brought to Earth by Splugorth Slavers, but his family managed to escape their Horune captors off the coast of Central America.

Alignment: Scrupulous Good.

Attributes: I.Q. 8, M.A. 20, M.E. 10, P.S. 30 (Augmented), P.P. 20, P.E. 30, P.B. 12, Spd 23.

Hit Points: 123. **S.D.C.:** 1,000 via his natural body armor. Also see natural abilities.

M.D.C.: 400 thanks to a specially designed suit of armor.

Height: 12 feet (3.6 m). **Weight:** 1.1 tons.

Age: 38

P.P.E.: 11. **I.S.P.:** None.

Experience Level: 10th level Headhunter and Vampire Hunter.

Disposition: Despite his enormous size and nickname of “The Destroyer” – as in destroyer of evil – Mii-Tar is known for his gentleness, especially with children. He is cheerful, optimistic, always laughing, gentle, kind, generous, merciful, compassionate, trusting (too trusting of his fellow Rangers) and trustworthy. His oath is his bond. A true paladin, he is completely loyal to Doc Reid and all of his teammates and fellow Rangers. Mii-Tar is especially close to Vyurr Kly, Little Meetal and Grizzly Carter. He doesn’t really know Doc Reid very well but believes in him implicitly. Trusts the other

original Rangers, and considers them all his friends, including Pequita, Lazarious and Planktal-Nakton.

Natural Abilities: All members of Mii-Tar’s species can see in the ultraviolet spectrum of light, can see 50 feet (15.2 m) in total darkness, heal four times faster than humans, possess great strength, have natural body armor and a tough hide, damaged and lost pieces of body armor plates regrow in a matter of 1D4 weeks.

M.D.C. Armor Transformation (special): Something Mii-Tar discovered after the age of 32, is that his natural body armor turns into M.D.C. armor when traveling on a ley line. The conversion is two S.D.C. = One M.D.C. point. That becomes a point to point conversion at a ley line nexus. Moreover, damaged natural body armor heals at a rate of one M.D.C. point per melee round on ley lines and two points per melee at a nexus. Likewise, the giant’s Augmented P.S. becomes the equivalent of Robotic P.S. on ley lines and Supernatural at a nexus point. Mii-Tar calls this his great gift from the ancestors, but realizes he actually knows very little about his people.

Skills of Note: Detect Ambush 85%, Detect Concealment 85%, Electronic Countermeasures 90%, Hand to Hand: Expert, Land Navigation 85%, Language: Native D-Bee tongue, American, Spanish and Gobblely 90% (but cannot read any of the Earth languages, while he is fully literate in his native tongue), Lore: Vampires 98%, Lore: Demons & Monsters 80%, Pilot: Basic Robot Combat, Pilot Jet Pack 90%, Pilot Robot & Power Armor 81%, Pilot Tank/APC 85%, Radio: Basic 98%, Read Sensory Equipment 90%, Tracking 80%, Weapon Systems 65% and Wilderness Survival 85%. W.P. Chain, W.P. Energy Pistol, W.P. Energy Rifle and W.P. Heavy M.D. Weapons all at 10th level, and W.P. Sword at 6th level proficiency.

Attacks per Melee: Six (+1 on ley lines).

Bonuses: +3 on Perception Rolls involving vampires, +3 on initiative, +5 to strike, +6 to parry, +7 to dodge, +2 to roll with impact, +2 to pull punch, +17 S.D.C. damage, kick attack, Critical Strike on a Natural 18-20, Paired Weapons, +8 to save vs magic and poison, +30% to save vs coma/death, and +60% to invoke trust or intimidation.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Weapons: Stun gun, giant-size wood nunchaku (does 2D8 normal S.D.C. damage, 4D8 to vampires), pair of giant-size silver-plated swords (3D6 normal S.D.C. damage, 6D6 to vampires), C-20 Laser Pistol (2D6 M.D.) and an NG-P7 Particle Beam Rifle (6D6 M.D.). Mii-Tar also often uses an NG-101 rail gun loaded with wooden and silver ammunition. This ammo does 1D4x10 S.D.C. damage (2D4x10 to vampires; 4,000 foot/1,219 m range).

Body Armor: Giant-size armor specially made for the big D-Bee, 400 M.D.C. (has three additional suits in storage), with an attachable Wilk’s jet pack (half speed, 60 mph/96.5 km), because of Mii-Tar’s bulk). Also owns and pilots a specially modified Titan TR-002 exploration and light combat robot, 300 M.D.C., on long-range missions or for heavy combat.

Bionics & Cybernetics: Right leg is bionic and has the following features: Concealed ion rod (4D6 M.D., 2,000 feet/610 m range), and two medium-size storage compartments. One contains a pocket laser distancer, PDD audio disc player and his six favorite discs, 100 credits’ worth of gold coins and a credit card with 4D6x1000 in Universal Credits (in case of emer-

gencies). The other contains two pairs of handcuffs, a tube of protein healing salve, a canteen of water, and a magic talisman (three Heal Wounds). Additional augmentation includes a multi-optic eye and clock calendar.

Money: Mii-Tar spends most of his money on the poor, buying them food, clothing, tools, cybernetics and medical care. Has 95,000 in Universal Credits back at Fort Reid for emergencies and usually carries 30,000 in gems and 40,000 in credits on him.



Lt. General William Wilding

Lieutenant General William Bedford Wilding is a stern, gaunt individual with cropped black hair and a thick moustache. Wilding has darting, suspicious eyes and almost always appears a bit nervous, agitated or on edge. He is a conniving weasel who craves power and wealth. He is not a power-hungry maniac, but has sought and acquired a position of influence within the Rangers. He is the Fort's peacekeeper and Chief of Security. This makes him "super-cop" at Fort Reid and gives him authority over most of the troops and citizens at Fort Reid. It also gives him the power to do what he pleases, when he pleases, to whom he pleases. As the Head of Security he is answerable only to Doc Reid and the original Reid's Rangers, no one else. His evil alignment, greed and selfishness have created a very strong camaraderie between Lt. General Wilding and Planktal-Nakton, Raoul Lazarious and Carlotta la Blanca, but especially with Planktal-Nakton. For more than a decade he has been Planktal-Nakton's hatchet man and eyes and ears at Fort Reid.

In many respects, Wilding conducts himself like an elite mobster. He has a network of snitches, spies and underlings who keep an eye on all goings on at the Fort, especially the ones where he can skim a dollar. Wilding is a known gambler, womanizer, tin-plated tyrant, and bully who takes bribes to look the other way or drop charges, seizes property with little cause, uses unnecessary force because he can, displays brutality and is petty and vengeful. His methods may be deplorable, but he runs a tight operation, security is excellent, and the Fort has NEVER been infiltrated by vampires or their agents. This is due, in large part, to the fact that the Lt. General sees Fort Reid as his power base, and he's not about to let a "fanger" take that from him. Indeed, after the Original Eight, Wilding is the most powerful man within the Rangers. With a single word from the Top Cop, one of his goon squads will set up secret surveillance, fabricate evidence and make troublemakers disappear (sometimes permanently). Meanwhile, the Fort's lawmen handle the more public affairs and maintaining law. When Wilding needs to take care of business under the radar, he is likely to draw upon one of his many Black Market contacts or mercenary henchmen. The Lt. General has his hand in, and gets a piece of, every Black Market operation under the protection of Reid's Rangers. While this is for personal gain, these contacts are also excellent for sniffing out spies and enemies out to hurt the Rangers. And since Doc Reid and his Rangers are Wilding's meal ticket, he's not about to let anything harm them.

Lt. General William Wilding Stats

Real Name: William Bedford Wilding.

Also Known As: Fort Commander and The Enforcer.

Heritage: Mexican/American born to parents in the Pecos Empire.

Alignment: Miscreant. Life among heroes and Vampire Hunters has only made the man more careful.

Attributes: I.Q. 12, M.A. 9, M.E. 17, P.S. 20, P.P. 18, P.E. 14, P.B. 11, Spd 132 (bionic; 90 mph/148 km).

Note: Lost his legs in the heroic service of the CS, and his reward was a pair of bionic replacements. He quit the CS four years later, but still has fond memories about the Coalition Army.

Hit Points: 38. **S.D.C.:** 42.

M.D.C.: Bionic Legs have 70 each. Body armor provides additional protection (200 main body).

Height: 6 feet, 2 inches (1.8 m). **Weight:** 175 lbs (79 kg).

P.P.E.: 8. **I.S.P.:** 78.

Age: 40

Experience Level: 9th level Military Specialist; ex-Coalition.

Disposition: Always on the lookout for trouble and competitors, he is confident and capable, but mean, greedy, selfish, petty and vengeful. Wilding loves his job because it gives him the degree of power he has always desired and the opportunity to get rich. First and foremost, he is loyal to the Necromancer Planktal-Nakton, who has given him his position as Head of Security. Wilding is fairly loyal to Doc Reid, but thinks him a lunatic and sees Planktal-Nakton as the true leader and the power behind the Rangers. He likes and respects Lazarious and is infatuated with Carlotta, who he has secretly desired since the first day he laid eyes upon her. As a result, he is willing to do shady favors for them. He dislikes the goody-goody Rangers, especially Grizzly Carter and Vyurr Kly, and finds

Little Meetal to be a spirited filly who needs someone like him to tame her.

Insanity: Borderline sadist and narcissist.

Skills of Note: Boxing, Computer Operation 80%, Disguise 70%, Escape Artist 75%, Forgery 65%, Intelligence 70%, Interrogation 80%, Land Navigation 75%, Language: American and Spanish 98%, Literacy: American 75%, Lore: Demons & Monsters 70%, Lore: Vampires 85%, Pick Locks 75%, Pilot Hovercraft 90%, Robot Combat Elite: SAMAS & UAR-1 Enforcer, Running, Surveillance 80%, Tracking 65%, Undercover Ops 80%, Wilderness Survival 75%, and W.P. Energy Pistol, W.P. Energy Rifle, W.P. Heavy M.D. Weapons, W.P. Submachine-Gun and W.P. Targeting all at 9th level, and W.P. Archery art 6th level.

Attacks per Melee: Seven.

Combat Skills: Hand to Hand: Assassin, Paired Weapons, entangle, knockout/stun on a Natural 17-20.

Bonuses: +4 on Perception Rolls involving vampires, +2 on all other Perception Rolls, +2 on initiative, +4 to strike, +7 to parry, +7 to dodge, +3 to pull punch, +3 to roll with impact, +9 S.D.C. damage. +1 to save vs psionics.

Magic: None.

Psionics: Major Psychic: See Aura (6), Sense Magic (3), Sixth Sense (2), Alter Aura (2; great for disguise), Levitation (varies), and Telekinesis (varies). **I.S.P.:** 69

Weapons: Favorite conventional weapons include C-27 plasma cannon, CR-1 rocket launcher, TX-5 pump pistol, and Neural Mace.

Vampire-Killing Gear: 24 stakes and a mallet, crossbow, 24 wooden crossbow bolts, 24 silver tipped, 6 explosive, 6 smoke, plus TW water shotgun, TW water pistol, 20 TW storm flares, 20 daylight flares, conventional water pistol, and 9 mm submachine-gun with a 40 shot clip and six additional clips of 9 mm silver bullets, silver dagger (1D6 S.D.C.), Vibro-Sword (2D6 M.D.), and has access to all power armor, robots, vehicles, surveillance equipment, and manpower in the Rangers' possession at Fort Reid.

Body Armor: One old style SAMAS power armor and one Super-SAMAS (both maintained well and at full M.D.C.), 10 fully loaded rail gun ammo canisters for the SAMAS, and also owns two suits of heavy Coalition Dead Boy armor, also owns a suit each of Bushman, Crusader, and Terrain Hopper armor.

Bionics & Cybernetics: Two bionic legs, concealed laser rod in the right leg, left leg modified with a concealed TW water pistol, and two vials of holy water and a small silver cross are kept in a secret leg compartment. Other items include a built-in radio receiver and transmitter, headjack, speech translator, and toxic filter.

Money: Has 180,000 in Universal Credits available at all times, plus a secret stash of 250,000 credits' worth of silver, another 90,000 credits worth of gold and gems, 100,000 credit at Merctown and 450,000 credits in a bank with the Black Market.

Wilding's Elite Peace Officers: Wilding has a group of tough ex-mercenaries who see themselves as the "new," elite Reid's Rangers. They include: **Rem Fields**, a sullen, sadistic bully and 10th level Operator O.C.C. who serves as Wilding's surveillance and electronics expert. I.Q. 14, M.E. 10, M.A. 7, P.S. 18, P.P. 17, P.E. 10, P.B. 10, Spd 11; human, age 34, 6 feet (1.8 m) tall, 41 Hit Points, 20 S.D.C., Anarchist alignment.

Minor Psionic: 35 I.S.P., Machine Ghost (12), Object Read (6), Total Recall (2), Resist Fatigue (4) and Sixth Sense (2). **Skills of note:** Computer Hacking 90%, Computer Operation 98%, Computer Programming 85%, Computer Repair 90%, Electrical Engineer 98%, Literacy: American 90%, Locksmith 80%, Mechanical Engineer 90%, Radio: Basic 98%, Radio: Scramblers 90%, Surveillance 85%, TV/Video 80%, Weapons Engineer 80% and Hand to Hand: Basic.

Spike, a wild, rambunctious, and super-hyper/jumpy reactionary who is Wilding's current right-hand man. 7th level Juicer. I.Q. 10, M.E. 12, M.A. 9, P.S. 28, P.P. 23, P.E. 28, P.B. 11, Spd 78; human, age 23, 6 feet tall (1.8 m), Miscreant alignment, 54 Hit Points, 340 S.D.C., plus the usual Juicer bonuses. Has been a Juicer for three years. **Skills of note:** Speaks American, Spanish and Gobblely at 85%. Detect Ambush, Intelligence, Wilderness Survival, W.P. Energy Pistol, W.P. Energy Rifle, W.P. Heavy M.D. Weapons, W.P. Sword, W.P. Targeting and Hand to Hand: Martial Arts. **Note:** His old second-in-command, Mad Martin, died years ago and was replaced by a Juicer named Tim Tom who fell to Last Call only a year ago.

The rest of his elite security force includes: **Consuela**, a 5th level Ley Line Walker (knows most 1-5 level spells suitable for espionage and vampire slaying, plus Heal Wounds). **Zenaida**, a 7th level Burster, **Vic and Cassie**, a mated pair of 6th level Dog Boys, four 8th level City Rats skilled in tailing and surveillance, four 7th level Headhunters, and four 7th level Robot Pilots with NG Samson power armor. All are of Anarchist or evil alignments.

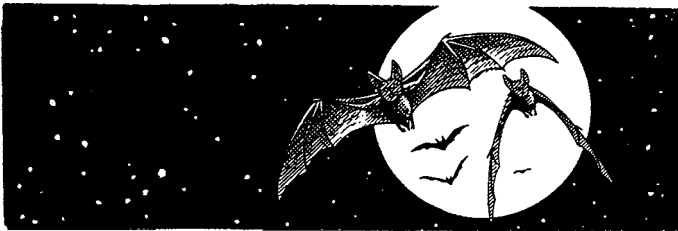
A secret ally in the war against the Vampire Kingdoms

In the greater Megaverse, the various Vampire Intelligences have long been rivals and hated enemies of the Splugorth race. Lord Splynncryth is no exception, and he offers incredible rewards for the teeth of vampires that have been killed in Atlantis or any of his territories. He is painfully aware of the presence of vampires in Mexico.

Lord Splynncryth would love nothing more than to invade Mexico and push the Vampire Kingdoms into the sea. With his vast holdings on other worlds, however, he must be careful to avoid creating more problems than he solves. Should Lord Splynncryth attempt to cleanse Rifts Earth of vampires, there is a good chance that the vampires would strike up some sort of agreement that could seriously threaten a planet or entire solar system elsewhere. Of more immediate concern, any overt action he might take against the Kingdoms would almost certainly tip the balance on Rifts Earth itself. If he sent troops to Mexico, his enemies everywhere (as well as those who fear him, such as the CS) would immediately think he was making a move to conquer all of North America and take devastating retaliatory action against him. So his hands are tied.

For the time being, Splynncryth is satisfied to gather intel about his dreaded enemies and strike at the vampires through intermediaries. Fronts like the *Shadow Warriors* (see **Rifts® Mer-**

cenaries™) and secretly assisting the *Tampico Protectorate* and other mercenary and Vampire Hunter groups. And by secret, we mean that even the people he's helping are unaware of Splugorth involvement. This includes a few shipwrecks laden with surplus Atlantean/Kittani weapons and supplies that can help protect against or battle the undead. Individuals and a few bands of Kittani, Tattooed Men and D-Bee servants of the Splugorth may pretend to be "renegade outlaws" and "runaway slaves" who have managed to escape Atlantis and have washed up on the shores of Mexico. Rogues who happen to be well-stocked with "stolen" weapons, magic and armor, to join the fight against vampires. Monsters, they say, that are even worse than the Splugorth. Anti-vampire agents and teams work to insert themselves among local Vampire Hunters or function as adventurers quick to come to the aid of Vampire Hunters. Likewise, Splugorth anti-vampire strike forces operate under the cover of normal Atlantean operations. Slavers, raiders, pirates and Metztains are constantly working the coasts the world over, so nobody wonders if they might be a vampire hunting party. Normal ops are also handy for inserting Splugorth Vampire Hunter parties, Metztains, Undead Slayers and agents of Atlantis into hot spots. (Is that really a team of True Atlanteans or are they Sunaj Assassins hunting undead?) Even those involved in legitimate Splugorth operations are encouraged to take down vampire targets as opportunity permits. There is little danger of reprisal as long as Splynncryth's forces limit their activities and make it all look innocent and coincidental. The animosity between vampires and the Splugorth is legendary, so vampires and their henchmen, likewise, attack and do harm to the Minions of Splugorth at every opportunity. Consequently, a pitched battle between a Splugorth Slaver party, Kittani or Metztla and a horde of vampires will not raise an eyebrow.



Vampire Fighting Tactics in Mexico

Vampire Night Raids. One thing every Vampire Hunter and denizen of Mexico knows is that daylight hours are the time of safety and security. A time when vampires are sure to be asleep. Night is the vampires' domain. A time of freedom and a time to hunt prey. For humans, it is the time to huddle together in safe zones and pray for the coming dawn. Many times, all seems lost right up until the rays of the morning sun send ravenous vampire packs running for a dark place to hole up.

In the evening, though, as the sun goes down, tensions rise. Farmers and villagers retreat to defended citadels in the centers of their villages, or into their homes, the windows and doorways covered with crosses, wolfsbane and garlic. Defensive citadels and bunkers may range from true forts and labyrinthine caves to churches, root cellars and boarded-up farmhouses. Vampire Hunters load and prepare their weapons, ready to march out into

the darkness looking for bloodsuckers or to meet them face-to-face at the edge of the lantern's light. They say in war that the defender naturally has the advantage, but against bloodthirsty vampires with a range of supernatural powers, this is certainly not the case. The biggest advantage defenders can count on is time; without a large number of human minions, vampires can only maintain a siege until the *sun rises*, and with daylight comes a merciful reprieve. A time when the wounded can be tended to, defenses can be repaired and new supplies gathered.

During any night siege there will always be critical points which the vampires try to attack. Against an ordinary foe, perimeter guards, sensors and listening posts generally come under attack first, followed by palisades and walls, moats, and other defenses. In the case of vampires, they can easily circumvent walls and barriers. Their ability to turn into a wolf allows them to prowl through the darkness unheard, squeeze through small openings and leap short fences. As a bat, vampires can fly around, over and through defensive walls, easily avoid a patrol and drop down onto rooftops or the street and back alleys. Transforming into a mist, the demons can penetrate all barriers but airtight ones, and hide in fog or creep along the ground in silence.

The latest Techno-Wizard Globe of Daylight lanterns and floodlights are extremely valuable deterrents, holding vampires at bay just beyond the edge of their light, but this also makes them the first to be targeted. Such lights are attacked whenever possible by vampires and their henchmen. Destroy the artificial sunlight and there is no place for people to hide. TW generators and P.P.E. batteries are also prime targets of vampires, and need to be protected. They also require practitioners of magic to keep them powered and running. Vampires also seem to take delight in killing guards and defensive patrols to show off their superiority. In short, at night, there are few places where one is truly safe against vampires.

A warning to outsiders. Whether they be a Vampire Hunter, mage or ordinary person, the people who call Mexico their home feel isolated and cut off from the hub of North American civilization. This has made them feel quite independent and rather adversarial toward outsiders. The tough, resourceful people of Mexico have survived for centuries on their own, stalked and tormented by vampires, without any help from the outside world. (Doc Reid is considered to be one of their own.) A party of mercs, bandits or heroes riding in from the North are in for a bit of culture shock if they think they can just ride around freely, and get all the help they want from the locals. One has to either live here in Mexico a long time, or kill a truckload of vampires to be considered worthy of friendship and trust.

Wary of strangers. The local citizens may appear to be simple farmers or ranchers, but they have learned to be careful, strong and work together. They may not say it outright, but they are wary of every stranger. They know all too well that behind a smiling face may be a monster – a vampire, a werebeast or other shapeshifter in human guise, bandit or servant of evil. Forced to live with such creatures, most have learned how to conceal their fears, concerns and suspicions of others. Thus, even when a "visitor" thinks no one suspects a thing, the people and their defenders are very likely to be on to them and mentally preparing to take the necessary action to preserve themselves and their village. Be that play along, disappear and hide, or fight back. Mexico is a kill or be killed environment, and these people have survived in it for generations. They are more savvy than many people give them credit for.

This works to the advantage of Reid's Rangers and other known Vampire Hunters, because villagers are likely to pick up on cues to hide, get help, prepare for combat, etc. Likewise, with nary a word spoken between them, villagers are quick to hide known Vampire Hunters and friends, lie about their presence and whereabouts to the undead and their servants, provide medical assistance, warn them of danger/servants/spies/strangers, and do whatever they can to help in any little way they can.

Defensive Tactics Against Vampires. When fighting vampires, deploying special weapons and tactics is a must. Defending against them is no different. Normal walls and fences are all but useless. Vampires can fly over them in bat or mist form or rip them to shreds with their supernatural strength. Wooden palisades, silver barbed wire and water systems can all be effective if designed and placed properly, but do a better job at deterring Wild Vampires than their more intelligent cousins.

Magic is a better means of defense. Spells and TW devices capable of producing daylight or sunlight at night can make a tremendous difference, as can spells that conjure up and/or manipulate wood and water. There are numerous Techno-Wizard contraptions that blend the damaging properties of light or water magic with the simplicity of a more standard-style weapon system. Most types of magic are still useful against vampires, even if they inflict half damage, and the attacks of supernatural creatures deliver damage right to a vampire's Hit Points. (See page 74 of **Rifts® Vampire Kingdoms™, Revised Edition** for a full list of magic spells useful against vampires.)

When magic or specialized technology is not available, the siege reverts to its most basic form: desperate defenders using wood, silver, garlic and water to hold back ravenous, shape-shifting, supernatural predators. Teamwork and vigilance are the only ways to survive, and any vampire that isn't staked could be the end of even the best planned defensive strategy the moment that stake is removed.

Crosses and Crucifixes are both useful as tools in psychological warfare and to distract and hold vampires at bay. Such holy symbols are often inspirational and comforting to defenders, and represent safe zones where vampires are kept at bay. Wearing a cross around one's neck can often buy just enough time to make the difference between a fatal bite and a bloodsucker that has been driven off at the last possible second. Touching a vampire with a cross also has a damaging effect, though it is extremely dangerous to get close enough to use a cross as a weapon. Simple as they are to make, wooden crosses or equivalent holy symbols are in the kit of every Vampire Hunter and even impoverished peasants can make them and place them all over a village, farmstead or home.

The shortcomings of staking and impaling vampires. It is a common tactic for frantic mortal defenders to *incapacitate* vampires quickly with an arrow, spear or stake to the heart, and worry about finishing them off later. That's not a bad plan, provided you take measures to take the staked vampires' bodies into protective custody, or quickly work to destroy them.

The problem with just staking a vampire, letting the body drop and leaving it where it falls, is that the first thing other vampires and their mortal servants do is remove the stake or arrow to re-activate their fallen teammate. Something Reid's Rangers have taken to doing, when they can, is to snap arrow shafts off as close to the body of the impaled vampire as possible. Without a piece of the arrow sticking out to pull or push, it takes longer to remove



the broken arrow. It might even require cutting it out or require tools like a pair of pliers to grab the impaled piece of wood inside the body and yank it out. This may only buy a couple of minutes, but sometimes minutes can save lives.

Decapitation. It is best if a staked or impaled vampire's body can be dragged away by the defenders and, as quickly as possible, beheaded and burned. However, another Reid's Ranger tactic is to stake a vampire, behead the demon, and run off with the head in hand, to prevent the monster from being reanimated. It is a gruesome tactic, but an effective one. Vampires never bother with a decapitated comrade unless the head is found. To insure the monster cannot be reunited with its head and brought back to life, both the head and body should be burned in separate funeral pyres as soon as possible. Of course, that is likely to be impossible during a firefight or all-out siege.

Force Fields. For those who can afford them, force fields make excellent anti-vampire defenses. They are invisible to vampire senses, usually small and discreet, and allow the defender to maintain full mobility and range of motion. Doc Reid has several *Naruni Enterprises* force fields that he and his most valued lieutenants use in the field or for public appearances. Larger force fields can protect wider areas, but they are extremely rare and usually unavailable to Vampire Hunters with limited budgets and connections.

Magic. Without a doubt, magic is one of the best defenses against vampires. *Globe of Daylight* renders whole areas untenable, along with *Circles of Protection*, but there are other spells that do direct damage. *Dessicate the Supernatural* is one, along with *Lifeblast*; see page 75 of **Rifts® Vampire Kingdoms™, Revised Edition** for a full list of magic spells useful against vampires. For hydromancers, Ocean Wizards, psychics with Hydro-

kinesis and anyone who may know Ocean or Water Elemental Magic, such mystical or psychic water attacks inflict double damage to vampires. Considering most psychics and spell casters are difficult to distinguish from helpless, unarmored, normal humans, sudden magic rain or water blasts can turn the vampires' targeted victim into a deadly combatant in their own right. Wind and rain can both assist in holding off vampires, but also make miserable working conditions for the Vampire Hunters themselves. The wise and strategic use of magic can keep vampires at bay as well as destroy them. See TW anti-vampire weapons elsewhere in this section. (See page 74 of **Rifts® Vampire Kingdoms™, Revised Edition** for a full list of magic spells useful against vampires.)

Enchanted Light. The *Globe of Daylight* spell is taught to practitioners of magic all over the world. Many learn it early in their training or development as a source of light. In the Vampire Kingdoms, however, the spell, which serves mostly as a lantern elsewhere, becomes a vital defensive measure. Vampires cannot enter the reach of the magic light, held at bay as if it were the rays of the sun itself. While it does not destroy vampires, the mystical *Globe of Daylight* spell and the Techno-Wizard lanterns that utilize it are more effective than any wood or silver fence to keep vampires away. The light is also projected up into the air and bathes an entire area in light, creating a “no-fly-zone” where defenders do not have to worry about vampires descending for the kill in bat or mist form.

Moving Water. If a ready supply of it can be accessed, *water* is a very effective anti-vampire tool. In addition to moats, hoses and sprinkler systems, “mini-waterfall fountains or “water curtains” can be placed in doorways, vents and small areas to prevent vampires from entering in mist or bat form. Any of these methods will require a plumbing system, found in only the most developed cities. Water pipes and aqueducts are rare enough in the low-tech outer reaches of Mexico, and basically unheard of within the Vampire Kingdoms, where restricting water access is one way the vampires control their slave populations and ensure against uprisings.

Many magic spells and Techno-Wizard water guns provide their own magical water supply, and one of the reasons why they are so useful in dry desert environments. Clever technological devices might only be viable near wells, lakes or rivers, and even then only when pumps can be set up, powered and defended. When conditions are right, though, vampires are generally unprepared for sprinklers set to timers or motion sensors, rivers dammed and diverted to flood certain areas, and water curtains placed over doorways.

Wooden Palisades and Stake Traps are old defensive techniques usually associated with ancient warfare or primitive booby-traps. With vampires vulnerable to staking and wood weapons, however, they can be quite useful for defensive purposes. Vampires are slowed down because they have to transform and carefully squeeze through as a wolf, fly over as a bat, or pass through them as a mist. This may give defenders precious seconds to dispatch a special attack, hide, sneak out the back way, etc. In addition, barriers made with wooden spikes can be useful in pitched battles in which a vampire may be impaled on them.

As for stake traps, there are a wide variety. Though vampires can fly, they must transform first. This means if one falls into a pit lined with wooden stakes, the monster is going to take considerable damage (01-50% chance the fallen vampire is staked through the heart). Likewise, punji stick spring traps, activated by

a trip wire or releasing the cord that holds it, can do considerable damage to vampires. They are especially effective in doorways, at stairwells and around corners (01-35% chance of impaling one or two vampires in the heart). Even simpler are boards with stakes/spears sticking out of them and mounted on wheels. When attacked, the defenders push the wheeled wall of spikes forward and hopefully into the charging vampires. Again, this is most effective in doorways, at gates, at the bottom of the stairs, down hallways, and similar locations (01-30% chance of impaling a vampire in the heart).

Spike-Loaded Door Traps. Another low-tech weapon that can be put together with just a spring and some woodworking talent are spike shooters triggered when the door handle is turned/pushed or the door is opened. This can be a single spike or several small wooden spikes/stakes that shoot out at chest height from a concealed location in or around the door, or walls or drop down from the ceiling. Similar traps can be made for windows and gates as well. While they may cause S.D.C. damage to unwitting humans, such traps are deemed to be an acceptable risk to defend a home or community. Of course, those who live with the traps know how to open the door without activating the spike attack or know how to temporarily disable the firing mechanism. The wooden spikes don't always have to shoot out, either. They can swing down on a framework like a pendulum, mousetrap or punji stick trap.

Technological Defenses. With Operators and skilled carpenters/builders on hand, modern technology takes on almost magical proportions. Drone guns, remote weapons and external defensive systems that would be firing lasers or rail gun rounds anywhere else are converted with crossbows, silver bullets or water cannons in the Vampire Lands. Vampires are naturally sneaky and like to attack from unexpected avenues. Their senses are also attuned to picking out living prey, so a computer-controlled gun or simple spring trap is likely to go unnoticed until it is too late. Tech weapons and traps are more delicate and expensive, and may be useless against human minions, Chupacabras or wild dogs the vampires may command. Automated machine-guns or rail guns with silver or wood ammunition can be effective, but are even more pricey to set up.

Water-Based Defenses

For coastal villages and those with access to plentiful wells or modern plumbing systems, the power of water can be used to fend off vampires. There are few reliable water systems in Mexico, but defenders are willing to go to extreme lengths to build pipes and aqueducts for defense.

Perimeter Sprinklers. A sprinkler system attached to a timer or motion sensor might seem like a practical joke to normal humans, but to vampires it is another matter entirely. Not only will sudden water attacks cause damage and disorientation, but sprinklers also work as area denial weapons, making certain zones basically impassable to vampires unless they find a way around or over them. Sprinklers don't require much thought, either, leaving defenders free for other tasks.

Door Water Curtains. While vampires might be able to fly over or go around many exterior water defenses, doorways, windows and tunnels are a different matter. With just a few pipes and a water supply, an Operator or someone specifically trained to build “water curtains” can rig up a simple defense system. Hu-

mans, D-Bees, werebeasts and animals can walk right through the torrent of water without injury; they just get soaked by the mini-waterfall. Vampires take 1D4x10 points of damage from most water curtains as they are usually a heavy sheet of water that drenches all who pass through it. Multiple water curtains make it nearly impossible for vampires to access certain areas without first cutting off the water supply or subjecting themselves to repeated and perhaps severe damage. The sight of such water curtains causes most vampires to hesitate (Horror Factor 16). And what if it is **holy water** being cycled through?! It would be like running through acid; 2D4x10 Hit Points of damage! Even a heavy sprinkler system would do only 1D4 damage and has a mere Horror Factor of 7. **Note:** Smart designers always have a way to capture, collect and re-circulate as much of the water released as possible so it can be used over and over again. Important when using holy water and in desert environments.

Air Blowers. One of the most insidious powers of vampires is their ability to transform into mist. In mist form they can seep through cracks in walls, pass right through grates and fences and go virtually unnoticed. In order to protect air intakes, ductwork and other small openings that cannot be sealed off, fans make things much more difficult for vampires trying to sneak past. To keep out smoke, poison gas and biological agents, vehicles, robots and environmentally sealed armor have “overpressure” systems that keep the interior at a higher pressure than the outside, making it impossible for air (or mist) to enter through anything other than the intended air intake, which is filtered to remove impurities. Placing fans and air blowers inside buildings’ air ducts creates a similar effect and can be extremely frustrating to vampires (reduce mist travel speed by half). **Note:** A vampire can not mist inside non-environmental body armor and turn to physical form to pop the armor off or launch an attack. Nor can they simply mist inside sealed vehicles.

Also see **TW Water Weapons** later in this section.

Common Tech Vampire Defenses and Tools

Reid’s Rangers Vampire Survival Kit

Reid’s Rangers send out truckloads of **Vampire Survival Kits** to hand out to innocent people across Mexico and the American Southwest. As part of his campaign against the Vampires of Mexico, Doc Reid and his followers hope the kits provide some measure of knowledge and defense. While taking down a raging vampire with a hammer and stakes is no easy task, something can be said just for the psychological benefit of having a defensive weapon and survival information from the famous Reid’s Rangers. Such Vampire Survival Kits are always handed out whenever a village is liberated from the undead. They may also be given to human-cattle liberated from vampire slave pens and ranches, as well as to any community seeking assistance from the Rangers.

Thousands upon thousands of **Vampire Survival Kits** have been given away over the years. They provide only the most basic protection and survival tips. The kits are cheap and easy to manufacture and usually made by local volunteers happy to help.

Contents:

- One 12 inch (0.3 m) wooden cross with a sharpened bottom that can be used to stab or impale a vampire.
- Two small wooden crosses on a loop string that can be worn around the neck or around the wrist; neck is recommended.
- Six crude wooden stakes.
- A simple wooden club that can be used as a mallet for staking and as a blunt weapon against vampires.
- Doc Reid’s Vampire Survival Tip Sheet.

Doc Reid’s Vampire Survival Tip Sheet

This is a simple, one sheet of paper printed on both sides. It is presented in a comic book style with simple, cartoon-like pictograms and sequences for the purpose of instruction. This is necessary for the many illiterate people of Mexico and the American Southwest. The tip sheet includes the drawings and text written in American or Spanish. The tips are as follows:

1. Daytime is safe. Vampires only come out at night. You are safe from them during the daylight hours. But beware of the vampires’ servants who may be able to come out during the day and may look like you. Vampires come out at night. Take cover before the sun sets.

2. Be vigilant. It only takes one vampire inside your village to compromise your defenses. Keep watch at night, maintain constant two-man patrols and the night-watch must not fall asleep.

3. Vampires are quiet. They do not have noisy engines. They do not show up on radar, infrared or nightvision systems. Keep watch for bats, wolves, dogs, Chupacabras or unnatural mists. Do not assume it was just your imagination.

4. The cross can protect you. Point the cross at the vampire to hold it at bay. This is only a temporary defense and best to use on no more than 1-3 vampires.

5. Wear a cross around your neck for additional protection.

6. Work together. One man or woman has little chance even against one vampire. Use your numbers, stick together. Fight together. Watch out for your neighbor. There is NO DISHONOR in staking a vampire that is distracted or overwhelmed by several people.

7. Wooden stake to a vampire’s heart. Impaling the monster in the heart with a wooden stake, spear or arrow will stop it in its tracks. **WARNING:** The vampire may look dead but is not. The wooden stake in the heart immobilizes the vampire, but does not kill it. Remove the stake and the monster comes back to life! **DO NOT DO THIS!**

8. To kill a vampire. Remove the head. NEVER remove the wooden stake. Burn the head in one fire. Burn the body in a second fire. NEVER put the head and body in the same fire.

Another way to destroy a vampire is to put the severed head and body out in the sunlight after dawn. Both will burn and turn to ash in the sunlight.

9. Hunt a vampire only during the day. Vampires sleep during the day. Hunt them only during the daylight hours, but even this is very dangerous. Send for a Reid’s Ranger to destroy the vampires in your village.

10. Weapons and bullets covered in silver. Silver weapons and bullets can hurt and kill vampires and werebeasts.

11. Find safe shelter at night. Make crosses, even if made from twigs tied together with string or yarn, and hang them outside above every window and every door. The fewer doors and

windows you have, the better. Garlic and Wolf's Bay/Wolfsbane also keep vampires away and prevent them from entering your home or safe place. **Note:** None of this will keep out a vampire's servant, slave or minion. Arm yourself with weapons that can kill another man or Werewolf (silver). Have an escape route planned in case the monsters set your home on fire or break in. Keep a fire burning in the fireplace.

12. Good Luck!

Anti-Vampire Weapons and Equipment

Blood Boilers & Dart Guns

By T.G. Moore & Kevin Siembieda

The invention of Blood Boilers is attributed to Doc Reid, though nobody can be sure about that. It is a known fact that *holy water* burns the very flesh of vampires, so why not inject it directly into vampires to really mess with the demons? Ideal for diminishing a vampire's attacks and fighting abilities. **Note:** Colloidal silver – a solution filled with microscopic silver particles – was also tried by Doc Reid, but it had no appreciable effect on vampires or werebeasts. Vampires (and werebeasts) can touch silver and wood without injury, just as humans can touch a steel blade. It is only when they are cut or stabbed by the weapon that double the usual damage is inflicted.

Duration: The effects and penalties last 1D4+1 melee rounds from a proper injection.

Damage: An injection of just a half ounce of holy water causes the vampire to feel as if his body is burning from the inside out, and his flesh may even boil and melt where his veins are closest to the skin. The dart's impact does one Hit Point of damage to vampires (and werebeasts). Within one melee round (15 seconds), the injection of Holy water inflicts *5D6 damage direct to Hit Points*, but the burning agony lasts for 1D4 additional melee rounds, during which the vampire suffers *1D6 Hit Points of additional damage per melee round and debilitating penalties* before the monster's hyper-healing can purge it. **Note:** Holy water hurts, damages and temporarily incapacitates vampires, but does not kill/destroy them. A vampire will recover from holy water damage even when damage is well below zero Hit Points; Bio-Regenerates as usual. However, while the demon's abilities are diminished, opponents may get the jump on the monster and kill it more easily and quickly. Holy water has no effect on werebeasts.

Penalties: No Perception Roll bonus, no initiative (the last to strike), reduce the number of attacks and all combat bonuses by half (round down), and Spd and skill performance are reduced to a mere 30% of normal. If inflicted with multiple, successful holy water dart attacks, the damage and duration are increased accordingly per each dart, but the penalties remain the same, unchanged.

The Role of Chance on Damage: Upon each successful strike with a dart, roll percentile dice to determine the effect of the injection.

01-25% The dart breaks or the plunger fails to inject the holy water. No further damage.

26-50% The dart injects only part of the holy water. Damage and duration is half, penalties remain at full.

51-00% The dart and holy water works properly; damage, duration and penalties are as described above.

Holy Water Delivery Systems:

Hypodermic Needle and Syringe: This is a shot with a syringe like you get from a nurse or doctor.

Range: Touch/close, hand to hand combat.

Damage: As above.

Rate of Fire: Each shot counts as one melee attack.

Payload: One dart. Reloading the weapon takes one melee round.

Penalty: -2 to strike in hand to hand combat or any kind of struggle and the attack can be blocked or dodged. -1 penalty to strike via a surprise attack (still have to hit and inject). No penalty when used upon an incapacitated target.

Cost: Two credits for a standard, disposable syringe and needle, 15 credits for a reusable syringe; one credit for replacement needles. **Cost of Holy Water:** Can range from free to 100 credits an ounce (half an ounce or one tablespoon is the typical dose for a dart). Most priests will bless and make holy water at no cost to fight vampires, though a donation to the church is encouraged.

Blowgun: A hollow length of pipe or tube made from any number of materials, from modern lightweight aluminum and plastic to the more traditional wood.

Range: 20 feet (6.1 m) for best accuracy, 40 feet (12.2 m) maximum.

Damage: As above.

Rate of Fire: Each shot counts as one melee attack.

Payload: One dart. Reloading the weapon takes one melee round.

Penalty: -2 to strike at up to 20 feet (6.1 m), -4 at greater distances up to 40 feet (12.2 m).

Cost: 50 credits for a properly designed blow gun plus cost of holy water.

Basic Dart Gun: A simple, single-shot breech-loader that resembles a pistol. Dart guns are the best means of injecting vampires at a safe distance. Dart guns were originally used to tag and tranquilize wild animals, and sometimes by the cattle industry for injecting antibiotics or anesthetic. The modern vampire hunting variant uses silver-tipped needles to deliver a searing dose of holy water directly into a vampire's body/bloodstream. While the darts are delicate and not the most combat-worthy weapons, scoring a direct hit has devastating results to a vampire.

Weight: 1.2 lbs (0.5 kg).

Range: 30 feet (9.1 m).

Damage: As above.

Rate of Fire: Each shot counts as one melee attack.

Payload: One dart. Reloading the weapon takes one melee round.

Penalty: -1 to strike due to the uneven flight characteristics of the dart.

Cost: 5,000 credits; rare. Normal darts cost roughly 50 credits each, plus the cost of holy water.

Dart Pistol: Most dart pistols are simple, single-shot breech loaders, but a few double, triple or even quadruple-barrel versions are available, multiplying their effectiveness in battle.

Weight: 2 lbs (0.9 kg).

Range: 100 feet (30.5 m).

Damage: As above.

Rate of Fire: Each shot counts as one melee attack.

Payload: One dart. Reloading the weapon with one or two darts takes one melee round. Multi-tube versions may hold 2-4 darts.

Penalty: -1 to strike due to the uneven flight characteristics of the dart.

Cost: 10,000 credits for a single shot gun; fair to poor availability. 17,500 credits for a double-barrel dart pistol; poor availability. 30,000 credits for a triple- or quadruple-barrel dart pistol; rare. Normal darts cost roughly 50 credits each plus holy water.

Dart Rifle: Most dart rifles are simple, single-shot breech loaders, but a few double, triple or even quadruple-barrel versions are available, multiplying their effectiveness in battle.

Weight: 4 lbs (1.8 kg).

Range: 360 feet (110 m).

Damage: As above.

Rate of Fire: Each shot counts as one melee attack.

Payload: One dart. Reloading the weapon with one or two darts takes one melee round. Multi-tube versions may hold 2-4 darts.

Penalty: -1 to strike due to the uneven flight characteristics of the dart.

Cost: 20,000 credits for a single barrel gun; poor availability. 35,000 credits for double-barrel dart rifle; poor availability. 50,000 credits for a triple- or quadruple-barrel dart rifle; rare. Normal darts cost roughly 50 credits each, plus holy water.

Underbarrel Weapon Attachments

Squirt guns and bow and arrows may be useful against vampires, but they are basically pointless on a normal battlefield. **Underbarrel weapons**, however, add a vampire-fighting capability to normal guns. The old US Army used to have underbarrel grenade launchers, shotguns, laser designators and other tools. For Vampire Hunters, underbarrel water guns and crossbows are the preferred attachments, though normal underbarrel grenade launchers and shotguns can be loaded with anti-vampire rounds as well. The Black Market/Bandito Arms and Northern Gun manufacture all the underbarrel weapons described on these pages.

Underbarrel Crossbow/Speargun: Underbarrel crossbows fit underneath any modern day energy or projectile rifle. Their arms can be folded in to minimize the weapon's size and profile, then flipped out for when the crossbow is needed. Speargun versions are essentially the same weapon, but do not have crossbow arms and may require CO2 or compressed air to fire.

Weight: 2 lbs (0.9 kg).

Range: 120 feet (36.6 m).

Damage: 2D4 S.D.C. (4D4 to vampires).

Rate of Fire: Single shot only. Reloads must be carried separately. Manual reload takes one melee attack/action.

Payload: One bolt/spear at a time.

Cost: 2,000 credits.

Note: May be substituted with a single or double-barreled *dart gun* to fire Blood Boilers. Cost is 2,000 credits, -2 to strike penalty for an underbarrel dart gun; range is 40 feet (12.2 m) for a pistol attachment, 120 feet (36.6 m) for a rifle.

Underbarrel Grenade Launcher: A standard underbarrel grenade launcher can be loaded with wood or silver rifle grenades. They have decent range compared to most anti-vampire weapons and an explosive area effect that can injure or stun multiple bloodsuckers at once.

Weight: 3 lbs (1.35 kg).

Range: 500 feet (152 m).

Damage: Wood: 1D4 Hit Point damage to all vampires within a 4 foot (1.2 m) blast radius. Has a 01-05% chance of staking the vampire by striking its heart with wooden shrapnel. However, there is also a 01-10% chance of the explosive charge simply destroying the wood pieces instead of scattering them. In this case, the grenade goes off with no effect.

Silver: 2D6 Hit Point damage to all vampires and werebeasts within a 6 foot (1.8 m) blast radius.

Rate of Fire: Single shot only.

Payload: One grenade. Reloads must be carried separately. Manual reload of one grenade takes one melee attack/action.

Cost: 3,500 credits for the underbarrel launcher, plus the cost of the grenades. Wood: 100 credits each. Silver: 500 credits each.

Underbarrel Shotgun: A small, compact shotgun system that fits underneath a normal rifle. The shotgun has limited range, but is more dependable than crossbows or water guns.

Weight: 3 lbs (1.35 kg).

Range: 60 feet (18.3 m).

Damage: Silver Buckshot: 3D6 S.D.C./Hit Points to everything within a 10 foot (3 m) area. Solid Silver Slug: 4D6 S.D.C./Hit Points; double damage to vampires and werebeasts.

Rate of Fire: Single shot only.

Payload: 6 shells. Reloads must be carried separately. Manual reload takes four melee actions to reload all six shells.

Cost: 2,500 credits.

Underbarrel Water Gun: This is a simple, pump-action weapon that fits under the barrel of any modern energy or projectile rifle to fire a stream of water from the weapon.

Weight: 3 lbs (1.35 kg).

Range: 50 feet (15.2 m).

Damage: 3D6 Hit Points to vampires; no damage to others.

Rate of Fire: Single shot only.

Payload: 10 blasts.

Cost: 500 credits.

Anti-Vampire Fragmentation Grenade

"Grenades" incorporating sharp bits of wood or silver are relatively simple to produce and are reliable anti-vampire weapons. Wood shrapnel launching grenades have the added bonus of potentially sending a wooden fragment into the vampire's heart, producing the same effects as a wooden stake. Grenades that erupt in silver-plated shrapnel work more like traditional grenades, however, and are much more reliable. As an S.D.C. weapon, it does no damage to M.D.C. armor or structures.

Weight: 0.5 lbs (0.23 kg) wood, 1 lb (0.45 kg) silver.

Range: 120 feet (36.6 m) for hand grenades or 500 feet (152 m) for rifle-fired grenades.

Damage: Wood: 1D4 Hit Point damage to all vampires within a 4 foot (1.2 m) blast area. Has a 01-05% chance of staking the vampire by striking its heart with wooden shrapnel. However, there is also a 01-10% chance of the explosive charge simply destroying

the wood pieces instead of scattering them. In this case, the grenade goes off with no effect.

Damage: Silver: 2D6 Hit Point damage to all vampires within a 6 foot (1.8 m) blast radius.

Cost: Wood: 100 credits each. Silver: 500 credits each.

Garlic Grenade

Garlic grenades are anti-vampire weapons that work like tear gas on vampires. When the grenade explodes, a cloud is created that is noxious to vampires and burns their eyes and throats, stings exposed skin and makes them gag and choke. All vampires will immediately try to stagger out of the garlic cloud and flee 2D4x10 feet (6.1 to 24.4 m) away from the searing stench. It also induces penalties that diminish the abilities of every vampire caught inside the actual cloud.

Weight: 0.5 lbs (0.23 kg).

Range: 120 feet (36.6 m) for thrown hand grenades or as per rifle-fired grenades. The gaseous garlic cloud covers a 20 foot (6.1 m) radius.

Duration: The garlic cloud lasts 1D6+1 melee rounds; half that time outdoors with a strong wind (15 mph/24 km or greater). The penalties last for as long as the vampires are in the cloud and for an additional 2D4 melee rounds after the vampires exit the garlic cloud.

Damage: 1D4 Hit Points initial damage to all vampires caught within the cloud itself, plus burning, tearing eyes blinds the monsters and causes choking with the following penalties: -3 on initiative, -6 to strike, parry and dodge, and -1 attack for each of the next 2D4 melee rounds. In addition, garlic repels vampires and causes *all vampires* to stay 2D4x10 feet (6.1 to 24.4 m) away from the noxious cloud until it dissipates. **Note:** Werebeasts are only slightly affected by the powerful stench and are -1 on initiative, and -1 to strike, parry and dodge. The vampire penalties are lower than the effects of tear gas on humans, due their supernatural senses and abilities, but are still considerable.

Cost: 700 credits per each grenade, sometimes costs 2-3 times more.

Anti-Vampire Mini-Missiles

Mini-missiles, like grenades, can be turned into fragmentary explosive weapons with wood or silver shrapnel, or smoke and garlic to use against vampires. Missiles are much more specialized, pack more explosives and do greater damage to vampires, however, which is reflected in their higher price.

Weight: Standard as per all mini-missiles.

Range: A half mile to one mile (0.8 to 1.6 km).

Damage: Wood: 2D4 Hit Point damage to all vampires within an 6 foot (1.8 m) blast radius. Has a 01-10% chance of staking the vampire by striking its heart with wooden shrapnel.

Damage: Silver: 3D6 Hit Point damage to all vampires within a 10 foot (3 m) blast radius.

Damage: Garlic: Same damage and penalties as the grenade, but a 25 foot (7.6 m) radius for the cloud.

Cost: Wood and Garlic: 1,400 credits each. Silver: 8,000 credits each.

Note: A tiny handful of Vampire Hunters have similarly converted larger missiles, but missiles are rare enough and expensive as they are, and special order missiles with wood or silver must

be hand-loaded and cost a considerable amount more. Very rare and not very effective.

Special Vampire Fighting Power Armor, Robots and Vehicles

NG-XF103 Firefighter Power Armor

The NG-XF103 Firefighter is an all-purpose, sealed, environmental power armor that specializes in firefighting and search-and-rescue operations. The armor has all the standard power armor features, but can withstand higher temperatures and exposure to flame and thick smoke. It is a ground unit without flight capabilities, and is reasonably well armored to protect against falling debris and explosions. It is a popular first response power armor that has proven its value in the field for nearly two decades. It has been in the last five or six years that it has been used to fight vampires as well as fires.

Model Type: NG-XF103 Firefighter.

Class: Armored Hazard and Fire Suit.

Crew: One.

M.D.C. by Location:

*Water Tank, Large (1, back) – 50

*Water Tank, Medium (1, back) – 25

Water Cannon (1, handheld) – 50

*Water Cannon Hose (1) – 15

Forearm Mini-Laser (1, right) – 15 each

Arms (2) – 90 each

Hands (2) – 25 each

Legs (2) – 115 each

**Head/Helmet – 90

***Main Body – 210

* Destroying the water tank or hose releases whatever water is left inside, cutting off the supply to the water-based weapons within 1D4 melee rounds. **Note:** The tank and hose are small and difficult targets to hit. Thus, they can only be hit when an attacker makes a *Called Shot* and even then he is -3 to strike.

** Destroying the head of the power armor eliminates all forms of optical enhancement, sensory systems and the environmental capabilities of the armor. The pilot must now rely on his own human vision and senses, all of which will be diminished by smoke and heat. No power armor combat bonuses to strike, parry, and dodge when helmet is reduced to zero. **Note:** The head is a small and difficult target to hit (shielded by exhaust tubes and water tanks). Thus, it can only be hit when an attacker makes a *Called Shot* and even then the attacker is -3 to strike.

*** Depleting the M.D.C. of the main body will shut the armor down completely, making it useless.

Speed:

Running: 80 mph (128 km) maximum. The act of running does tire out its operator, but at 10% of the usual fatigue rate.



Leaping: The powerful robot legs can leap up to 25 feet (7.6 m) high or across unassisted by the jet boosters. A jet booster assisted leap (small jets are located in the feet, legs and sides) can propel the unit up to 100 feet (30.5 m) high and 200 feet (61 m) across. This is not flight.

Statistical Data:

Height: 7 feet, 3 inches (2.2 m) from head to toe. 8.5 feet (2.6 m) including height of the large water tank.

Width: 3.4 feet (1 m).

Length: 4 feet, 6 inches (1.4 m).

Weight: 480 lbs (216 kg) without water tanks. With fully loaded tanks (75 gallons/284 liters; 1,147 pounds/516 kg).

Physical Strength: Robotic P.S. of 28.

Cargo: Small storage area for extra supplies and personal weapons.

Power System: Nuclear; average life is 15 years.

Market Cost: 800,000–900,000 credits for a new, undamaged, fully powered suit complete with water cannon and two loads of firefighting chemicals. Good availability; excellent in and around Michigan and from Northern Gun dealers.

Weapon Systems:

1. NG-F302 Power Armor M.D.C. Water Cannon: This weapon resembles a heavy-duty flamethrower connected by hose to a pair of large water tanks. The tanks are suitable for most types of Combat Cyborgs and ground power armor without requiring modification of the armor. Strap the tanks on and you are ready to go. The water cannon fires high pressure streams of water. The gun is attached to the water tanks via an M.D.C. hose that feeds the water to the gun. This item was actually designed by Northern Gun for *firefighters* (based on a pre-Rifts NEMA design) and intended to fire a chemical spray or foam that dowses fire better than plain water. However, in the wilds of Mexico, the firefighting tool can be used to extinguish the undead with high-powered streams of water.

Primary Purpose: Firefighting.

Secondary Purpose: Anti-Vampire.

Weight: Gun is 15 lbs (6.75 kg), plus water tanks.

Range: 300 feet (91.4 m).

Damage to Vampires: 6D6 Hit Points; fires a high pressure stream of water; 1D6x10 Hit Point damage if the payload is holy water. Damage to ordinary people, none, they just get wet.

Rate of Fire: Single shot only. Each blast counts as one melee attack.

Payload: Two water tanks, one large fifty gallon tank (190 liters, 415 pounds/186.7 kg): 250 blasts, and a 25 gallon reserve tank (95 liters, 207.5 lbs/93.3 kg): 125 blasts. If desired, the smaller tank can contain actual fire retardant chemical or foam. Which tank is accessed for firing is changed with a voice command or press of a three digit code on the gun. The NG-XF103 armor is sold with an extra pair of tanks, hose and water cannon.

Movement Penalties: -1 attack per melee, -2 on all combat bonuses and reduce Spd by 10%. This is due not just to the weight, but the *movement* of the water in the tanks, forcing the user to constantly exert effort to maintain balance.

Cost of Water Cannon & Water Tanks: The firefighting system by itself costs 55,000 credits, but sometimes double or triple in the Vampire Lands.

Note: Water cannon may be substituted with a rail gun in combat situations, or drilling and excavation equipment in rescue or recovery operations.

2. Forearm Mini-Laser (1): Concealed in the right arm is a pop-up mini-laser for cutting through locks and walls for entry and exit in rooms. When not needed it is concealed in the forearm.

Primary Purpose: Cutting tool.

Secondary Purpose: Combat and defense.

Range: 1-200 feet (0.3 to 61 m).

Mega-Damage: Four settings: 6D6 S.D.C., 2D4x10 S.D.C., 1D4 M.D. and 2D6 M.D.

Rate of Fire: Each blast, regardless of damage setting, counts as one melee attack.

Payload: Effectively unlimited; tied to power supply.

3. Optional: Silver-Plated Knuckle Spikes. Three or four silver-plated knuckle spikes may be mounted to the hands. Adds 1D6 M.D. to punch attacks, but does 3D6 Hit Point damage to vampires.

4. Optional: Forearm Equipment Strap. A Velcro strap on the left forearm to hold a few tools (screwdriver, pliers, wrench, hammer, etc.), light sticks or four wooden stakes.

5. Optional: Sidearm. A handgun can be carried on the belt or in a holster attached at the hip or on the chest.

6. Hand to Hand Combat: Rather than use a weapon, the pilot can engage in Mega-Damage combat. Skills and bonuses depends on whether the character has *Robot Combat Basic or Elite*. Double damage from Leap Kick attacks.

7. Special Features: In addition to the usual features common to power armor, the NG-Firefighter also has the following.

A) Thermal-Imager and Multi-Optics System: A special optical heat sensor that allows the infrared radiation of warm objects to be converted into a visible image. Enables the pilot to see in the dark, in shadows and through smoke. Also handy for seeing fire and heat sources behind walls or people (as cold spots) in a building (vampires do not register on thermal imaging devices or optic systems). Range: 1,000 feet (305 m).

B) Passive Nightvision Optics for night operations. Not useful in environments filled with fire as intense light causes the night-sight to go white and obscure the user's vision.

C) I.D. Lights. A line of tiny, colored LCD lights run down the sides of the arms, legs, chest and water tanks so firefighters can identify fellow firefighters and see them in dark, smoke-filled environments. Can be deactivated from within the suit.

D) Superior heat protection up to 900 centigrade.

E) Has an independent oxygen supply good for 18 hours.

F) An advanced first-aid kit with two RAU, RMK, and RSU robot medical systems as well as the usual items in a standard kit, is usually hooked to the left hip, and an insulated, fire-resistant box containing two portable oxygen masks (10 minute supply of air) hooked to the right hip. The mini-oxygen masks are for victims of smoke inhalation that need help breathing.

G) A utility belt containing a mini-tool kit, 8 green mini-flares, four light sticks and two small, green smoke grenades.

Titan Fireman Robot

The Titan Fireman Robot is a comparatively small, but fast and agile brother of the larger Titan series robots. It is designed specifically as a mobile firefighting unit and may be thought of as a fire truck with legs. It is tough enough to handle extreme temperatures without danger to the pilot inside. On the right forearm is a high-powered water cannon that can fire water or release fire extinguishing chemicals or foam. Shoulder missile launchers contain mini-missiles filled with fire retardant chemicals released upon impact to smother fire (but any type of mini-missile can be used). Mounted on the back are two massive tanks that each contain 2,000 gallons (7571 liters) of water or firefighting chemicals. That means each of the tanks weighs approximately 8.3 tons. Behind the shoulders between the robot's back and the two water tanks are mountings and bench-style seats for three man-sized

firefighters or passengers. Hooks, cables and a seatbelt are at each location to secure the individual and his gear.

Archie Three Note: All Titan manufactured robots are the secret creations of the sentient, pre-Rifts artificial intelligence, *Archie Three* and his human friend, *Hagan Lonovich*. The two have taken a keen interest in the Vampire Kingdoms, and the danger they represent to North America. The Titan Fireman is something Hagan and Archie dreamed up. Though it is marketed as a full-functioning *firefighting robot vehicle*, it was secretly created for the express purpose of giving vampire fighting forces in Mexico a reliable robot suitable for travel and battling the Undead. That's why the price is so low; Archie and Hagan are selling the robot with a tiny margin of profit.

Indeed, the robot has been widely accepted by vampire slayers, Mexican freedom fighters and warriors, as well as by first response teams and fire brigades. Additional combatants (or firefighters) can take positions on the robot's back to provide support and more firepower, and vampire fighters often add wooden spears or silver blade weapons to the left forearm, and silver spikes to the knuckles, as well as coat the robot's finger blades in silver.



Titan Fireman Robot

Model Type: TRF-107

Class: Light Ground/Infantry First Response and Firefighting Robot.

Crew: One pilot and three passengers can be accommodated.

M.D.C. by Location:

Head – 90

* Hands (2) – 40 each

* Extendible Finger Blades (3, left hand only) – 10 each

Forearm Water Cannon – 100

Upper Arms/Shoulders (2) – 130 each

Arms (2) – 130 each

Legs (2) – 150 each

* Chest Laser Turret – 30

** Sliding Sensor Turret (behind left shoulder) – 20

*** Main Body – 300

**** Connecting Water Hose – 50

Water Tanks (2, back) – 150 each

Reinforced Pilot's Compartment – 100

* A single asterisk indicates a small, difficult target to strike, requiring the attacker to make a "Called Shot," but even then he is -4 to strike.

** If the sensor turret is destroyed, the radar and targeting systems are knocked out, forcing the pilot to rely on his own human vision and other optical enhancements of the robot.

Note: The turret is a small and difficult target to hit. It can only be hit when a character makes a *Called Shot* and even then, the attacker is -4 to strike and must be on the side or back to aim at it.

*** Depleting the M.D.C. of the main body shuts the robot down completely, rendering it useless.

**** The Connecting Water Hose is a small, moving and difficult target to hit. Most of the time it is behind and under the arm. It can only be hit when a character makes a "Called Shot" and even then, the attacker is -4 to strike.

Speed:

Running: 90 mph (144 km) with empty water tanks. 60 mph (96 km) with full water tanks (16.6 tons).

Leaping: The powerful robot legs can leap up to 15 feet (4.6 m) high or across. Add 10 feet (3 m) with a running start.

Statistical Data:

Height: 16 feet, 4 inches (4.9 m).

Width: 7 feet (2.1 m).

Length: 4 feet, 6 inches (1.4 m).

Weight: 10 tons. 26.6 tons including full water tanks.

Physical Strength: Robotic P.S. of 32.

Cargo: Minimal storage space inside the pilot's compartment, about four feet (1.2 m) for extra clothing, weapons, and personal items.

Power System: Nuclear; average energy life is 20 years.

Black Market Cost: 7 million credits new. Four to five million rebuilt and without sensory systems. Fair availability of both.

Weapon Systems:

1. Water Cannon (1, right arm): This is the method of spraying water or firefighting chemicals to extinguish and contain fire. The stats that follow, however, are its use as a vampire fighting weapon.

Primary Purpose: Firefighting.

Secondary Purpose: Anti-Vampire.

Range: 600 feet (183 m).

Damage to Vampires: Light, Short Blast: 4D6 Hit Points. Medium Blast: 1D4x10 Hit Points. Heavy Blast: 2D4x10 Hit Point damage. This large, robot water cannon fires such a high pres-

sure blast of water that no amount of exterior waterproof clothing or umbrella provide any protection. Each blast does full damage. Only a full environmental suit or force field can shield the undead. There is also a 01-10% chance of the blast knocking a vampire off his feet, causing him to lose initiative and one melee attack, (01-25% chance for medium blasts, 01-40% chance for heavy). Against ordinary people, the likelihood of being knocked down is 01-25% for a light blast, 01-50% medium, 01-75% for a heavy blast.

Rate of Fire: Single shot only. Each blast counts as one melee attack.

Payload: Each Short and Medium blast uses up 10 gallons (38 liters) of water. A heavy blast 20 gallons (76 liters), providing the Titan Fireman Robot with approximately 100 heavy blasts per each tank of water.

2. T-003 Mini-Laser (1): A small laser turret is mounted in the chest, capable of 90 degree angle of fire (up and down). To move side to side, the entire upper body of the Titan Fireman must reposition; the robot can rotate 360 degrees at the waist.

Primary Purpose: Entry into sealed burning buildings, cutting through floors, ceilings and walls.

Secondary Purpose: Defense.

Range: 2,000 feet (610 m).

Mega-Damage: 3D6 M.D. per blast.

Rate of Fire: Single shot only. Each blast counts as one melee attack.

Payload: Effectively unlimited, tied to the power supply.

3. Mini-Missile Shoulder Launchers (3 per shoulder): Launch fire retardant, chemical-filled mini-missiles which release on impact to smother fire, but any type of mini-missile can be used.

Primary Purpose: Firefighting via chemical mini-missiles.

Secondary Purpose: Defense using smoke and combat mini-missiles.

Range: Chemical Missiles: 2,000 feet (610 m). Combat Mini-Missiles: One mile (1.6 m).

Mega-Damage: Firefighting Chemical: None; smothers a 30 foot (9.1 m) radius of fire. Conventional Missiles varies with missile type. Fragmentation mini-missiles salted with silver do 3D6 Hit Point damage to all vampires (and any unarmored innocent civilians) within a 10 foot (3 m) blast radius.

Rate of Fire: Single shot only. Each blast counts as one melee attack.

Payload: 12 total mini-missiles; six per shoulder.

4. Finger Blades (3, Left Hand): Titan robots only have two fingers and a thumb. The fingers on the left hand of the Titan Fireman have extendable and retractable blades for tearing and chopping through walls, locked doors and debris, cutting cables, etc., to rescue people from fire. (Almost any giant robot has enough strength for this, the real reason was to give Vampire Hunters another weapon with which they could plate with silver and fight the undead. Silver plating costs 800+ credits per blade).

Mega-Damage: 1D6 M.D. from blades; 6D6 Hit Point damage to vampires and werebeasts. These are not Vibro-Blades, but M.D.C. steel. Also suitable for chopping, raking and tearing attacks.

5. Hand to Hand Combat: Rather than use a weapon, the pilot can engage in Mega-Damage hand to hand combat.

6. Sensor System Note: In addition to sensors and features common to all giant combat robots, the Titan Fireman has an excellent array of sensory equipment.

A) Thermal-Imager and Optics: A special optical heat sensor that allows the infrared radiation of warm objects to be converted into a visible image. Enables the pilot to see in the dark, in shadows, and through smoke. Also for seeing fire and heat sources behind walls (Vampires do not register on thermal imaging devices or optic systems). Range: 1,600 feet (488 m).

B) Infrared and Ultraviolet Optics: This optical system projects a beam of infrared light that is invisible to the normal eye. The infrared beam enables the pilot to see in the dark and to see other infrared beams. The ultraviolet system enables the pilot to see into the ultraviolet spectrum of light and is used to detect the light beams of ultraviolet detection systems. **Note:** The infrared light beam can be seen by anybody who also has infrared optics, and the beam can be traced back to its source. Smoke impairs the infrared beam, making it impossible to see.

C) Enhanced Radar: Can identify and simultaneously track up to 96 different targets. Range: 100 miles (160 km).

D) Personnel Platform: Between the back and the water tanks is a platform that can accommodate as many as three additional firefighters, combatants or survivors/passengers. Bench-style seating and straps to hold passengers and equipment are provided.

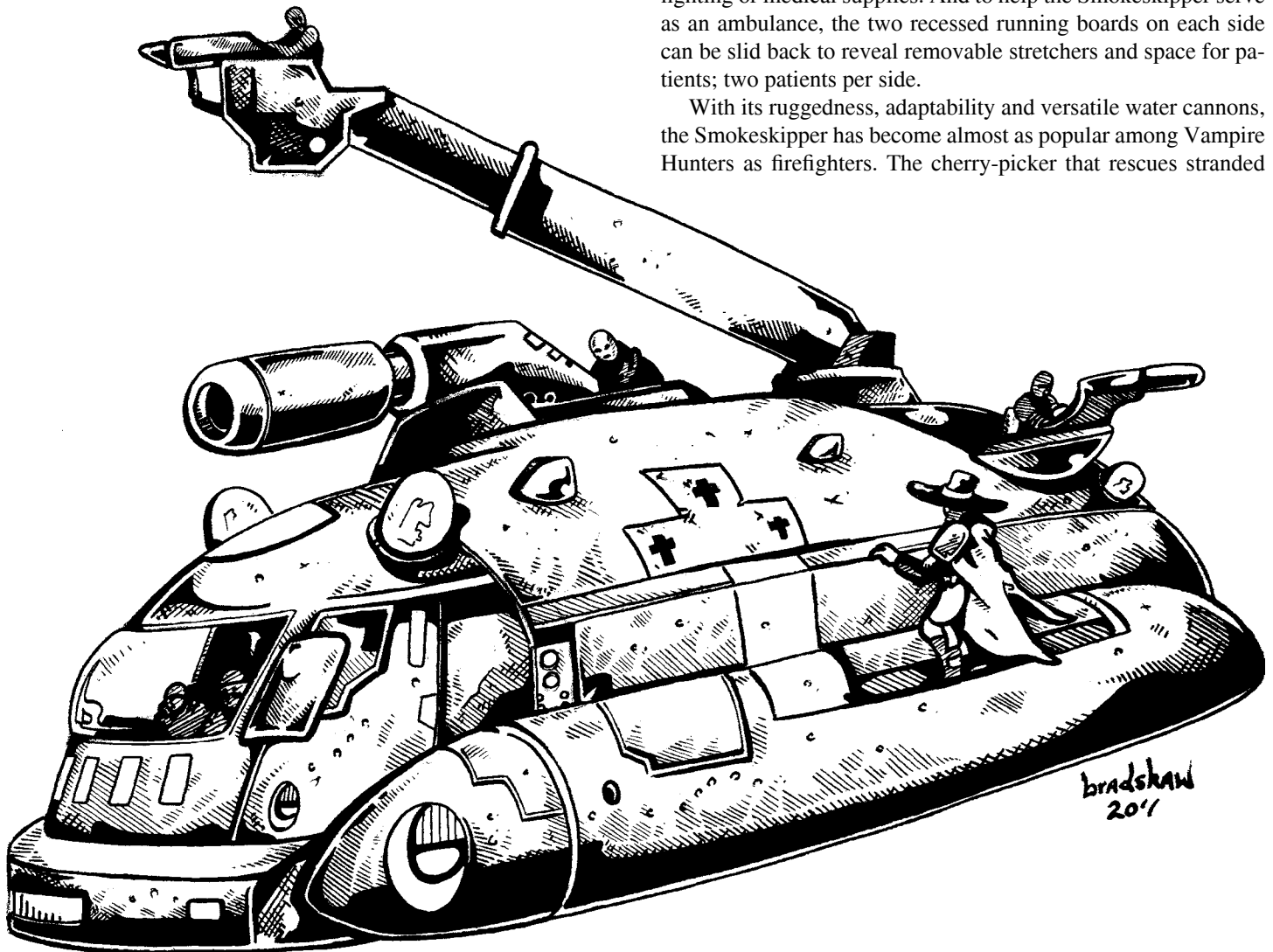
E) Secret Hidden Cameras: All Archie-Bots have one or more “black box” type hidden cameras and sound recording system as well as coded transmission capabilities that records all actions by the robot and sends them to Archie, in secret, making Archie Three one of the best-informed beings in Rifts North America. The Titan Fireman has five such concealed cameras and data systems.

NG-F911 “Smokeskipper” Hover Firetruck

With its growing experience in the field of hover technology, Northern Gun has designed an effective hover-capable firetruck that can respond swiftly to alarms. Built using military expertise, the well-equipped vehicle comes with one massive water cannon as its main turret, three small, man-portable water hoses, two in side turrets and one located in an extendable cherry-picker mounted atop the firetruck.

In addition to its internal water supply, the Smokeskipper has extendable hose connections that can be attached to fire hydrants or simply inserted into water towers, lakes, rivers or other water sources. The connection doesn’t even need to be pressurized as the hoses themselves draw plenty of water when set to *intake mode*. There are panels on each side of the vehicle that open to reveal storage for medical equipment, oxygen and additional fire-fighting or medical supplies. And to help the Smokeskipper serve as an ambulance, the two recessed running boards on each side can be slid back to reveal removable stretchers and space for patients; two patients per side.

With its ruggedness, adaptability and versatile water cannons, the Smokeskipper has become almost as popular among Vampire Hunters as firefighters. The cherry-picker that rescues stranded



victims from balconies and windows can also serve as an extendable turret, maneuvering its gunner and water cannon into perfect position to hose down a vampire lair or pursuing pack of Wild Vampires. Northern Gun has taken note of increased sales in the southwest, and has been sending more and more Smokeskippers to their outlets and distributors in that region.

Model Type: NG-F911 Hovering Firetruck.

Class: Armored hover vehicle.

Crew: One pilot/driver with room for four firefighters/passengers up front, plus four gunners stationed outside at the water cannons and an additional four human-sized or two giant passengers may ride along on the running boards on each side of the vehicle.

M.D.C. by Location:

* Alarms/Sirens/Flashing Lights (2, front) – 8 each

* Headlights (8, various types) – 2 each

* Windshield (1; front) – 35

Main Jet Thrusters (4; rear) – 40 each

* Hover Jets (8, undercarriage) – 50 each

Main Water Cannon Turret (1, large, top and center) – 100

* Rear Water Cannons (2) – 30 each

* Cherry-Picker Mounted Water Cannon – 25

* Extendable Cherry-Picker – 100

* Side Hover Skirts/Running Boards (2) – 100 each

Reinforced Crew Compartment – 50

** Main Body – 190

* A single asterisk indicates a small and/or difficult target to strike, requiring the attacker to make a “Called Shot,” but even then the attacker is -3 to strike.

** Depleting the M.D.C. of the main body will shut the vehicle down completely, making it useless.

Speed:

Driving on the Ground: Not possible, but can hug the ground at the vehicle’s maximum speed, one foot (0.3 m).

Flying: Hover stationary, VTOL or fly at maximum speed of 120 mph (192 km). Cruising speed is considered to be 50 mph (80 km).

Maximum Altitude: 200 feet (61 m); critical for rescuing people from burning buildings and rooftops, and getting above a fire.

Flying Range: A nuclear power supply provides effectively unlimited range, but the hover jets require cooling after 8 hours of continuous use. Gas, diesel and electric models can travel approximately 200 miles (320 km) on a single tank/charge.

Underwater Capabilities: None.

Statistical Data:

Height: 14 feet (4.2 m). Cherry-picker can extend an additional 50 feet (15.2 m) straight up or to the side.

Length: 25 feet (7.6 m)

Width: 12 feet (3.6 m).

Weight: 7 tons fully loaded. 15.3 tons when equipped with a full water tank.

Cargo: Interior bay has a 6x4x4 feet (1.8 x 1.2 x 12 m) cargo area in addition to passenger space. The internal water tank can hold 2,000 gallons (7571 liters) of water or firefighting chemicals, adding 8.3 tons to the weight of the vehicle.

Power System: Nuclear, average life is 15 years. Electric battery and gas/diesel versions are also available.

Cost: 4.5 million credits for the nuclear powered version. 2.9 million credits for the electric or gas/diesel engine models.

Weapon Systems:

1. Main Water Cannon: A heavy-duty water cannon is mounted in a central turret atop the Smokeskipper. It can rotate 360 degrees and has a 45 degree up and down arc of fire. It feeds off the vehicle’s internal water tank or can be connected to an outlet or body of water.

Primary Purpose: Fire-Fighting and Rescue.

Secondary Purpose: Anti-Vampire.

Range: 1,200 feet (365 m).

Damage: Inflicts 2D4x10 Hit Point damage to vampires plus a 01-40% chance of knockdown. Regular humans suffer 1D6 S.D.C./Hit Points damage plus a 01-75% likelihood of being knocked down (loses initiative and one melee attack).

Rate of Fire: Each blast counts as one of the gunner’s melee attacks.

Payload: 40 streams when feeding off the vehicle’s internal tank. Effectively unlimited when connected to a water source.

2. Secondary Water Cannons (3): There are two smaller water cannons attached to rear-mounted turrets and a third mounted up on the cherry-picker. They can feed off the vehicle’s internal water tank or be connected to an outlet or body of water.

Primary Purpose: Fire-Fighting.

Secondary Purpose: Anti-Vampire.

Range: 600 feet (183 m).

Mega-Damage: 5D6 Hit Points to vampires plus a 01-10% chance of knockdown.

Rate of Fire: Each blast counts as one attack of the cannon operator.

Payload: 80 streams when feeding off the vehicle’s internal tank. Effectively unlimited when connected to a water source.

3. Mini-Missile Launcher: A panel next to the driver slides away to reveal an internal mini-missile launcher. Typically comes equipped with fire-retardant missiles but can accommodate any type of mini-missile.

Primary Purpose: Firefighting via chemical mini-missiles.

Secondary Purpose: Riot Control and Self-Defense.

Range: Chemical Missiles: 2,000 feet (610 m). Combat Mini-Missiles: One mile (1.6 m).

Mega-Damage: Firefighting Chemical: None; smothers a 30 foot (9.1 m) radius of fire. Conventional Missiles varies with missile type. Fragmentation mini-missiles salted with silver do 3D6 Hit Point damage to all vampires (and any unarmored innocent civilians) within a 10 foot (3 m) blast radius.

Rate of Fire: One at a time or in volleys of two, four or six.

Payload: 12 total mini-missiles.

4. Sensor System Note: The Smokeskipper does not have the same sensor systems as most military vehicles, but is equipped with an infrared imager mounted on the passenger side of the driver’s compartment. The IR view allows firefighters to quickly judge the heat and severity of the blaze, as well as predict where blowouts and flare-ups may occur.

Techno-Wizard Anti-Vampire Gear

TW Cross Vampire Detector

This Vampire Detector is a sleek, 8-12 inch (20-30.5 cm) crucifix, trimmed with silver, and has a white or clear power crystal in the center of it. Upon closer inspection, a number of wires can be seen attached to the crystal, and remove the back plate of the cross and there is a mesh of wires and circuit boards. The Vampire Detector can be worn around the neck as a rather large amulet (not unusual in Mexico) or handheld. The crystal flashes twice with light and turns blood red whenever a vampire is within a 20 foot (6.1 m) radius of it. It cannot pinpoint a vampire, but will indicate the presence. As a cross, it is able to hold vampires at bay. Many are ornate and attractive enough to be worn as jewelry.

No mystic energy is needed to activate it as the TW device draws upon the P.P.E. of its wearer/user (1 P.P.E. per hour, and P.P.E. usually recovers at a rate of a few points per hour), or any ambient P.P.E. in the area. The response to the vampire presence is automatic. The TW Cross Vampire Detector radiates magic energy and will stand out to those who can sense magic.

Creation Notes: Costs 125 P.P.E. to create and utilizes the primary spells Sense Evil, See Aura and Mystic Alarm.

Weight: 1-2 lbs (0.45 to 0.9 kg).

Range: 20 foot (6.1 m) radius.

Damage: Warns of vampires nearby and can hold them at bay as per holy symbol.

Payload: Effectively on all the time.

Cost: 10,000 credits, but can sell for double or triple in the Vampire Lands. Ornate pieces trimmed or plated in silver and/gold, or studded in gems, also increase the cost by three to six-fold.

TW Starlight Night Goggles

Magic goggles that enable a person to see in the dark and see the invisible. Requires at least some ambient light from the stars or moon. Range of vision is 120 feet (36.6 m). Costs 15 P.P.E. or 30 I.S.P. to activate. Duration: 15 minutes. Initial Creation Cost in P.P.E.: 140, primary spells are Eyes of the Wolf and See the Invisible. Market Value: 60,000-85,000 credits.

TW Thieves' Gloves

The gloves appear to be normal leather with a metal plate on the top knuckle, with wires running along the seam of the fingers and crystal studs on the knuckles. Gives the wearer the equivalent skills of Concealment, Palming and Pick Locks at 90% skill proficiency and a +10% bonus (or base skill) to Pick Pockets and Safecracking. Requires 25 P.P.E. or 50 I.S.P. to activate. Duration: 10 minutes. Initial Creation Cost in P.P.E.: 200, primary spells are Concealment and Escape. Market Value: 250,000 credits (the sale of the gloves is prohibited in many towns).

Globe of Daylight Lantern

At a quick glance, the Globe of Daylight lantern looks like any other type of box-style lantern with a handle at the top. However, closer inspection shows a high-tech looking apparatus inside where the wick should be. Dangling in the center of it all,

connected to an array of wires, is a yellow, white or clear quartz crystal. This is the light and energy source of the TW lantern.

Weight: Varies; 1-2 lbs (0.45 to 0.9 kg) on average.

S.D.C. of Lantern: 30 (Add 30,000 credits for a lantern that has 15 M.D.C.).

Range: 12 foot (3.6 m) radius of light when turned on high.

Damage: Holds vampires at bay, as well as unwrapped mummies and other creatures vulnerable to sunlight, but only when turned on to high. Low lighting is the equivalent of lantern light and has no effect on vampires. There are only two settings.

Duration & Payload: A minimum of 12 P.P.E. (or 24 I.S.P.) is required to light the lantern. It will provide light for 108 minutes at full power (which is what you need to hold vampires at bay) or 324 minutes (5 hours and 24 minutes) on low, which is good enough to see by and read in dim light but does not keep vampires away. At high, the light covers a 12 foot (3.6 m) radius (24 foot/7.3 m diameter). On low, the light fills a 4 foot (1.2 m) radius. Every additional two P.P.E. placed into the lantern (36 P.P.E. maximum) increases the duration by 9 minutes when turned up to high or 27 minutes on low. **Note:** The TW Globe of Daylight Lantern can be charged with up to 36 P.P.E. (or 72 I.S.P.) to provide a maximum of 324 minutes (5 hours, 24 minutes) of "sunlight" when turned on to high. It is advised to charge the lantern with additional P.P.E. to extend the duration, before the light goes out. It always costs 12 P.P.E. minimum to light the lantern and provide the initial light.

Cost: 20,000 credits is the normal cost, but in the Vampire Lands, cost is often double, triple or even quadruple. First created by Techno-Wizards in the New West, but now made at most TW manufacturing centers. Colorado Baronies is the original creator and primary manufacturer.

Globe of Daylight Floodlights

Vampire Defense Tools and Devices

A product of Stormspire in the Federation of Magic, Globe of Daylight Floodlights are being shipped south to help combat and contain vampire hordes. They consist of clusters of Globe of Daylight lanterns that project magic sunlight to create a perimeter that vampires cannot enter. There are several different sized versions depending on the requirements of a certain situation. Man-portable versions only cover a small area, but they are typically attached to frames that can be easily moved to wherever they are needed. Larger floodlights must be mounted on trucks, robots or armored vehicles, while the biggest versions are essentially lighthouses or large tower lights that must be incorporated into buildings or other permanent structures. In all cases, the floodlights can be turned to rotate 360 degrees and can be positioned/turned in a 90 degree up and down arc. The Colorado Baronies are the manufacturers.

TW Man-Portable Floodlight

Weight: 40 lbs (18 kg).

M.D.C. of the Floodlight: 35 and is a small target, requiring a Called Shot and the shooter still incurs a penalty of -4 to strike.

Range: 90 foot (27.4 m) directed beam of light, or can illuminate a 20 foot (6.1 m) radius.

P.P.E. Requirements: 12 P.P.E. per hour.

Cost: 100,000 credits.

TW Vehicle-Mounted Floodlight

Weight: 280 lbs (126 kg).

M.D.C. of the Floodlight: 70

Range: 360 foot (110 m) directed beam of light, or can illuminate a 40 foot (12.2 m) radius.

P.P.E. Requirements: 36 P.P.E. per hour.

Cost: 325,000 credits.

TW Building Floodlight

Weight: 3.5 tons.

M.D.C. of the Floodlight: 150.

Range: 1,000 foot (305 m) directed beam of light, or can illuminate a 120 foot (36.6 m) radius.

P.P.E. Requirements: 72 P.P.E. per hour.

Cost: 1 million credits.

TW Modified, Wood-Firing Rail Gun

This is a very rare and expensive weapon said to have been developed by a Techno-Wizard at *Lazlo* with the help of a wizard from another dimension. Any rail gun can be magically converted, but the lighter models are preferred because they can be used by strong, but ordinary people. Like the TW water weapons, no external ammunition drum is required, only the rail gun itself; the rapid-fired wood shards *magically appear*. Normal rail gun rounds cannot be fired from these weapons. Construction requires a large, rapid-fire weapon such as a rail gun. Cannot be applied to rifles or machine-guns.

Range: 2,000 feet (610 m).

Damage: A short burst does one M.D., but 2D6x10 Hit Points to vampires.

Payload: 10 bursts per every 25 P.P.E. or 50 I.S.P.

Cost: 500,000 to 750,000. Very rare.

TW Sungun Pistol

The TW Sungun is one of the newest and simplest anti-vampire weapons on the market. It is made by the Techno-Wizards at the *Colorado Baronies* and uses a Globe of Daylight spell refracted by lenses and focused through a very small aperture to create a beam of magical sunlight damaging to vampires. While harmless to most normal creatures, the shaft of light sears the flesh of vampires (and mummies that are not protected by their wrappings, and other creatures harmed by sunlight).

The Sungun can be custom made to look like any type of revolver or pistol, but many start with an actual laser pistol; any brand, S.D.C. or M.D. weapon doesn't matter. The weapon is altered and enhanced by a Techno-Wizard to be remade into a TW Sungun; any M.D. capability is lost in the transformation. It works like any other type of energy pistol, pull the trigger and a beam of bright light is fired.

Weight: Varies; 2-4 lbs (0.9 to 1.8 kg) on average.

Range: 100 feet (30.5 m).

Damage: 3D6 Hit Point damage against vampires and unwrapped mummies. No damage to mortals or property, though it can blind

a person for 1D4 melee rounds if shot in the eye; requires a successful Called Shot at -4 to strike to hit a person in the eye; -8 to strike if the target is moving.

Rate of Fire: Each shot counts as one melee action/attack.

Payload: 20 shots. Requires 20 P.P.E. or 40 I.S.P. to recharge. Casting of the Globe of Daylight spell into the TW weapon provides two shots.

Cost: 45,000 to 100,000 credits. Poor availability, high demand.

TW Sungun Rifle

Fundamentally the same as the TW Sungun pistol except it is built into a rifle housing and has better range than the pistol. However, both the Sungun pistol and rifle have a short range compared to other energy weapons. Such is the finicky nature of magic. Any type of laser rifle can be used as the foundation to make one. Pull the trigger and a beam of bright light is fired in a short blast.

Weight: Varies, but usually around 6 lbs (2.7 kg).

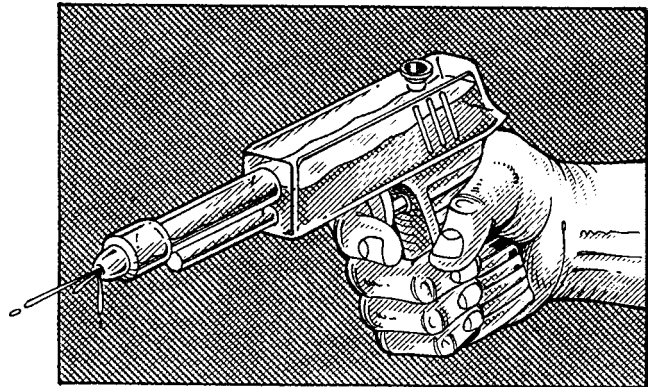
Range: 800 feet (244 m).

Damage: 3D6 Hit Point damage against vampires and unwrapped mummies.

Rate of Fire: Each shot counts as one melee action/attack.

Payload: 10 shots. Requires 20 P.P.E. or 40 I.S.P. to recharge. Casting of the Globe of Daylight spell into the TW weapon provides one shot.

Cost: 75,000 to 150,000 credits. Poor availability, high demand.



Techno-Wizard (TW) Water Blasters

These weapons either look like squirt guns or real automatic weapons (cannot fire bullets) that appear to be empty of ammo. However, when 10 P.P.E. or 20 I.S.P. are pumped into the blaster, it fires high-powered jets of water.

Payload and Rate of Fire: The typical TW Water Blaster can fire 40 bursts of water before requiring a recharge of 10 P.P.E. or 20 I.S.P. The rate of fire is identical to automatic and energy weapons, generally meaning as often as one can pull the trigger. However, the conditions for *aimed*, *burst*, and *wild shooting* still apply (as do automatic weapon W.P. bonuses and skills).

The great thing about TW Water Blasters is that they do not require a reservoir of water. The water magically appears when 10 P.P.E. or 20 I.S.P. is placed in the weapon, which makes them more durable, lightweight (no water weight) and easy to use. The range is also significantly greater than conventional toy-like water guns.

Attacks per Melee: All items are single shot, so one blast counts as one melee attack.

Availability: Poor; high demand.

TW Plastic Water Pistol: Weight: 6 ounces (170 grams). Range: 150 feet (46 m). Damage to Vampires: 2D6 Hit Points. Payload: 40 blasts. Cost: 6,000 credits.

TW Metal Water Pistol: Weight: 2 lbs (0.9 kg). Range: 200 feet (61 m). Damage to Vampires: 2D6 Hit Points. Payload: 40 blasts. Cost: 12,000 credits. Greater durability. Any existing automatic pistol can be converted.

TW Pump-Style Water Pistol or Sawed-Off Shotgun: Weight: One pound (0.45 kg) for plastic or 3 lbs (1.35 kg) for metal. Range: 200 feet (61 m). Damage to Vampires: 4D6 Hit Points, wider concentrated blast (more water). Payload: 40 blasts. Cost: 25,000 credits.

TW Full-Size Water Shotgun: Range: 300 feet (91.4 m). Weight: 3 lbs (1.35 kg) for plastic or 5 lbs (2.25 kg) for metal. Damage to Vampires: 5D6 Hit Points. Payload: 40 blasts. Cost: 35,000 credits.

TW Full-Size Water Rifle: Range: 600 feet (183 m). Weight: One pound (0.45 kg) for plastic or 5 lbs (2.25 kg) for metal. Damage to Vampires: 4D6 Hit Points. Payload: 40 blasts. Cost: 50,000 credits. Greater range. Any existing rifle can be converted into a water rifle.

TW Rifle and Water Grenade Launcher: Range: 600 feet (183 m). Weight: 5 lbs (2.25 kg) for plastic or 9 lbs (4 kg) for metal. Damage to Vampires: Rifle blast 4D6 Hit Points; the water grenade is a concentrated sphere of water that erupts on impact, covering its target in 15 gallons (56.7 liters) of water and splatters a 6 foot (1.8 m) radius. 1D4x10+4 Hit Point damage is inflicted to the main vampire struck, but 2D6 Hit Points of *splash damage* is done to every vampire in the blast radius; everyone in the radius gets wet. Payload: 20 water blasts and four water grenades. Cost: 80,000 credits. Limited Rate of Fire: Can fire a grenade only twice per melee round and each grenade fired counts as two rifle blasts. Not available in thrown hand grenades.

TW Water Cannon Bazooka: Range: 600 feet (182 m). Weight: 5 lbs (2.25 kg) for plastic or 11 lbs (5 kg) for metal. Damage to Vampires: Fires a concentrated sphere of water that erupts on impact covering its target in 30 gallons (113.5 liters) of water and splatters an 8 foot (2.4 m) radius. 2D4x10+8 Hit Points of damage is inflicted to the main vampire struck, but 3D6 Hit Points of *splash damage* is done to every vampire in the blast radius; everyone in the radius gets wet. Payload: 10 blasts. Cost: 100,000 credits. Limited Rate of Fire: Can shoot only three times per melee round; each blast counts as one melee attack.

TW Water Cannon: This weapon looks like a two-handed flamethrower with hose and small, one gallon (3.7 liters) hip or back tank. Range: 300 feet (91.4 m), Weight: 5 lb (2.25 kg) for plastic or 11 lbs (5 kg) for metal. Damage to Vampires: 3D6x10 Hit Points; fires a high pressure stream of water the full 300 foot (91.4 m) length, covering its target in 50 gallons (189 liters) of water to a 10 foot (3 m) impact area. Payload: 6 blasts. Cost: 150,000 credits. Limited Rate of Fire: Can shoot six times per melee, but will need to be reloaded via 10 P.P.E. (or 20 I.S.P.).

TW Animal Repellent Flares

A handheld flare that ignites when a cord is pulled. It doesn't fire anything, but releases a minty scent and a magic aura that repels as many as two large animals like horses or cattle, six wolves or large to medium dogs, or 20 small ani-

mals like rats, mice, and bats. Typical Duration: 1D6 minutes. The magic aura covers a small, five foot (1.5 m) radius, although scattering several around an area will enlarge the area of effect. Moving the flares will cause them to dissipate twice as quickly. The mint smell is only for effect and to let the user know the enchantment is active. When the flare stops burning, its magic is over. **Note:** Does not affect vampires in wolf or bat form. *Werebeasts* hesitate for a moment making them -3 on initiative. Ordinary animals immediately flee, running off 1,000 feet (305 m) and have a 2D4x10% chance of forgetting about the humanoids and leaving the area completely. Cost: 6,000 credits per flare.



TW Globe of Daylight Flares

A magic flare that is fired into the air by a flare gun or lit and launched like a rocket. Explodes 200 feet (61 m) in the air to release a magic Globe of Daylight that slowly drifts down until it stops and hovers, stationary, 20 feet (6.1 m) above the ground. The light is bright enough to perform detail work and illuminates a 60 foot (18.3 m) diameter as if the sun were out. The daylight from the flare forces vampires to the edge of its light, holding them at bay and preventing them from entering the lighted area (same as the spell). Typical Duration: 3D4 minutes. The globe is stationary and cannot be moved. Cost: 2,000 credits per flare. **Note:** Shooting the magic flare into a vampire does NO damage; bounces off and away, but will still burst into a Globe of Daylight. Also excellent as a signal flare, scaring animals and lighting an area, especially at night.

TW Storm Flares

A magic flare that is fired into the air by a flare gun or lit and launched like a rocket. Flies up 2,000 feet (610 m) in the air and causes a sudden rainstorm. The storm covers a small, 100 foot (30.5 m) diameter and lasts 1D6 minutes. Storm damage inflicts 4D6x10 Hit Point damage for every HALF melee round (7.5 seconds) a vampire is exposed to the cleansing waters. Cost: 10,000 credits per flare.

Note: Shooting the storm flare into the vampire does NO damage and does not create rain.

TW Water Saber

Inspired by T.G. Moore

One of the most effective and straightforward Techno-Wizard weapons designed for use against vampires, the TW Water Saber looks rather like a sword hilt without a blade. Instead, the handle is covered wires and blue and clear colored crystals. When 15 P.P.E. (or 30 I.S.P.) is pumped into the TW weapon, water flows up and out from the handle to create a column of running water held in place by a field of magic energy. This lets the user swing and use the column of water as if it were a short sword. The blade can be used to slash an jab and opponent. Ordinary people are made wet wherever the water column touches them. Vampires feel the water as if it were acid. The water strikes penetrate clothing, but armor will block and prevent damage.

When not in use, the water blade flows back into a small tank built into the handle. TW Water Sabers require no conventional ammunition; simply charging up the magic battery and replacing water lost to combat (about 50 swipes of the blade) and evaporation is all it takes to keep the weapon in good working order.

Weight: 3 lbs (1.35 kg). Only requires 8 ounces (0.23 liters) of water to stay functional as a weapon.

Damage: 2D6 Hit Point damage to vampires with each strike. Non-vampires get a little wet but are unharmed.

Payload: The weapon is powered by magic energy. 10 P.P.E. will activate the sword and keep it active for up to 20 minutes.

Cost: 50,000-90,000 credits. Uncommon.

TW Vampire Water Field

The TW Water Field is a silly, but surprisingly popular device with people in the vampire plagued West. The basic unit is a compact backpack that weighs five pounds (2.25 kg). When activated by 10 P.P.E. or 20 I.S.P., an umbrella-like tube framework (no protective membrane) sprouts up and sprays water all around the individual wearing the pack (some of the water hits the wearer too, especially if moving or on a windy day). Despite the ridiculousness of the “portable shower,” as it is frequently called, the device does keep vampires away. A vampire suffers 2D6 Hit Point damage every time he reaches or steps into the shower of water. Duration: Five minutes. Range: 2 feet (0.6 m) around the wearer. Cost: 45,000-60,000 credits.

TW S.C.U.B.A

– Wetsuit & Diving Gear

TW Respirator: A special, Breathe Without Air Respirator with a small air tank attached is worn instead of the normal air tanks and hose. P.P.E. Cost: 20 P.P.E. or 40 I.S.P. to activate. Duration: 20 minutes, but can be instantly refilled/reactivated by an additional 20 P.P.E. or 40 I.S.P. Also effective against toxic fumes or in an airless environment. Initial Creation Cost in P.P.E.: 200; Breathe Without Air spell. Market Value: 30,000-50,000 credits. Good availability.

Super Swimmer Diver’s Suit: This is an air mask, flippers and skin diver’s wet suit with a crazy looking contraption built into the belt and some lines of flexible wire running up the side of the legs, body and arms. The TW suit instills the magic power of Swim as a Fish: Superior, but a TW Respirator is also required. When combined, the swimmer can swim at speeds of 10 mph (16

km) at depths up to two miles (3.2 km) without fatigue! Activation Cost: 12 P.P.E. or 24 I.S.P. Duration: 15 minutes, but can be instantly continued/reactivated by an additional 12 P.P.E. or 24 I.S.P. for another 15 minutes when the duration ticks down to 1 or 2 minutes. Initial Creation Cost in P.P.E.: 420. Market Value: 75,000-200,000 credits. Fair availability.

TW Water Sled

Most look like conventional jet sleds used by water skiers to skim across the water, but some look like a surfboard with some crazy gizmo built into the back of it. All are TW powered and have great balance and stability (+1 to dodge, +5% to piloting skill, +10% to balance) and an excellent speed of up to 100 mph (160 km or 86 knots). Speed is controlled by the thought or voice command of the rider.

Duration: Five hours. P.P.E. Cost: Initial creation cost in P.P.E. is 270, and needs the swim as fish, telekinesis, and Energy Field spells. 20 P.P.E. (or 40 I.S.P.) to activate. Market Cost: 50,000 credits for a one-man sled, 75,000 for a two-man sled or surfboard-style sled.

TW Self-Propelled Sail Boat

A sail boat with an oversized fan in the rear facing the sail. When the TW fan is activated it creates its own wind to drive the sail. Can maintain a speed of about 30 mph (48 km or 26 knots).

Duration: Three hours. P.P.E. Cost: Initial creation cost in P.P.E. is 210, and requires the Wind Rush and Energy Field spells. 10 P.P.E. (or 20 I.S.P.) to activate. Market Cost: 30,000-40,000 credits for a small six-man boat, 50,000-75,000 for a mid-sized fishing boat (holds 20 people), and 125,000 for a larger vessel up to 100 feet (30.5 m) long.

TW Hover Yacht

A jet-propelled, Techno-Wizard designed hover-watercraft that utilizes magical wind, energy and propulsion. It can reach and maintain speeds of about 150 mph (240 km or 130 knots).

Duration: Two hours per 20 P.P.E. points. P.P.E. Cost: Initial creation cost in P.P.E. is 350, and requires the spells Levitation, Float in Air, Wind Rush and Energy Field. Costs 20 P.P.E. or 40 I.S.P. to activate. Market Cost: 100,000-160,000 credits for a small six-man yacht, 250,000-600,000 for a 30-60 footer that holds up to 20-40 people, and one million credits for any larger (9-20 m) up to 100 feet (30.5 m).

TW Underwater Ley Line Flyer

These are underwater versions of wing boards and are of a very similar design, with directional water flaps instead of air flaps. The board rides under the waves along ley lines at a speed of up to 45 mph (72 km or 39 knots); maximum depth 400 feet (122 m). Duration/Limitations: The TW vehicle can be used indefinitely as long as it remains on an underwater ley line; does not work away from ley lines. Range is the length of the line. P.P.E. Cost: 50 points to create it and requires the Swim as a Fish spell. One P.P.E. (or 2 I.S.P.) to activate. Market Cost: 5,000-20,000 credits for one and two-man versions depending on the design and quality.

TW Underwater Scooter

A conventional looking underwater scooter except for the strange crystals and doohickey toward the engine. Speed 60 mph (96 km or 52 knots); maximum depth 400 feet (122 m). Duration: Six hours. P.P.E. Cost: 250 points and needs the Swim as Fish, Wind Rush, and Energy Field spells. Costs 20 P.P.E. or 40 I.S.P. to activate. Market Cost: 50,000-75,000 credits for a one-man scooter, 75,000-100,000 for a two-man scooter. Optional Features: Add 25,000 credits for a conventional backup motor. Add 500,000 to add a protective energy field with a total of 50 M.D.C. (costs 10 P.P.E. or 20 I.S.P. to activate; duration one hour or until M.D.C. is depleted). Add another 200,000 for a Breathe Without Air bubble (duration one hour, costs 10 P.P.E. or 20 I.S.P. per hour, and adds 100 feet/30.5 m to maximum depth).

Gifts of the Lemurians

Noble allies from the sea and natural opponents of the undead for countless generations, the Lemurians have joined in the efforts to free the peoples of Mexico and Central America from the vampires that threaten them. In addition to unpredictable air strikes and sudden assaults on slave pens, Lemurians offer several magical weapons and tools useful for fighting the undead. Lemurian soldiers and warriors will be found carrying the following equipment, but many tons of valuable gear have also been provided to independent Vampire Hunters, village militias, Reid's Rangers and freedom fighters looking to liberate people from the Vampire Kingdoms.

Webnet Launcher

The Lemurian Webnet Launcher is a strange weapon, the product of some Gene-Mage's overactive imagination. As one might expect, the device is alive and made from a species of mutant spider bred specifically for the task. The launcher rapidly weaves aerodynamic webs that are fired at high speed out of the weapon. What the vampire does not expect is that the organic M.D.C. nature of the Lemurian Webnet is sticky and much stronger than man-made M.D.C. fibers, instantly entangling the vampire (or their henchmen and creatures such as wolves or Chupacabras) caught in the webbing.

Weight: 4.3 lbs (2 kg).

Range: 60 feet (18.3 m).

Damage: None; immobilized! Victims of a Webnet are barely able to move, have no combat bonuses available (unmodified rolls only), are reduced to two physical attacks per melee via biting and thrashing, though thrashing about only entangles and tightens the webbing. Full number of attacks via psionics/mind control or magic only. Vampires can chew and use Supernatural P.S. to tear free, but it takes 2D4 melee rounds for them to succeed! The only way to escape faster is to turn to mist and slide through the Webnet and reform outside of it. In either case, the vampire is likely to be out of commission for 2-8 melee rounds. Those who don't quickly think of turning to mist may be vulnerable to other attacks or being staked. Turning into a wolf or bat is useless; remains entangled and trapped in the Webnet.

Rate of Fire: Each shot counts as one melee action/attack.

Payload: Four nets per hour.

Cost on the Black Market: 75,000-150,000 credits.

Waterlight

A Lemurian version of the Globe of Daylight spell is the basis for the bulky but very powerful Waterlight. The spell is channeled through a lens of enchanted water, which, while making the light quite heavy, extends the Globe of Daylight spell's properties into a wide beam. A vampire caught in its magic glare must roll to save vs magic (15 or higher) or be blinded. The delivery system for Waterlight is usually a large, handheld lightgun or floodlight. Weight: Varies with size. The smallest is 15 lbs (6.7 kg).

Range: 800 feet (244 m), with a 6 foot (1.8 m) diameter/spotlight. Damage: No physical injury, but vampires must roll to save vs magic (15 or higher) or be blinded by it; -10 to strike, parry or dodge while caught in the light and for 1D4 melee rounds thereafter. Moreover, the vampire will want to move out of the light and away from those wielding it while blinded. A successful save means spots before its eyes and reduce the fiend's initiative and Perception Rolls by half.

Rate of Fire: Each use of the light counts as one melee attack.

Payload: 50 uses. Requires 25 P.P.E. to recharge.

Cost on the Black Market: 125,000 to 250,000 credits.

Well of Plenty

Another creation of the sea-dwelling Lemurians, the Well of Plenty has many applications. A heavy cauldron of enchanted stone, the Well must be lugged from one place to another, but can be invaluable in providing water in a desert environment, fighting fires, and fueling water weapons to fight vampires. A Well of Plenty requires a Lemurian or practitioner of magic to operate it, as the device requires P.P.E. to function and a human mind to provide direction. When the Well of Plenty is placed inside an existing well with water, or within the reservoir of a water pumping station, it magically keeps conventional water systems flowing and purified for consumption. When used as a mobile source of water in and of itself, it generates water at a rate of 5,000 gallons (18,927 liters) per hour, per 50 P.P.E. Once activated, hoses, water curtains and sprinkler systems can all be attached to the Well of Plenty to draw water. The Well of Plenty is a living construction of some sort that knows when too much water is being released and it will stop to avoid creating floods or unintended water damage even if sufficient P.P.E. is available.

Weight: 1,500 lbs (675 kg) empty.

M.D.C. of the Well: 250

Water Output: Generates 5,000 gallons of water (18,927 liters) for every 50 P.P.E. channeled into it.

Cost on the Black Market: 5 million credits.

Thornvine

A biological equivalent to wooden palisades or walls of spikes has been developed by Lemurian Gene-Mages. Starting out as shaggy bulbs with many roots, once planted, the thick, Biomancy M.D. vines grow rapidly (1D6 minutes), sealing off doorways or windows, and any opening less than 15 feet (4.6 m) in diameter. The magic vines can also be planted in a row, 15 feet (4.6 m) apart, to create a spike-covered wall. As living, sentient creatures, Thornvines know to part and make an opening for large,



Moonseer Hawk

Their name comes from their attunement to the moon and its energy. The Moonseer Hawk's sensory powers are enhanced at night, when the moon is out, and even more so when the moon is full.

The Moonseer Hawk is a Gene-Mage creation bred specially to assist Lemurian land forces and Vampire Hunters. A small flying creature similar to an owl, the Moonseer Hawk is neither a bird nor a bat, but a small, air-breathing fish genetically engineered from sharks and rays. Moonseer Hawks use their advanced senses to scout ahead and search for vampires like hunting falcons. Their sensitive eyes and senses can find a bloodsucker in any guise, even when hidden among a pack of wolves or bevy of bats. Moonseer Hawks are trained to attack vampires disguised as bats.

Moonseer – A Creature of Magic (Biomancy)

Also Known As: Moonbirds and Sharkowls.

Alignment: Considered Scrupulous or Unprincipled.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+3 (high animal intelligence), M.A. 2D6+3, M.E. 2D6+4, P.S. 1D4+5, P.P. 2D6+7, P.E. 1D6+9, P.B. 1D4+4, Spd 1D4 walking, but 2D6+80 flying and swimming (60 mph/96 km on average).

Size: Wingspan is 2 to 2.6 feet (0.6 to 0.8 m).

Weight: 1D4+2 lbs (1.3 to 2.7 kg).

Hit Points: 3D6+4 Hit Points during the day.

M.D.C. Night Transformation: 3D6+4 during the night, even underwater, double during a full moon.

Horror Factor: 8 to undead.

P.P.E.: 4D6+20. **I.S.P.:** M.E. attribute x2.

Average Life Span: 3D6+7 years.

Natural Abilities: Nightvision 11,000 feet (3,353 m), flight (maximum altitude 15,000 feet (4,572 m), swim (maximum depth 4 miles/6.4 km), can breathe water and air, becomes a M.D.C. creature during the night and when the moon is full, and normal Bio-Regeneration at a rate of 1D4 Hit Points/M.D.C. per hour, 1D4 H.P./M.D.C. per melee during a full moon, and double per melee round healing when on a ley line or nexus point, day or night.

See Vampires (special): A Moonseer Hawk's eyes can spot a vampire from up to a half mile (0.8 km) away at night, one mile (1.6 km) when the moon is out, and two miles (3.2 km) when the moon is full. When a bloodsucker is sighted, the Moonseer Hawk indicates this with head movements and vocalizations. If told to pursue, the animal follows from a safe distance before circling, like a hawk, above the vampire's location when the monster stops or goes indoors. When signaled or told to attack, it swoops down, screeching with raking claws and biting mouth. Moonseer Hawks are trained to attack vampires in bat form upon command, knocking them to the ground and forcing the monster to assume human or wolf form to better fight back. When perched on its master's shoulder, the animal becomes agitated whenever it senses a vampire within 1,000 feet (305 m) or it sees one at any distance. Like a trained pointer, the Moonseer Hawk's body becomes rigid, points in the direction of the undead and it makes a series of short, soft chirps until its master acknowledges its warning.

Sense Vampires/Undead (special): Moonseer Hawks are very sensitive to all undead, including mummies, zombies, Ghouls and others. The presence of the undead is felt within

living, mortal creatures, from dogs and deer to people, to enter/pass through its walls, but know to ensnare and enwrap vampires, other undead, animated dead and other evil supernatural beings. The vines are covered in fierce *wood thorns*, and a vampire attempting to tear through or climb over them will become firmly entangled and be unable to free itself without causing further harm. Even simply stepping within arm's reach of a Thornvine will trigger an immediate hostile effect as the offshoots lash out at the presence of the undead.

Primary Purpose: Defense.

Range/Reach: 5 feet (1.5 m).

Attacks per Melee Round by the Thornvine: Three.

M.D.C. of Vines: 1D6x10+10 M.D.C. per 15 foot (4.6 m) diameter of vines.

Damage: Each vine attack inflicts 1D6 points of damage directly to a vampire's Hit Points per melee round via its large wooden thorns, but also entangles and holds the monster. There is also a 01-20% chance that the vampire will become entangled for 1D4 melee rounds per each vine attack. 01-70% chance if the vampire tries to intentionally break through or tear apart the thick vines.

Duration: The vines last for 1D6+1 days before wilting and fading away. 1D6+1 weeks along a ley line or at a nexus point.

Cost on the Black Market: 10,000-40,000 credits per bulb.



a radius of 300 feet (91.4 m) during daylight, 1,000 feet (305 m) at night, and 2,000 feet (610 m) during a full moon and along ley lines. While the animal may not know the direction or number of the undead, the animal will alert its handler and will behave in a distressed manner until the undead move away or are dealt with.

Attacks per Melee: Two.

Damage: Bite does 1D6 S.D.C./Hit Points and talons do 2D4 S.D.C./Hit Points to vampires and mortals alike; +6 and +8 damage respectively during a full moon. Does not do M.D., even at night when the Moonseer Hawk is a Mega-Damage creature.

Bonuses: +1 on Perception Rolls to track and locate undead, +3 on initiative, +1 to strike, +3 to automatic dodge (the act of dodging does not use up an attack), +2 to roll with impact/fall, and +3 to save vs Horror Factor against most enemies, and is impervious to vampire mind control and the Horror Factor of all undead. All bonuses are double at night, triple during a full moon.

Magic: None, other than its natural abilities, senses and vision.

Psionics: I.S.P.: M.E. Attribute x2. Psi-Abilities: See Aura (6), See the Invisible (4) and Sense Time (2).

Value on the Black Market: 50,000-100,000 credits.

Moonseer Hound

The Moonseer Hound has been engineered to be a larger and more dangerous ground runner. It still possesses the shark-like teeth, but wings and talons have been shed in favor of four stout legs and claws.

The Moonseer Hound possesses the same detection capabilities as its flying cousin, but can also be unleashed and used like a bloodhound to track and attack undead prey, including Chupacabras. They are also excellent for chasing down and dispersing packs of Wild Vampires and watching the back of Vampire Hunt-

ers engaged in combat, attacking undead who close in for the kill. Moonseer Hounds are intelligent, loyal and extremely hostile towards any undead, vampire or otherwise. They also have a partial covering of light M.D. scales that makes them much more resilient against supernatural predators.

Also Known As: Vampire Bloodhounds.

Alignment: Considered Scrupulous or Unprincipled.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+5 (high animal intelligence), M.A. 2D6+5, M.E. 2D6+7, P.S. 2D6+9, P.P. 2D6+7, P.E. 2D6+9, P.B. 1D6+5, Spd 2D4+40 (30 mph/48 km on average) running, half that swimming.

Size: 4 feet (1.2 m) long from snout to rump; 2.5 feet (0.7 m) tall at the shoulder.

Weight: 90-120 lbs (41 to 54 kg).

M.D.C.: 1D6x10 M.D.C. during the day, 1D6x10+50 M.D.C. at night, and 1D6x10+90 M.D.C. when the moon is full.

Horror Factor: 13 to all undead.

P.P.E.: 5D6+25. **I.S.P.:** M.E. Attribute x2.

Average Life Span: 5D6+11 years.

Natural Abilities: Same as the Moonseer Hawk with the following differences. No flight capabilities, is an M.D.C. creature during the day, but has more M.D.C. at night and when the moon is full, and normal Bio-Regeneration of 1D4 M.D.C. per hour, but Bio-Regenerates at a rate of 1D6 M.D.C. per melee when the moon is full and when on ley lines or nexus points, day or night.

Attacks per Melee: Three.

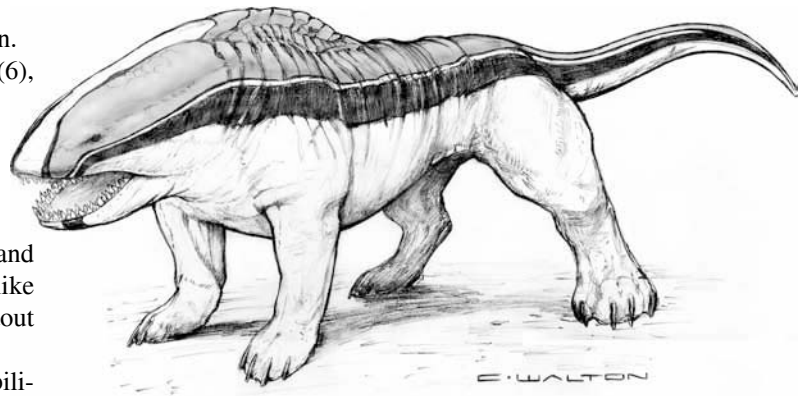
Damage: Bite does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Points and claws do 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Points to vampires and mortals alike; +8 and +6 damage respectively during a full moon. Does not do M.D. even at night.

Bonuses: +1 on Perception Rolls to track and locate undead, +1 on initiative, +2 to strike, +2 to automatic dodge (the act of dodging does not use up an attack), +2 to pull punch/bite/claw attack, +1 to roll with impact, +3 to save vs Horror Factor against most enemies, and impervious to vampire mind control and the Horror Factor of all undead. All bonuses are double at night, triple during a full moon.

Magic: None, other than its natural abilities, senses and vision.

Psionics: I.S.P.: M.E. Attribute x2. Psi-Abilities: Empathy (4), See Aura (6), See the Invisible (4) and Sense Time (2).

Value on the Black Market: 150,000-250,000 credits.





Desert Travel & Survival

By Kevin Siembieda and Matthew Clements

Sonoran Desert Notes: The Sonoran Desert covers southeastern California, southwestern Arizona and northern Mexico, from the western Rockies to the Baja Peninsula. It is sandy with lots of cacti, including the tall *Saguaro cacti* that are typically associated with deserts in people's minds. There are forests up in the mountains, with some of the lowest temperatures anywhere in the desert. It is cool in the mountains, and some are even snow-covered. The Sonoran gets about 10 inches (25.4 cm) of rain per year, which is a good deal for a desert, and leads to numerous flash floods and large amounts of water erosion. Sandstorms and *dust devils* (mini-tornadoes) are a relatively common occurrence, especially after periods of particularly high temperatures. *Nodosaur*s, camels and buzzards are often the only large animals encountered deep within the desert. As one might expect, there are spiders, scorpions, snakes, lizards and rodents as well.

Chihuahuan Desert Notes: The Chihuahuan Desert occupies northern central Mexico between the *Sierra Madre Occidental* and the *Sierra Madre Oriental mountain ranges*. **Ciudad Juarez** and **El Paso** are both well within the Chihuahuan Desert, but near the northern end of it, although parts of the desert stretch further north, almost to Albuquerque, New Mexico. Even though it is bordered by the two Sierra Madre ranges, it has several smaller internal mountain ranges separated by valleys. The Chihuahuan is mostly shrub desert, with lots of Creosote bushes and some Tarbush. Small to medium-sized cacti are common, as are yucca plants. Some Barrel cacti are common, which contain drinkable liquid best obtained by mashing or chewing – but not eating – the pulp. The liquid in a similar, red-flowered variety contains oxalic acid, which causes nausea and an inability to walk for up to 1D4 hours.

Desert Climates

With the possible exception of the vampires, the most dangerous thing about the Mexican wilderness is the environment itself. With two distinct deserts, two desolate mountain ranges, and mostly prairie in between, *northern Mexico* is hot, dry, and unforgiving.

Water Consumption

If you are going to survive in the desert, you're going to need water, and lots of it. Most humans can go for weeks without food if they have to, but can only last three or four days, maximum, without water. And that's just sitting still. Somebody who is particularly active – e.g., running, walking, fighting, or performing heavy manual labor – can dehydrate himself beyond the point of no return within a day. Heat, wind and lack of shade also contribute to the problem of dehydration in a desert environment.

In the desert, having adequate water supplies is critical to all adventurers. For game purposes, human-sized people must consume a minimum of two quarts (1.9 liters) of water per day or become dehydrated, double if involved in strenuous activity like combat, running or hard labor.

Penalties for dehydration: Dehydrated characters have all combat bonuses and number of attacks per melee *reduced by half*. Sustained dehydration (for more than 24 hours in desert conditions) results in the character losing all of his S.D.C. and 25% of his total Hit Points.

Reduce Hit Points by an additional 20% for each subsequent 24 hour period without at least one quart (0.95 liters) of water. After 72 hours, characters suffering dehydration will have lost 65% of their total Hit Points, plus speed will be reduced by 90%, attacks/actions per melee round are reduced to one per round, and the characters have no initiative and *no* combat bonuses of any kind! After 96 hours, Hit Points are down by 85% and if the dehydrated characters do not each get at least two quarts (1.9 liters) of water within the next 1D6 hours, they lapse into a coma. After that, unless they receive at least two quarts of water in the next 24 hours, Hit Points drop to 3D6 points below zero and they die.

These requirements are just for characters doing normal activity, such as walking, talking, exploring, etc. If the individuals spend more than four hours of the day performing rigorous activity such as fighting, running, heavy manual labor, etc., then their water requirements for that day will be *doubled*. Additional exertion requires an equivalent amount of water.

Recovery from dehydration for humans and most D-Bees: The characters must drink two extra quarts of water for each day they have gone without water. They cannot drink all that extra water at once, though. They need to drink it over the course of the next 48 hours. With rest and proper hydration, a full recovery is made at roughly the same rate as the dehydration occurred. Meaning if a character suffered dehydration for three days, complete Hit Points, speed, bonuses and abilities are restored at the end of three days. It basically reverses the dehydration process.

Size Matters:

Large Humanoids: Water requirements for large (8-15 feet/2.4 to 4.6 m tall) humanoids are double those of normal-sized humanoids. So, your average large humanoid needs to drink four quarts (one gallon/3.8 liters) of water per day in desert conditions. And those over 15 feet (4.6 m) tall will require quadruple the human

amount (i.e. two gallons/7.6 liters). Quadruple the requirement if the being is 16-20 feet (4.9 to 6.1 m), and increase by 10x if the being is 21-30 feet tall (6.4 to 9.1 m). **Note:** These rules are pretty much true for horses and other animals not adapted to the desert. By comparison, camels can go 30 days without water.

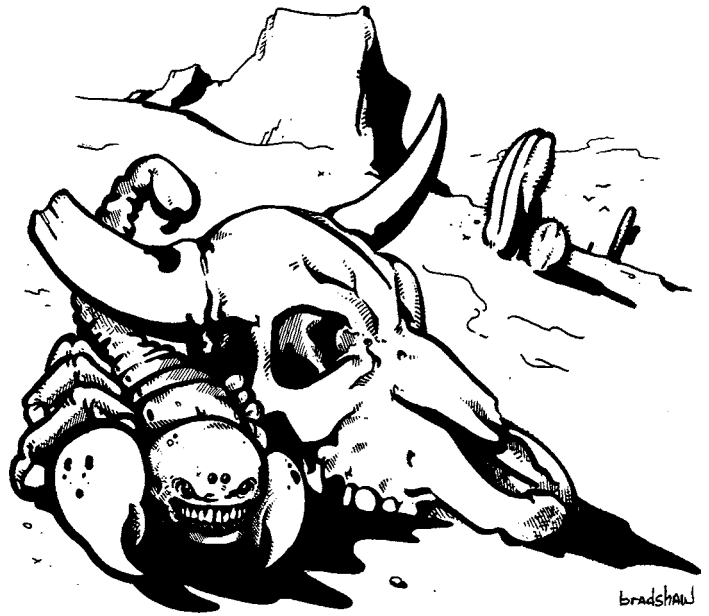
Small Humanoids: Beings smaller than three feet (0.9 m) tall need only half the amount of water per day that humans require. That means they only need to drink one quart (0.95 liters) of water per day while in the desert.

Desert Creatures: Beings and animals “native” or accustomed to desert conditions also require only half the normal amount of water that “outsiders” not accustomed to the environment require. This is because these creatures have, over time, acclimated to the extreme heat and dryness of the region, and their bodies naturally conserve water much more efficiently than humans and most D-Bees.

Creatures of Magic: Most M.D.C. creatures of magic such as dragons, Faerie Folk, werebeasts, and others, require one third the amount of water as humans, per size, can survive twice as long without water (8 days before feeling any effects from dehydration), and suffer one quarter the penalties and lose only 20% of their M.D.C. per every 8 days. Moreover, they never lose more than half their attacks, but can lose all bonuses and can die. Moreover, many creatures of magic can use magic and natural abilities to escape a desert before they begin to suffer serious damage and penalties. Note that creatures of magic suffering from dehydration can only Bio-Regenerate up to their current, reduced M.D.C. amount (or Hit Points as the case may be), not their normal, full amount. Those with vulnerabilities to heat suffer the effects of dehydration as fast as a human. Shape-changers, like dragons, can adjust their shape and size to reduce their requirements for water.

Supernatural M.D.C. Beings: Demons, Demigods, Godlings and other supernatural beings have a completely different physiology. Supernatural beings with physical bodies can survive without penalty or damage for one week per P.E. attribute point without water or food. Only after that time do they start to suffer penalties from dehydration, and even then its effects are minimal. After dehydration starts to kick in: Reduce M.D.C./Hit Points by 10%, -1 melee attack and -1 to all bonuses per every month without water until they are all reduced by half. This reduced M.D.C., attacks and bonuses remain in place until the monster can rehydrate. While the supernatural being may suffer and feel weak, its stats never drop below half. As with creatures of magic, supernatural beings suffering from dehydration can only Bio-Regenerate up to their current, reduced M.D.C. amount (or Hit Points as the case may be), not their normal, full amount. Those with vulnerabilities to heat suffer the effects of dehydration the same as creatures of magic, above.

Note: Supernatural beings resistant or impervious to heat/fire can survive without water and in extreme heat indefinitely without penalty or harm. Vampires don’t need water. They get their sustenance from blood. Spirits, Entities and similar ethereal beings, as well as Elementals and deities, do not require food or water and do not suffer any penalties or damage from desert conditions or other environments hostile to mortals. Likewise, animated dead, mummies and zombies, all of which are already dead and given movement via magic, do not suffer from desert conditions or lack of water. They don’t need food or water.



Finding Water Where There Appears to be None

Compounding the need for water is the fact that it is scarce in a desert environment. Travelers can go for days over the sandy, parched, dusty earth and rock without seeing so much as a puddle or spring. Tiny amounts of water might condense on one’s gear overnight, but it is an insufficient amount to live on; scarcely more than a sip. Furthermore, even if one is laden with full canteens, he or she probably won’t get much farther than a week to ten days in the open desert on that alone. So, how does one survive in the middle of the Mexican deserts? Many don’t. Those who do either rely on magic, the drinking of blood (often humanoid blood) or collecting juice from cacti.

Varieties of cactus store what little rainwater falls in the desert in order to survive. The juice contained within some types of cactus (but not all) is safe to be consumed by humans and D-Bees if it can be found and harvested. That usually involves cutting open the cactus and mashing or chewing the pulp found inside (but not *eating* it – that causes nausea and stomach cramps; reduce attacks per melee by two, and combat bonuses by one point for 1D4 hours). Many types have fruit, but while some fruit can be eaten safely, others are not safe to eat (same penalties as eating the cactus). Boiling or cooking the pulp is often necessary to render the juice safe to drink, and the same goes for some fruit. Having a skill like Wilderness Survival, Identify Plants & Fruit, or Botany is critical for finding safe sources of water in the deserts of Mexico, and especially in the old American Southwest, where poisonous varieties of cactus are more common (quadruple the penalties above, and triple the duration).

Cactus & Agave. Cacti are the most common plants in the deserts of Mexico. They provide a source of water where none can be found, but can be poisonous, are always covered in spines, and often must be treated or prepared before their juice or flesh can be consumed. Nopales are sections of prickly pear cacti that are popular in many Mexican dishes, and are some of the only cacti that are farmed. Barrel cactus and Cardón cactus are also common, as is the giant Saguaro, signature of Mexico and the American Southwest.

Agave, particularly blue agave, is a tough desert plant that is used to make tequila. It also grows throughout the deserts of Mexico and can be found in abundance in areas that used to be home to agave plantations.

Other sources of water in the desert. Other plant life such as scrub (short bushes, vines and weeds), and drought-resistant desert grass offer no means of extracting water or nourishment to humans. Even horses and animals that can eat such plants will only receive a minimal and insufficient amount of water from them.

The occasional and rare **oasis** of grass, flowering plants, bushes and/or small cluster of short, often scraggly trees offers (comparatively) cool shade and soft grass, but rarely any apparent source of water; only one in ten will have a small pond or spring on the surface, or a well made by nomads or Native Americans. What it does offer is a variety of game, mainly birds, lizards, rodents, snakes and insects, that are likely to live or hunt in this patch of green. If the time of year is right, and your luck holds out, there may be a small amount of fruit (namely raspberry and strawberry types). However, what such an oasis of life represents is a source of water, typically an underground stream. Characters with the Dowsing skill (+5%) and those with the Wilderness Survival skill (+15%) may be able to dig into the ground and get water to puddle up. While this water will be brown and gritty with dirt (and thus not harmful to vampires until purified), it will taste like nectar to those dying of thirst. **Note:** An oasis can be as small as 10 feet (3 m) in diameter and little more than a watering hole and a patch of grass, or as large as 1,000 feet (305 m) diameter, but most are 1D6x100 feet (30.5 to 183 m) in diameter.

Magic is one's only other hope for acquiring water in parched desert regions. The ability to Summon Rain, create a Circle of Rain, create water or ice, turn other liquids to water (like wine and other alcohol, which cause dehydration, so drinking them hurts rather than helps), or the ability to summon an Air or Water Elemental who can find or create such things, can mean the difference between life and death. Consequently, the service of *Water Warlocks* or *Elemental Fusionists* is highly valued, and to a lesser degree, Air Warlocks and other mages. In fact, some of the less scrupulous Warlocks and Elemental Fusionists wander the land and visit and even camp out at some of the oasis areas offering to provide water (and lots of it) for trade of goods, guns, ammo, food, supplies or Universal Credits (1D6x100 credits for 50 gallons/189 liters of water is a common price).

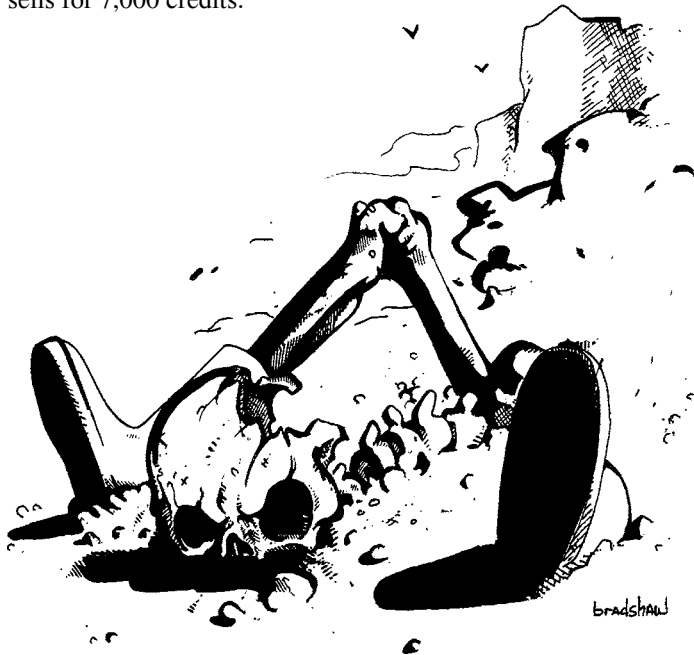
Note: As long as there is a spark of life, the Restoration spell will instantly heal and restore victims of dehydration. However, Healing Touch, magic potions of healing, and similar healing magic and psionics have only the most minimal effect on people suffering from dehydration – one Hit Point per spell, potion or touch! Enough, perhaps, to survive an extra day provided one has the benefit of eight or ten such supernatural healings. Of course, being made impervious to heat or being resistant to thirst and exhaustion are also helpful in delaying the inevitable (doubles the period a mortal can go without water), but even these characters ultimately still suffer from the cumulative effects of dehydration and heat exhaustion.

Ley Lines. Ley lines are not only places of magic, but places of life and water. See **Following Ley Lines** later in this section for full details, but the basics are this. Water collects along ley lines, in part, from Ley Line Storms, and even an active Ley Line Storm can produce rainwater, snow and ice. There is also a bit

more vegetation along ley lines, which means more oases, fruit-bearing plants and game animals present along ley lines.

Solar Stills. An extremely simple technological means of procuring water is to construct a solar still. Solar stills can be purpose-built devices made of plastic and metal, but are most often put together out of necessity and with whatever materials are on hand. The first step for making a solar still in the field is to dig a hole and place a bucket in the center. The pit is then either lined with pieces of chopped up cactus or filled with buckets of seawater, depending upon what is available. A tarp (sometimes transparent) is stretched over the pit, with a stone or other weight placed at the center. As water evaporates from the cactus or seawater, it collects on the underside of the tarp and runs down to the weighted center. There, it drips into the central bucket which gradually fills with clean, drinkable freshwater. If seawater is used, natural sea salt will be left behind as a useful byproduct.

Water Purifiers and Purification Tablets. Just because a water source is found does not mean the water is drinkable. Even water that seems clean may carry dangerous parasites and bacteria. For water of this kind, like that found in a stream or well, purification tablets are all that is necessary to render it safe and drinkable. For water loaded with sand, sediment or plant matter, some kind of filter is needed. Cloth or fine mesh usually does the job, but filter straws, water purifiers and other devices are a more high-tech alternative. Northern Gun manufactures filter straws that sell for as little as ten credits each, capable of filtering 35 gallons (132 liters) before they become clogged and degraded. The NG industrial water purifier is a small pump with a filtration system that can be powered by battery, connected to a vehicle or use a small solar panel setup. This larger system can filter 10,000 gallons (37,854 liters) before its filters need to be replaced, and sells for 7,000 credits.



Heat Exhaustion

More than one “civilized” adventurer has perished from overexertion and strength-sapping heat. Fools who attempt a forced march in full armor during the day quickly boil in their own sweat under the hot sun. Included here are some guidelines for what precautions player characters will have to take to keep from accidentally cooking themselves to death.

The Mexican deserts are hot, dry, and, except for the occasional boulder, cactus or prickly shrub, there is no shade. In the late spring and summer, the Chihuahuan Desert around Juarez and El Paso ranges from 95-104 degrees Fahrenheit (35-40 Celsius) during the day. The heat of the day tends to increase one's need for water, as even sitting still can cause you to sweat to the point of dehydration.

The heat of the desert makes it seem like you are traveling in a blast furnace. Just wearing clothing and a light load can become a difficult task or at least an annoyance. Normal, non-strenuous activity, such as walking or light manual labor, can only be continued for half an hour per point of Physical Endurance (P.E.) above 8. Thus, a character with a P.E. of 14 can walk or perform light work for three hours at a time before suffering from heat exhaustion or needing to rest and rehydrate.

Characters performing strenuous activity, such as a forced march, combat or heavy lifting/work (this includes wearing any non-environmental suit of armor or equipment weighing more than 50 pounds/22.5 kg) can only go on for 15 minutes per point of P.E. attribute above 8. So, the same character with a P.E. of 14 can only run, fight or perform otherwise strenuous activity for about an hour and a half at a time before needing to stop, rest and drink more water.

Extremely strenuous activities, such as heavy or prolonged fighting or running at a full-tilt sprint, can only be done for one minute per P.E. point.

Once the character has gone for such a period of continued activity, he will need to rest. The only way to avoid tiring out quickly is to take frequent rest stops and drink plenty of non-alcoholic fluids. Water and fruit juices are ideal. If a person rests for ten minutes every hour and drinks plenty of fluids, he can remain active for 8-10 hours before needing to stop and rest for at least 2-4 hours. Pushing himself will eventually cause the character to drop to the ground, physically exhausted (reduce speed, attacks per melee, skill performance and combat bonuses by half). **Note:** Only those who have lived in the desert all their lives are better acclimated to the environment and can remain active for twice as long with half the rest time.

Full Environmental Armor

While other heavy armor can be unbearable in the desert, Full Environmental Armor can be a blessing. At least, to a point. Such high-tech armor is designed to regulate the internal temperature to keep its wearer comfortable, and though desert conditions will stress it near its limits, a well maintained suit of such armor should be able to keep the heat within tolerable levels. The catch is, such armor needs to be maintained. That means frequent examination and cleaning (sand and dust gets *everywhere*), and after a while, replacement or recharging of power supplies. After all, if you're basically wearing an air conditioner on your back, it is going to be using a lot of power trying to keep you cool in conditions like these.

Extreme conditions such as those found in the Mexican deserts can seriously test the reliability of high-tech equipment, and environmental armor is no exception. While a brand new suit of Northern Gun or Coalition Dead Boy armor will work without a hitch for months, that suit you bought from a shady dealer in Juarez (or stripped from a body found along the road) might not be in such great shape. Just because it still has most of its M.D.C.

does not necessarily mean the electronics have held up, or the cooling system has been maintained properly. In fact, used and damaged environmental armor typically runs 4-16 degrees Fahrenheit (2-9 C) warmer than the wearer would like. So if normal would be 69 degrees Fahrenheit the best used or damaged environmental armor might be able to do is 73-84 degrees Fahrenheit, which is too hot and will lead to dehydration and exhaustion at about half the rate previously described. Just something to think about before you go wandering off into the wilderness, hundreds of miles from the nearest Operator.

Traveling over Desert Terrain

The Spd attribute of humanoid characters and animals typically measures how fast they can run at full speed for a short distance. Running full-tilt like this is very tiring and can only be performed for a few minutes (generally, one minute for every point of P.E. unless otherwise noted). When walking or riding an animal for long distances, characters will move at much slower speeds. Moreover, the type of terrain they travel over also has a serious impact on how far and how fast they can go. Walking or riding on a flat, smooth surface like a paved road or grassy plain is one thing. Walking or riding on uneven, unstable, or vegetation-covered terrain is something else entirely.

The Mexican wilderness has a widely varied terrain, full of hills, mountains, valleys, rocks and scrub, so going anywhere in this region will probably take longer than the characters are used to or anticipate. Given the extra amounts of water they must carry to drink while traveling in the desert, not to mention vampires and other threats, any extra time spent out in the wild puts the characters at added risk. G.M.s should try to keep this in mind when the player character are traveling distances greater than 40 miles (64 km) through the Mexican wilderness. This isn't like a long stroll in the park. This is traveling through a hostile environment, and you should consider making it so that any sensible player will think twice before attempting a long overland journey across the Vampire Lands.

The following are some guidelines for travel rates and restrictions for each of the main terrain types of Mexico.

Rocky Coastline

Traveling on foot: The expanses of cracked, uneven, and slippery rock hinder most overland travel along rocky coasts. The fastest rate of travel here is about four miles (6.4 km) an hour. Traveling at a leisurely pace will cover one and a half miles (2.4 km) per hour.

Speed Modifiers: Maximum speed is reduced by 15% to 25% for most humanoids, 40% for humanoids under four feet (1.2 m) tall, and 10% for giants over 15 feet (4.6 m) tall.

Traveling on horseback: The top speed here is about 20 miles (32 km) per hour at full gallop, but there is a 30% chance of stumbling, throwing a shoe or other injury to the animal at this speed. 15 miles (24 km) an hour is a brisk but safe pace. A leisurely pace would be only 10 miles (16 km) an hour, or slower.

Speed Modifiers: Maximum speed is reduced by 25% for horses and most other riding animals.

Traveling on a dinosaur, camel, giant insect or other desert animal: These creatures are better suited for the dry desert regions than the wetter, grassy coastal areas. The rates and re-

strictions of travel for desert animals in this area are the same as for hoofed animals. The Speed Modifiers are also the same. The same applies for *werebeasts*.

Traveling using robots and power armor: Small robots and power armor suits, including *robot horses*, will have their walking speed reduced by 5%. Large robots (20 feet/6 m and taller) suffer no speed penalties.

Traveling on wheeled or tracked vehicles: Wheeled and tracked vehicles suffer a -10% speed penalty.

Traveling on hover vehicles: No movement penalties, see hover vehicle section below.

Stony Desert

Traveling on foot: This terrain is made difficult by the blanket of small to medium-sized stones covering the surface everywhere. This gravel covering makes it difficult to get good traction or to maintain one's balance. Characters can maintain a maximum walking speed of 6 miles (9.6 km) per hour, but this is a dangerous pace. For each hour of travel at this speed, characters have a chance of hurting themselves. *Roll percentile dice:* 01-33% No problem, keep on trekking. 34-66% Minor slip and fall (1D4 damage). 67-00% Slips and twists or sprains their ankle (2D4 damage and reduce speed by 20% for the next 1D4+1 days!). A safe pace on this loose and uneven surface is three miles (4.8 km) per hour, or one or two miles (1.6 to 3.2 km) at a leisurely pace and with no risk of stumbling and hurting oneself.

Speed Modifiers: Maximum speed is reduced by 20-30% for most humanoids, 40-50% for humanoids under four feet (1.2 m) tall, and 10-20% for giants over 15 feet (4.6 m) tall.

Traveling on horseback: The stony ground cover of this land makes it especially hazardous for hoofed or long-legged animals of any kind. Riding at a full gallop on such terrain is impossible, since the animal will certainly fall and break a leg or get seriously injured/killed after only 1D6 minutes of moving at full speed. Maximum rate of sustained travel is 12 miles (19.2 km) per hour, but this is almost certain (75%) to result in the animal stumbling, falling and coming up lame, and/or throwing the rider after an hour of riding at such a pace. The fastest safe pace is 6 miles (9.6 km) an hour.

Speed Modifiers: Maximum speed is reduced by 50-70% for most horses and riding animals. **Note:** Same for *werebeasts*.

Traveling on a dinosaur, camel, giant insect or other desert animal: Most desert animals do not have the trouble navigating this land that horses tend to have. Desert animals can run at 12 miles (19.2 km) per hour, and only have a 01-10% chance of falling or hurting themselves for each hour of travel. The fastest speed without fear of stumbling is 9 miles (14.4 km) per hour. A leisurely pace would be 5 miles (8 km) per hour. The same applies for *werebeasts*.

Speed Modifiers: Maximum speed is reduced by 20% for most desert animals.

Traveling using robots and power armor: Small robots and power armor suits, including *robot horses*, will have their walking speed reduced by 20%. Large robots (20 feet/6 m and taller) have their speed reduced by 10%.

Traveling on wheeled or tracked vehicles: Wheeled and tracked vehicles suffer a -15% speed penalty.

Traveling on hover vehicles: No movement penalties, see hover vehicle section below.

Sandy Desert

Traveling on foot: The deep, relatively soft sand of this area makes it difficult for travelers to get any sort of traction; this is especially true of hoofed animals. The maximum walking speed for humanoids is 3-5 miles (4.8 km) an hour at a brisk pace, with a 5-10 minute rest necessary every hour. Travelers can cover two miles (3.2 km) per hour at a more leisurely pace, and only have to stop for a 5-10 minute rest break every four hours.

Speed Modifiers: Maximum running speed is reduced by 30% for most humanoids, 50% for humanoids under four feet (1.2 m) tall, and 15% for giants over 15 feet (4.6 to 8 m) feet tall.

Traveling on horseback: Approximately 24 miles (38.4 km) an hour at full gallop but there's a 01-15% chance of the horse stumbling or falling without injuring itself (loses initiative, 1D4 melee actions getting up, and must start running again, plus the animal is likely to throw its rider when falling). 18 miles (28.8 km) an hour at a brisk but reasonable pace; 10 miles (16 km) an hour at a leisurely pace.

Speed Modifiers: Maximum speed is reduced by 20% for most horses, mules and other hoofed riding animals.

Traveling on a dinosaur, camel, giant insect or other desert animal: 36 miles (57.6 km) an hour at full run, but this pace is extremely punishing for the animals, and it will kill them after an hour. A brisk but reasonable pace is 24 miles (38.4 km) an hour. A leisurely pace is 16 (25.6 km) miles and hour. The same applies for *werebeasts*.

Speed Modifiers: None. These creatures are truly in their element here in the Sandy Desert.

Traveling using robots and power armor: Small robots and power armor suits, including *robot horses*, will have their walking speed reduced by 20%. Large robots (20 feet/6 m and taller) suffer a reduced overall speed of -15%.

Traveling on wheeled or tracked vehicles: Wheeled and tracked vehicles suffer a -10% speed penalty.

Traveling on hover vehicles: No movement penalties, see hover vehicle section below.



Rocky Desert & the Sierra Madre Mountains

Traveling on foot: The rate of travel for this area is very slow in the Rocky Desert, because of the thick fields of sharp, jagged, uneven rocks covering the ground, and broken by giant boulders, buttes and rocky outcroppings. Shallow canyons, buttes and narrow, winding passageways, hills, cliffs and ledges are commonplace as one nears the *Sierra Madre Mountains*. The Sierra Madres hug Mexico's coastlines, with the Sierra Madre Oriental

along the Gulf of Mexico and the Sierra Madre Occidental along the Pacific coast. Navigating the barren mountains is even more treacherous. Occasionally, there is a spot where moving about is both easy and safe, but for the most part, travelers are forced to balance on the edges of sharp stones or wedge their feet in uncomfortably narrow crevices just to get a foothold, much less move around quickly and comfortably. Furthermore, there are places where pillars of granite rise up from the ground to create hiding places for predatory animals, Chupacabras and bandits waiting in ambush. Maximum rate of travel here is just one or two miles (1.6 to 3.2 km) per hour, with rests required every two hours or so. At a more leisurely pace, characters might cover less than a mile per hour.

Speed Modifiers: Maximum speed is reduced by 50-60% for most humanoids, 60-80% for humanoids under four feet (1.2 m) tall, and 30-50% for giants over 15 feet (4.6 m) tall.

Traveling on horseback: Horses and other such riding animals will prefer to avoid the Rocky Desert and Sierra Madre Mountains due to the extremely unstable, rocky, and/or treacherous terrain. Riding through this area is slow and exhausting for long-legged animals. 5-7 miles (8 to 11.2 km) per hour is astounding, but 1-3 miles (1.6 to 4.8 km) an hour is much more realistic. Unless traveling a worn, relatively clear path (roughly equal to traveling a Stony Desert), these are dangerous places for an animal so large and heavy, with a 01-50% chance of the horse getting stuck in a narrow rocky passageway, slipping and falling off a precipice, or slipping on the steep, rocky ground and breaking a leg. The chance for such a calamity is 01-20% roll for every half hour of travel. 01-50% chance every 10 minutes if a fast pace is forced. Sometimes the rider must get off his mount and lead it by the reins, walking the animal behind him.

Speed Modifiers: Maximum speed is reduced by 75% for most horses and riding animals. **Note:** Some areas of the Rocky Desert and Sierra Madres are too steep, narrow or treacherous for riding animals.

Traveling on a dinosaur, camel, giant insect or other desert animal: Dinosaurs, giant insects and other desert-acclimated creatures all suffer fewer penalties while moving through the mountains. Nodosaur, particularly Silvisaurus, are used to harsh and uneven terrain. Their tough feet and hides make them natural desert vehicles. Camels suffer a -60% speed reduction, giant insects -30%, dinosaurs -50%, Silvisaurus and *werebeasts* only -25%.

Traveling using robots and power armor: Small robots and power armor suits, including *robot horses*, will have their walking speed reduced by 40%. Large robots (20 feet/6 m and taller) have their speed reduced by 30%.

Traveling on wheeled or tracked vehicles: Wheeled and tracked vehicles suffer a -50% speed penalty and may not be able to climb certain inclines or squeeze through trails and tight passages.

Traveling on hover vehicles: Hover vehicles must remain at least 30 feet (9 m) above the surface or be forced to reduce their speed by 40% to compensate for boulders and steep inclines.

Some Notes Concerning Riding Animals and Alternative Vehicles

Horses. The kind of food fed to a horse also makes a difference in the rate of travel. Contrary to what many gamers may think, a horse is *not* a lawn mower with legs. A horse can eat grass, weeds and other vegetation, but it takes a much longer time

for it to digest such foods and therefore, the horse can not function at full capacity. A horse on a varied diet of oats, grass and hay will move 10% slower. A horse on a steady diet of grass and/or hay will run a full 25% slower because such food just is not as nutritional or filling. It would be like you or me living just on bread and water; it would keep us alive, but with very little energy. On the other hand, a diet of oats, barley and other grains, though more expensive, will help keep the animal healthy and operating at top efficiency. Grooming and proper watering are also important for the horse or pony's well-being.

Nodosaur are arguably the ultimate desert pack animal. Although sometimes stubborn, the various species of Nodosaur's ability to work tirelessly for long hours with little to no food or water makes them ideal for the rigorous demands of the Mexican interior. Nodosaur will eat almost anything, from scrubby grasses to dry roots to garbage. They can go for long periods without food or water, are able to drink vast amounts when the opportunity arises, and are virtually immune to sandstorms and harsh weather.

Silonar and other raptors are the only commonly used carnivorous steeds in the Mexican desert, but their all-meat diet makes them problematic. Whereas other animals might be able to graze, raptors must eat at least one quarter their body weight in meat every 3-5 days. In the wild, Silonar often prey on young Nodosaur, camels, lizards, snakes, rabbits, rodents and even horses, livestock and lone humanoids. As a riding animal, a raptor's keeper must keep his animal well-fed. Failure to do so will not only decrease the animal's performance (it will run 25% slower and be at -3 to strike, parry and dodge until it is fully fed). Worse, it makes them irritable, aggressive and sometimes, uncontrollable.

After going three days without food, a raptor or Silonar's rider will receive a -10% modifier, and will lose all bonuses to his Horsemanship: Exotic abilities as they pertain to the animal at hand. For each subsequent day the animal goes hungry, an additional -10% modifier applies to the rider's Horsemanship: Exotic skill. After seven days of fasting, these types of steeds become extremely unpredictable and uncontrollable, with a 01-75% chance of breaking free to seek out any kind of food, sometimes starting with its own rider! For each subsequent day beyond this point, the raptor is likely to go into a "hunger frenzy." The likelihood of a frenzy increases 10% with each passing day. After 14-17 days of hunger, the animal is likely to attack just about anything, including an armed camp, grabbing either the closest or most vulnerable looking victim.

Giant Insects. Giant bugs like *Fury Beetles* are well suited to harsh deserts, sand dunes and rocky mountains. Flying insects can avoid the terrain below them just like hover vehicles or aircraft, but virtually any bug's legs and feet can traverse desert terrain without difficulty. Giant insects suffer no movement penalties on sand dunes and beaches, and only suffer a -30% movement penalty on craggy mountains.

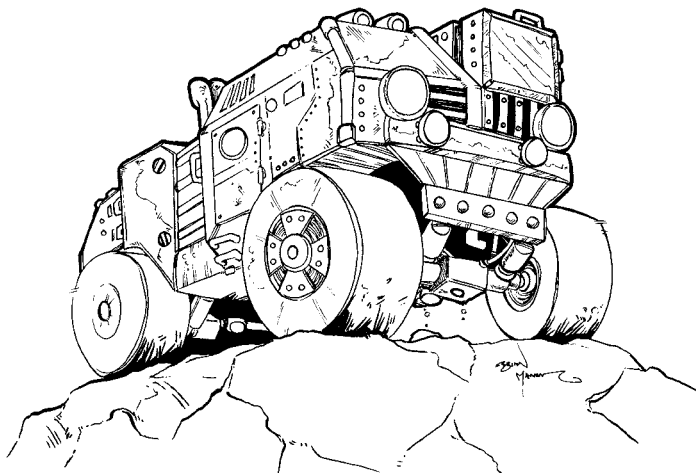
Travel by Wagon or Coach

Wagons and coaches are generally limited to smooth, flat terrain, such as grasslands, lowlands, trails and roads. Speed is limited by the weight and number of horses/animals drawing the vehicle. As a rule of thumb, it is safe to assume that a single animal pulling a wagon will travel 50-80% slower than when carrying a single rider on its back. A team of animals pulling the same

wagon share the weight and can move faster, but will still be 10-30% slower than when traveling by horseback. Furthermore, the other members of the team can only go as fast as the slowest horse, as well as being restrained by the weight of their load. Pulling a wagon at full speed may also cause the wagon to tip over and break (01-42% chance).

Certain environments in Mexico are impassable to wagons and coaches. The wagon simply cannot function in such an environment and will seriously break or get stuck within 1D4 minutes of trying. The dried-out riverbeds that crisscross the Mexican interior actually provide the perfect terrain for wagons and coaches, and are very similar in effect to paved roads. However, taking a wagon or coach into a river channel is to flirt with death, since a flash flood may come roaring down the channel during times of rain. Likewise, riding along cracked and dry earth or Stony Desert is doable, but constant bouncing and wobbling makes the ride incredibly uncomfortable. In addition, the odds of breaking a wheel, getting stuck or having an animal come up lame are greatly increased. The usual limits apply when traversing such inhospitable terrain.

Note: In most cases, riding across dry, blistered earth will create a cloud of dust, even when traveling at relatively slow speeds. Anything more than a walking pace will raise dust clouds, and running even at half speed will send them billowing up into the air and visible for at least two miles (3.2 km).



Wheeled Vehicles: Normal cars, trucks and motorcycles all handle relatively flat desert just fine. For Rocky Desert, mountains, ATVs, jeeps and dirt bikes are perfectly acceptable choices, but urban vehicles that require roads will be unable to travel such trails without getting stuck or breaking down within 2D6 minutes of travel. Dust, dunes and Sandy Deserts are the real problem, as dust and sand clogs up the gears, drive shafts and air filters. For each day of travel there is a 01-08% chance that the vehicle will become bogged down with crud and require 1D6x10 minutes to clean and restore.

Tracked Vehicles: Tanks, APCs and tracked exploration vehicles can certainly handle rough terrain, but are susceptible to sand in the same way as other high-tech transportation. For each day of travel, there is a 01-10% chance of the tracks or air filters needing to be cleaned of sand, requiring 1D6x10 minutes.

Robots and Power Armor: Legged vehicles like combat robots, robot horses and power armor are a better choice for most deserts than wheeled or tracked vehicles. They kick up a slightly less obvious dust cloud, especially at slow speed, and leave the

terrain a bit more undisturbed as they pass. Just like other vehicles, however, exoskeletons, mechanical horses and humanoid robots will become clogged with dust and sand, particularly amongst sand dunes and over beaches. In such conditions, 1D4x10 minutes must be spent for every day of travel cleaning sand out of joints, air filters and sensors, or the robot will break down after 2D4 days and require 4D6 hours to clean and repair.

Hover Vehicles: Hover vehicles are an excellent choice for the desert as they can ignore rocky and uneven terrain. They have a need to intake and expel air, however, which means in the desert they often succumb to dust and sand that clogs engines and air filters. True aircraft are able to fly above the layer of dust, but hover vehicles must plow right through it. While they are designed with this in mind, the harsh reality of travel through the deserts of Mexico and the American Southwest is often enough to overwhelm even the best built hover systems. For each day of travel over the desert, or each hour of trying to move through a dust or sandstorm, there is a 01-12% chance of the vehicle's air filter becoming clogged and needing to take 1D6x10 minutes to stop and clean it before normal use can be resumed.

Flying: Flying in an aircraft, riding on a flying mount, or using magic and psionics are among the best ways to travel across harsh desert environments, but mid-air collisions and crash-landings can be fatal. So are attacks by airborne predators, such as dragons, Leatherwings (pterodactyl-like creatures) and Gargoyles, among others like bandits and vampires.

Atmospheric conditions like fog, smoke, dust storms and cloudy or stormy weather can impede flying and make it dangerous. Likewise, flying low to the ground may require the flier to slow down in order to weave in and around canyons, rock formations, buttes and such, especially in the Rocky Desert and mountain regions. Coastal storms, sandstorms, tornados, strong winds and blistering heat can all ground fliers. Plus, the air over the desert gets really hot, so one can not escape the oppressive heat even when flying with a breeze in his face. The wind may feel comforting, but the heat and burning rays of the sun are still pounding down from on high, causing dehydration, sunburn, fatigue, and so on.

Furthermore, flying over Mexico does not mean one avoids the perils of the inhabitants of this hostile land. Flying at any altitude makes the flyer vulnerable to sharp-eyed aerial predators, and vampires are especially keen to pursue airborne intruders in bat or mist form.

Navigating from the air is more difficult than most people imagine as well. Ground-dwelling creatures like humans are not accustomed to an aerial perspective or finding their bearings from up high. As a result, they are easily disoriented when flying in the air. They tend to lose their sense of time, speed of travel, direction and distance, especially when flying high up in the clouds. As a result, Land Navigation and any other navigation skills, while flying, are -20% during the day and -30% at night. Reduce the penalty to only -10% if flying low to the ground (50 feet/15 m or lower).

One of the most common problems among flyers is that they often assume because they are "flying over" the desert they don't need to bring as many provisions with them. Hey, why load yourself with all that water when you can fly back to town and get some more tomorrow, right? Most do not realize that they suffer the effects of heat (and wind) to the same degree as those on the land, and need water to keep cool and hydrated – there is no shade

in the sky. Furthermore, more than one adventurer following such shallow wisdom has perished when conditions did not permit him to fly back to where extra provisions could be had. Or when heat exhaustion made it impossible to fly or, in some cases, even cast spells!

Magic: Of course, in a world of magic there are always alternatives to conventional means of travel. Magic spells such as Fly as the Eagle, Teleport, and others enable practitioners of magic to travel from one place to another via spells, circles, scrolls or other magic items. These modes of transportation are comparatively uncommon and not typically available to the average person. Walking or flying via ley lines is a nice way to travel too, except there are very few ley lines in northern Mexico. Likewise, there are psionic powers that can help one survive and overcome the desert. Super-powered methods of flight are fast, easy, and low-maintenance, but come with their own set of problems and concerns. One is expense. Unless a character is a practitioner of magic himself, procuring magical flight can be expensive. Even spell casters must be careful not to expend so much P.P.E. on flying as to be ineffective or helpless in case of trouble. Another problem is the fact that a large flying humanoid can be seen coming from a great distance (at least a mile or two) unless concealed by cloud cover or flying low to the ground.

Following Ley Lines

Ley lines provide a consistent source of magic energy that can power Techno-Wizard vehicles, keep magic users supplied with P.P.E. and increase the effect of spells, including those used for propulsion or to move from one place to another through more elaborate means. Some travelers prefer to follow ley lines for the light they provide at night, even if they do attract supernatural creatures, demons and predatory animals.

The benefits ley lines provide to Ley Line Walkers and other practitioners of magic make the lines safe havens where they can channel more magic energy, heal themselves, and so on. Vampire Hunters using Ley Line Walkers as scouts feel especially safe along the lines as the mage can create an *observation ball* to scout ahead of the group, and magic to conceal them from their enemies. For this reason, many undead, especially Wild Vampires, avoid ley lines and seldom attack people found walking the blue lines. However, mortal assassins hired by the undead to track and kill Vampire Hunters, as well as bandits, werebeasts, demons and other monsters, may see ley lines as the perfect place to find new victims or prey.

One of the more subtle effects of the magic radiated by ley lines and nexus points is an increase in vegetation and humidity levels. Grasses, cacti and brush can all be found in slightly greater abundance along the path of ley lines (15-20% heavier growth) and even more so at nexus points (30% heavier growth). While this may not render dry desert ground suitable for farming, those desperate for plants as a last source of food or water will be slightly more likely to find them under the glow of ley lines. Moreover, one is 50% more likely to find a small oasis every 1D4 miles (1.6 to 6.4 km) along a ley line, and there is a 01-66% chance that a ley line oasis will have a small pond of drinkable water. Water that always seems to taste fresh and clean, presumably a side effect of the magic energy that permeates the lines and purifies the precious liquid. Wildlife is 30% more plentiful at

such an oasis, too, even if the oasis is tiny (10 feet/3 m in diameter), because they come to drink from the pond too.

Ley lines also carry the risk of Ley Line Storms, dimensional anomalies and other strange phenomena. (For a full list of Ley Line Storm effects, see page 191 of **Rifts® Ultimate Edition**.) While these unpredictable interruptions can waylay a group of travelers or put their lives in danger, dimensional overlap and eddies of magic energy can also be a form of sudden salvation. Rain, hail or snow created by a *Ley Line Storm* provides clean drinking water (some people say they can taste the magic energy), even when the desert is dry and the sky cloudless. Likewise, an area that experiences D-Shifting may spontaneously transform into an alien meadow with a pond or lake, a forest with edible fruit and berries, or a stretch of river, ocean or ice field. Unlike the rain or snow of a Ley Line Storm, this life-giving resource may turn out to be contaminated with otherworldly bacteria, be too salty or toxic to drink, or both. What appears to be a normal lake or stream could also be something even more exotic and undrinkable, like a pool of liquid natural gas or methane. And an alien environment is likely to have alien flora and fauna that could be dangerous to humans and D-Bees. A wise traveler checks carefully before drinking from an other-dimensional body of water, but those dying of dehydration may not have that kind of patience or self-control.

Bad Weather

Outdoor adventuring just isn't complete without bad weather. In Mexico, the murderous heat, dryness, lack of surface water and shade, strong winds and storm activity kill more adventurers than vampires, bandits or demons. Skills such as Wilderness Survival and Land Navigation are absolutely essential for players to survive traveling in the open. Without the latter, travelers will easily become lost, travel in circles and/or head in the wrong direction.

Dust Devils are miniature tornadoes. Though not as large or deadly as a tornado, such storms cause localized dust storms (same penalties as the Dust Storm below, but only to an area a quarter mile in diameter), can clog engines, spin and overturn vehicles, tear away tents and anything not tied down, and snatch and throw supplies and gear across a 1D6x1,000 foot (305 to 1,828 m) diameter and 1D4x10% of the items/gear will be just gone, carried off by the Dust Devil. Anyone who gets caught in a Dust Devil is lifted off their feet and carried away 1D4x1,000 feet (305 to 1,219 m) before being dropped. Such victims suffer 2D4x10 S.D.C. damage (or 2D6 M.D. to Mega-Damage beings and robots).

Dust Storms occur in the Stony and Rocky Deserts, and throughout the region wherever parched earth is found. They are typically the result of strong winds (20 mph/32 km or higher). While they occur more frequently than Sandstorms (once every 1D4 days) they are much less harmful, more of a nuisance than deadly.

Penalties: Travelers caught in a dust storm will have their visibility reduced to about a quarter of a mile (1,200 feet/366 m), their movement/speed reduced by 30%, Land Navigation skill reduced by half, Tracking is impossible, sense of direction may be affected, sound is obscured by the wind and blowing dust (shouting range is about 100 feet/30.5 m), and the eyes, nose and mouth must be shielded/covered, otherwise the blowing dust and grit

will get in them and blind the eyes (takes one minute to rinse or rub them clear) and cause those who gulp a handful of dust when trying to speak with an uncovered mouth to cough and gag (lose one melee action). The mouth can be covered with a cloth or the hands, the eyes protected with the hands or brimmed hat.

Sandstorms. These are the classic desert maelstroms with high, sustained winds that can move an incredible amount of sand, dust, pebbles and debris in a short period of time. Sandstorms can happen almost anywhere in Mexico that is not covered by green grass and trees; any given area here can expect a serious sandstorm (lasting 3D6x10 minutes, sometimes twice as long) at least once every 10 days. Under most circumstances, sandstorms blind whoever walks through them, obscure paths, trails and landmarks and even harm exposed flesh with the pelting sand. Penalties: Travelers caught in a sandstorm will have their visibility cut down to a minuscule 1D4 yards/meters, their movement reduced by 70%, Land Navigation and Tracking skills are rendered absolutely useless, sense of direction is lost, sound is obscured by the wind and clatter of the sand (shouting range is about 10 feet/3 m), and the eyes, nose and mouth must be covered, otherwise the blowing sand and grit will get in them and blind the eyes (takes 1D4 minutes to rinse them clear with water and recover one's vision) and choke those breathing the stuff (causes coughing and gagging).

Furthermore, the pelting sand and debris stings, especially against unprotected flesh, inflicting one point of S.D.C. damage per 10 minutes until they reach shelter – shelter can be a tent, wagon, crate, boulder, or village hut to covering oneself with extra clothing or a blanket, protecting one's head and face and hiding behind a riding animal or curling up like a ball (moving from time to time to avoid getting buried if the sand begins to blow and drift too deep).

In the Sandy Desert region, sandstorms are especially lethal. Here, the average sandstorm lasts for 5D6x10 minutes. Anyone caught in one of these has their visibility reduced to zero (can barely see their hand in front of their face), their movement is slowed by 95%, and they will take 1D4 damage from the flying sand particles and scathing winds per ten minutes until shelter is found or made. However, a "soft" shelter like a tent will suffer double damage throughout the storm, which means that most tents and other light shelters will be ripped apart and destroyed during long storms. Under such conditions, the only real refuge is among a rocky enclosure/outcropping, cave, wood or stone structure or underground. Penalties: Same as above.

And if that weren't enough, sandstorms in the Sandy Desert also move tremendous volumes of sand. Any given spot affected by a sandstorm will gain or lose (50%/50% chance) 1D6 feet (0.3 to 1.8 m) of sand every 10 minutes! This means that in the course of a storm, an area can be entirely buried or completely uncovered. Characters caught in such storms must take this into account, or risk being buried alive by the storm! This also means paths, trails, and even roads and prominent landmarks *may* be obliterated, covered by drifting sand, at least until the next storm. One more reason traveling through these parts of Mexico is so difficult.

Night Freezes. With no cloud cover to contain the region's warmth from the day, parts of Mexico get very chilly after dark. The average temperature drops to 40 or 50 degrees Fahrenheit (4.4 to 10 C), which is uncomfortable, but not especially dangerous. Sporadic, unpredictable "night freezes" occur, however,

when the after-dark temperature plummets to as low as 10 or 20 degrees Fahrenheit (-12 to -6 C) for the night. Water will freeze and exposed people and animals will suffer from this kind of cold. Unless covered with appropriate clothing or blankets, characters will take 1D6 points of damage per hour until they find a source of warmth or until the sun comes up.

Thunderstorms. The last weather hazard most people think about in Mexico is torrents of rain. However, intense rainstorms can and do happen here, and because of this region's hot and dry weather, these rainfalls are very dangerous and damaging. Mexican thunderstorms fall into two basic categories: coastal storms and interior storms.

Coastal storms brew over the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific coast. These storms gather strength over the water, then head straight inland, where the rocky coastline comes right up to the sea. Usually, these storms crash head-on into the coastal areas, then roll either north or south until they blow themselves out, or until they return back to the sea. The hurricane-force winds of these storms wreak havoc on most of the coastal settlements, none of which are really built to withstand that kind of punishment. Moreover, the storm surge (a 20 foot/6 m tidal wave) caused by these storms can also dash ships against the stone cliffs. Major coastal storms happen about once a year, but every five years, the *El Niño* climate pattern appears, and 1D6+1 coastal storms will lash the coastline over a period of three months. During such times, one of those storms often will hit the coast and roll away to the sea but not really lose any power. These storms will double in size and strength and hit the coast again as a super-storm. *El Niño* also produces wetter, rainier winters in Mexico and the American Southwest, and is associated with brief seasons of reduced vampire activity.

Interior storms are like "normal" thunderstorms throughout the rest of Rifts Earth, except they tend to rain a little harder, come on fast, and have about double the amount of lightning. In extremely flat areas, tall characters, robots, power armor and vehicles may attract lightning (01-05% chance for each hour exposed), causing 8D6 S.D.C. damage to exposed individuals or 2D6 M.D.C. to armor.

The real problem with interior storms is that they dump 2D6 inches of water upon the desert. While this might seem like a good thing, the earth here is too rocky, hard and baked dry to absorb any of this water, so flash floods usually occur as it rushes toward the rocky coastline and pitches over into the sea. Thankfully, this flooding happens often enough that "river channels" 3D6 feet deep have been eroded into the earth in many places, keeping the flooding somewhat contained. However, during a flash flood, these dry channels instantly fill with 3D6 feet (0.9 to 5.5 m) of fast-moving water (Spd of 25) that will likely drown or wash away anybody caught in the wave. Characters with the Swimming skill can try to navigate the rush of water, but their skill rolls will be reduced by 25%. Those who fail three consecutive Swimming rolls when caught in a flash flood will go under and risk drowning. Those who do make their rolls can only stay in the rushing water for a number of minutes equal to their P.E. before they tire and drown as well.

One would think that as dangerous as these channels are, nobody would travel in them. However, they often are the only places in the desert where one can find a smooth path to walk on, shade from the walls of the channel, and sometimes, puddles of water. Indeed, flood channels serve as a kind of network of

natural roadways, but one should take caution when traveling in these; a flash flood will occur with only one melee round of warning (a roaring sound and rumbling of the ground), so unless travelers have some other means of advance notice or instant means of exiting the trench, they will be caught in the torrent. That having been said, thunderstorms are so comparatively rare (1-4 annually) that these channels are in constant use, which often makes them the most traveled stretches of desert interiors and attractive to bandits, raiders and brigands of all kinds.

Ley Line Storms: The desert is a very dangerous place to be caught in a Ley Line Storm. Without trees, mixed terrain or buildings for cover, anyone out in the open is at the full mercy of the storm's random and varied effects. Most storms last 3D6x10 minutes, and inflict a penalty of -20% to read sensory equipment and radar, as well as cutting sensor range and communication distance in half, along with bonuses to strike from power armor or robot targeting systems. One also runs the risk of getting struck by hail or lightning and other blasts of energy, as well as dealing

with a host of other strange things. For the full list of Ley Line Storm effects, see page 191 of **Rifts® Ultimate Edition**.

Both vampires and Vampire Hunters are known to use Ley Line Storms to cover their movements and attacks. At the same time, a planned assault may have to be postponed if a Ley Line Storm interrupts crucial parts of the plan. A Ley Line Storm accompanied by rain has the same threat of flash floods as a thunderstorm, but snow or hail, while even more unnatural in the desert, do not come with the same risk.

Tornadoes, also known as Cyclones in the American Southwest: Tornadoes in Mexico are heralded by the approach of dark storm clouds. A tornado kicks up a dust cloud and causes a dust storm 1D4 minutes before the devastating funnel cloud actually strikes. To make playing easy, consider the tornado to be the equivalent of a level 6+1D4 Tornado Air Elemental spell. (See **Rifts® Book of Magic** or **Rifts® Conversion Book One** for details on tornadoes).

Strongholds of Humanity

By Braden Campbell

Additional text and ideas by Matthew Clements and Kevin Siembieda

Old Mexico is not entirely devoid of human habitation, despite what many of the major nations in America might think. Besides the city-states of *El Paso* and *Juarez* and a myriad of tiny villages and farm communities, there are a number of notable settlements in Mexico. The most famous of these is **Fort Reid**, headquarters for the infamous Vampire Hunter, Doc Reid and his Rangers. What many don't realize is that Fort Reid is the cornerstone for an informal and unofficial city-state that grows with every passing day.

Other strongholds of humanity include the city-states of **Tampico**, **Acapulco**, **Ciudad Victoria**, and **New Del Rio**, all of which have been built along major waterways. Then there are **Monterrey** and **La Cueva de los Cristales** (the *Cave of Crystals*), which rest in the middle of the desert. Location aside, it is really only the resolve of the local defenders that keeps these places from being completely overrun by vampires. Each of these strongholds is an island unto itself. There is little communication between them, and with a few exceptions (most notably Silver City and Tampico), even less regular trade. Traveling from one to another usually involves a trek across the open desert, following the few cracked and broken pre-Rifts highways that have yet to be reclaimed by the wilderness. Life in most of these places is exceptionally hard; those who were born here know only constant danger, and those who have migrated here from other places cannot help but feel an overpowering sense of isolation and fear. The land is beautiful and the weather is warm, but the Mexican frontier, so far removed from the hub of civilization, can also be desolate and lonely.

Oddly enough, this has bred a kind of national identity into the people who call Old Mexico (at least the northern half of it) their home. They take a quiet pride in being able to survive where so many others have failed. Visitors from the north will have a

difficult time of things, especially if they don't speak Spanish. They are often called *yanqui* or *gringo*, an offensive slang that translates roughly as "outsider." People will treat them gruffly and see them as nosy interlopers who have no business being on this side of the Rio Grande. Outsiders find winning the trust of the local people to be difficult. Only by killing a great many vampires and/or performing other acts that help the people can any outsider prove, over time, their worth and their right to walk this harsh wasteland as a friend.

Tampico Military Protectorate

Stats – Circa 109 P.A.

Estimated Population: 3,670 (1,050 mercenaries) in the city.

Racial Breakdown:

54% Humans

45% D-Bees

1% Others

Average Transient Population: Less than 200 per year.

Surrounding Communities (20 mile/32 km area): An additional 3,200 people scattered amongst a dozen, vampire-free coastal villages; 60% human. A dozen or so additional villages are located inland. Most other villages (85%) beyond that are slaves of, or allied to, the *Muluc Vampire Kingdom*. Contact with these communities is rare and infrequent.

Tampico lays claim to some of the surrounding countryside, out to a radius of twenty miles (32 km). For the most part, this land is a tropical wilderness, filled with palm trees and tall grasses. Freshwater lagoons and rivers extend inland in all directions wherein fish, shellfish, and turtles abound. A dozen small, vampire free, fishing villages are found within this area. The total number of people living within this zone is no more than 3,200.

The weather is reasonably pleasant in the spring and autumn with temperatures averaging 90 degrees (32 Celsius). During the summer, the heat and humidity can greatly affect those not used to it; temperatures of 104 degrees (40 Celsius) are quite normal. In the winter months, the site is buffeted by colder winds that can reach speeds of more than 37 miles per hour (59 km). Although the city-state lies within a hurricane zone, it is only directly hit by one every fifty years or so. Obviously, given its position on the Gulf Coast, seafood is plentiful, with crab and fish being a common staple of civilians and mercenaries alike.

During the Great Cataclysm, pre-Rifts Tampico was smashed piecemeal by tidal waves and hurricanes. Those structures that weren't completely obliterated were submerged when the continent of Atlantis reappeared and drove the coastline inland by several miles. For a century or more afterwards, the area sat abandoned, save for the otters that made their home in the lagoons along the shore and the dolphins that frolicked out amidst the waves. Then, groups of refugees arrived and established a base camp for themselves. Using science now lost and surveying techniques now unheard of, they began to construct a drilling platform near the waterline. Who these people were will forever remain a mystery; they vanished almost as suddenly as they appeared. It is likely that they fell prey to vampires, but in truth, any number of horrible fates may have befallen them. All that can be said with any certainty is that their demise was swift, for they left their work behind them, barely begun.

Later, some nameless explorer wandered the coastline, sketching out a rough map as he went. When he came to the wreckage of Tampico, he took note of the derelict equipment, the neatly stacked yet unused pipes, and of the incomplete derricks that towered up into the sky. He marked his map with an X and in barely literate, blocky letters, scribbled one word: TREZUR. No one can say exactly how this crumpled sheet of paper eventually made its way to *Kingsdale*, but the fact remains that it did, passed on from one owner to another, each of them ignorant of its potential worth. Finally, a freelance general named **Roger Gamblin** won the map in a poker game. Whether it was because he could actually read what was printed on it, or because his ragtag merc army, the **Gamblin Men**, had fallen on hard times, the general took the map and headed southwards. Hugging the coastline, he and his soldiers managed to avoid the worst of the vampire territory, eventually arriving just north of where Tampico had once stood.

Gamblin and his mercenaries were fighting men, and what little engineering skill they had between them related mostly to the maintenance of the weapons they carried. The true founding of Tampico is therefore credited to **Anita Hoak**, a former Coalition Technical Officer who had only recently joined the group. It was she alone who was able to decipher the computer disks and notes left behind by the original surveyors, and although she could not understand all of the data (geophysics, as an applied science, has virtually vanished from the world of Rifts), it told her that a substantial deposit of crude oil lay not more than half a mile (0.8 km) beneath their feet. The hardest part, the detection of the oil, had already been done for them. All they had to do was drill down to get it. So, while General Gamblin took half the company and established a secure perimeter, Hoak was put in charge of getting to the oil.

Despite what many might think, the extraction of oil from beneath the surface of the earth is a difficult and complex undertaking. It must be done slowly and methodically, with precise equip-

ment and trained personnel. Unfortunately, the mercenaries were impatient with greed, and were using whatever scavenged machinery they found on the beach. All they had to guide them was a crash course in building production wells from a person with lots of "book smarts" but little real-world experience. Moreover, according to Hoak, most of the oil lay under the Gulf Coast, and her expertise stopped short of what was necessary to construct an actual oil rig. So, they had to try a different approach. Long docks were built out into the water, atop which more drills and pumps were constructed. Sinking the drills on dry land had been dangerous enough. Doing so under fifty feet (15 m) of water was even more so. As a result, there were hundreds of accidents, injuries, and fatalities before the Gamblin Mercenary Company managed to fill their first barrel of crude. Blowouts and explosions were a monthly occurrence, but still the people in the company remained grimly determined.

Within a few months, Tampico was not only a fortified encampment, but was ready to start exporting and selling its liquid treasure. The oil is mainly transported by boat along the coast in order to avoid vampire intervention, and then sold to places like *Monterrey*, *Ciudad Juarez*, *El Paso*, *Los Alamo*, *Nuevo Del Rio* and *the Pecos Empire*. The money from the sale is then divided evenly amongst the mercenaries.

For many, Roger Gamblin included, this is a life far better than they have ever known. They are now making a steady income without having to constantly submit themselves to some would-be king's warmongering. As the encampment grows, local people arrive in a steady stream, offering labor in exchange for food, basic necessities, a safe place to live and protection. Today, Tampico has a dedicated workforce of thousands, which allows most of the Gamblin Men to receive their profit share from the oil while doing less and less actual work. Their dreams of power and wealth are slowly coming true, but many of the mercenaries find they cannot just sit drinking tequila and lazing about in the warm, tropical sun. Deep down, they are men of action, and by one avenue or another, they have to satisfy their constant craving for it.

Fort Tampico

Fort Tampico is one of the most formidable of the Mexican strongholds, and in many ways is diametrically opposed to Fort Reid. Whereas the majority of the Rangers are young fighters with only the most basic of training, Tampico's core population is made up of hard-bitten, experienced mercenaries and super soldiers. Fort Reid was founded as a base of operations for those who have dedicated their lives to killing vampires and helping the innocent. Tampico exists primarily *to make money*.

The fort is the original land base of operations and it still functions as the heart of the community. The fort and what they call a city is surrounded to the north, west, and south by a series of ditches, sharpened wooden palisades, mine fields, moats, and walls. The few dirt roads that pass through this defensive zone are watched at all times. The east is protected by the sea.

The fort itself is a large wooden palisade with some M.D.C. bunkers and barracks, along with numerous S.D.C. buildings inside. The ruins of various pre-Rifts cities and shipwrecks along the coast provide a continual source of scrap metal. Still, only 25% of the buildings are Mega-Damage structures (average 1D6x100 M.D.).

The rest of the “city” consists of simple structures of wood construction, clay brick, tarpaulins and scrap metal. Indoor plumbing is virtually nonexistent, but gasoline powered generators that provide electricity are found throughout. Instead of spending time and money to give every home a flush toilet or running water, the mercenaries have simply built a central reservoir which draws fresh water from the nearby lagoons. Each morning, one person from every household must collect water from the reservoir and carry it back. In the barracks, the mercenaries take turns. Hot water for things like shaving, cooking, or doing laundry is a luxury in the city unless one can afford the right machines (which most cannot), but is available to those living inside the fort via gas-powered generators. (All the amenities of home are only found on the oil platform.) At night, the fort and the city are lit up by strings of lights, floodlights and oil lanterns.

All of the mercenaries carry some type of light or medium energy weapon and a crossbow with silver/wood ammo for fighting vampires. Nearly 70% also own a heavy weapon such as a particle beam rifle, rocket launcher, or portable rail gun. In particularly tough times, a few hundred citizen workers with bows or water guns can also take up arms to help defend the town, but defense is the responsibility of the shareholders: the mercenaries. The mercenaries have at their disposal a range of robots and power armor, with the newest items being of Northern Gun manufacture. There are also eight Glitter Boys, 9 Triax Ulti-Max suits and a Spider-Skull Walker dating back to the Tarwater expedition. All of these use conventional Mega-Damage weaponry, though the rail guns can have their regular ammunition swapped out to shoot wood or silver rounds. Likewise, robot fists and blades are silver plated, and all know where additional vampire fighting gear is located. On the water, a half dozen heavily-armed patrol boats keep an eye out for pirates and Coalition warships, while beneath the waves, a trio of UB-300 mini subs (see **Rifts® Underseas™** for full details) lay in wait. A dozen Triax Dyna-Bots (with Black Market combat programming) continually patrol the walls of the encampment and can be remotely controlled from the oil platform to act as eyes and ears for the defenders there.

Notable Buildings at Fort Tampico

1. Hospital. The hospital has a half dozen midwives (each with Holistic Medicine at +10%), five nurses (have Paramedic at +10%), and four doctors (7th level Body Fixers with Holistic Medicine at +20%). There are a dozen sick rooms, four surgery rooms, a basic laboratory, and a fair amount of medical equipment that, despite its rundown looks, works perfectly well. In addition, the hospital is one of the few places in town that has running fresh water indoors. There is no one here who can do anything involving cybernetic or bionic systems. Such experts are found only among the mercenaries and on the Platform.

2. Reservoir. In the center of the fort are the large tanks that hold the town’s fresh water supply. These are continually fed by a nearby lagoon, filtered and purified to ensure the people of Tampico have more than enough safe drinking water. This alone makes it worthwhile living here. Still, many farms have their own solar stills that use sunlight and evaporation to clean water from other sources.

3. Motor Pool. The fort has fifty or so Operators to keep the oil rigs, generators and everything else running. Young Operators, some trained from the civilian population, get trained and start working in the motor pool. This is a collection of buildings

and garages: 5 for vehicles, one specifically for hovercycles, another for power armor, and the two largest for combat robots. The vehicles of Tampico civilians are also repaired here at bargain prices (half of standard prices elsewhere), but defense vehicles get priority and the wait, depending on the situation, can be a few hours to a couple of weeks. Outsiders can also get vehicles repaired at Fort Tampico, but at 50% more than what is standard. This high rate applies to all outsiders, including heroes and Reid’s Rangers.

4. Barracks. Although referred to as “the barracks,” this is really a small military encampment made of M.D.C. materials and used by the locals as an emergency shelter when under attack. This is actually the site where General Gamblin and his men first set up camp and it holds a special place for them. The barracks are ringed by a wall of light, M.D.C. cantina wire, with an inner wall of sandbags and a shallow moat, and there are three watchtowers, each with a large Globe of Daylight Floodlight atop it. Most of the mercenaries have established quarters for themselves out on the Platform, and the barracks are generally full of oil workers, miners, other workers and visiting mercs and adventurers not directly affiliated with the Tampico mercenaries.

5. Fuel Depot. One of the most heavily guarded facilities is the fuel depot, a collection of huge, pressurized tanks (75 M.D.C. each) where the fort stores its precious supplies of usable gasoline, kerosene, and diesel fuel. In general, there is enough to supply the needs of everyone in town for 2D4+4 months.

6. The Oil Field. A total of 30 small derricks, along with the large oil derrick at sea, comprise the heart of Tampico’s chief enterprise: crude oil. While a few of them are built along the shore, the majority sit atop long, wooden piers that stretch out into the Gulf, some of which have been cut-off from the land and turned into small, secondary oil platforms. The tanker ships that take the crude to be refined elsewhere wait patiently until they are filled. Up to six other vessels can be docked at a separate facility on the south end of town as well as at the Platform.

7. The Cantina el Tampico. Tampico’s largest drinking hole is the Cantina el Tampico. While it does have some card tables and a few games of chance, it is mostly a place for mercenaries, oilmen and adventurers to cool off in the shade and have a drink. A few members of the mercenaries are almost always found inside, and the barkeeps are good sources of information for those who seek it.

The Platform

The oil platform itself has a population of nearly two thousand, nearly half of whom are the mercenaries who own and run the Tampico Protectorate.

In 103 P.A., the violence and regularity of vampire attacks began to increase. A pair of outlying villages were destroyed and the people slaughtered by the undead. The wooden stockade surrounding Tampico itself has been tested many times since. The mercenaries have been successful at repelling the vampire invaders, but they can’t help feeling that the monsters are playing some kind of cat and mouse game with them. The general and his troops had even retaliated, hitting several vampire dominated towns that are part of the Muluc Kingdom, but outside Muluc proper. This caused the vampires to circumvent the Protectorate’s defenses, get inside the fort and take the battle directly to the

mercs. Each battle seemed bloodier than the last. Sometimes the humans of Tampico fared well, other times it was the vampires.

Looking for a new way to protect themselves and their investment, General Gamblin and his senior people decided to begin construction of a new fortress. One protected from the ravages of the vampires by the waters of the Gulf of Mexico and which would protect their oil-pumping enterprise at the same time. They turned the base of the drilling platform into a fortified position and refuge. The old platform was used as the starting point for new construction. Within a few months, a new fort served as the hub of operations at Tampico. A fort nestled out in the waters of the Gulf, where it frustrates vampires too afraid to venture beyond the shoreline to get at it; which is the vast majority of them.

“The Platform,” and the tenacity of mercenaries unwilling to relinquish their fortunes to the vampires, are the two main reasons Tampico has not fallen to the Vampire Kingdom of Muluc. The land-based fort town and fragile communities have come to rely on the Tampico mercenary company and the Platform for protection. For years now, every sunset there is a mass exodus from land to the Platform. Over the years, the Platform has been enlarged to include more living quarters, and many long docks jut out from it like the spokes of bicycle wheel. All around the Platform and its docks are rafts, barges and fishing boats filled with people who travel into the sea and out to the Platform to escape the terror of the vampires. Many have taken to living on their boats and rafts, creating a floating shanty town. As one might imagine, the few small and medium-size M.D.C. ships and barges outfitted with weapon systems all belong to the mercenaries.

With the first light of day, people return to tend to their farms and livestock, go back to work, and to see what new damage the vampires have inflicted overnight. Inevitably, there are those who take their chances on land at night, and there is always a platoon or two of Tampico mercenaries, all well versed in fighting vampires, who patrol the streets, ready to engage the demons in vengeful combat. To this end, there are several dozen combat robots and power armor units equipped with weapons of wood, silver and magic to battle the undead invaders.

At first, the vampires came every night to vandalize and destroy property and to slaughter whatever animals and people may have been left behind. However, over time and as the mercenaries became more expert in combating the undead and easy mortal prey became scarce, the vampires relented. Now, vampire incursions are comparatively small events, with trouble arising once or twice a week and raids by more than a dozen seldom happening more than once a month.

The Tampico Protectorate is known to all the vampires living in and around the Muluc Kingdom to be an *open target*. That means it is free for any vampire to attack, raid and do with its populace as they please without needing permission of the rulers of Muluc. This makes the location something of a playground for vampires. Bands of Wild Vampires may slip into the fort or one of the surrounding communities to feed on the living, kill for fun or terrorize the people for the sport of it. Muluc vampires hungry for the blood of a warrior or “free range humans,” as some call mortals not raised in-captivity, may seek prey at Tampico. Likewise, when a vampire is angry or frustrated about almost anything, he or a group of them, may go to Tampico to vent their anger and let off some steam by killing and feeding on the people there. Newly created vampires may also target the people of Tampico to make their first kill or to test their mettle as newborn monsters. Such in-

dependent vampires typically go to Tampico as lone individuals, pairs or small groups of 3-12. Even most bands of Wild Vampires seldom exceed a dozen, though such wandering gangs can be two or three dozen strong and do sometimes attack the mercs in such numbers.

Since the Tampico Protectorate has proven to be so resourceful, tenacious and resilient, and because it serves to amuse the vampires of Muluc, mass sieges have, for the most part, stopped. The last one took place five years ago and was done in retaliation for a strike into Muluc territory by the Tampico mercenaries. General Gamblin and his troops have since learned that if they do not openly hunt and kill the vampires of Muluc, the mass attacks stop. As it stands, the defenders of Tampico can fight and slay any vampires who attack them, but they cannot go into Muluc territory to pick a fight. The general and his warriors are not happy with this unofficial truce arrangement, but they do not have the firepower nor troops to challenge the domination of the Muluc Kingdom. Unless they are willing to relinquish their literal pipeline to wealth, they have no choice but to accept it.

For this reason, *Reid's Rangers* are not welcome in Tampico. They'll trade with the Rangers and offer basic medical assistance, but Reid's Rangers are told to leave before sunset, or else. Most Rangers understand how the wrath of a Vampire Kingdom can decimate a community and, not wanting to compromise or harm the people of the Protectorate, willingly comply. While the Rangers understand, there is resentment, and most avoid Tampico except when it is absolutely necessary to deal with them. The resentment is mutual, as many of the Tampico mercenaries feel the heroes make them look bad and regard the Rangers as fools and martyrs who die in droves for a futile cause.

Meanwhile, the mercenaries and people of Tampico never take their safety for granted. During the night, nearly two-thirds of the citizens of the fort and the nearby villages take boats and rafts over to the Platform and sleep there, safe from all but the most determined and organized vampire attacks, pirates or foul weather. When attacked by a large band of vampires (40 or more), let alone anything that looks like an all-out siege, virtually the entire populace will retreat to the Platform, the land fort itself occupied only by defenders, vengeful citizens who welcome a fight with vampires, and those too stubborn to leave their possessions behind.

The Platform consists of several levels. The lowest level is thirty feet (9 m) above the waterline, and serves as a structure to mount docks and for large visiting ships to tie themselves off against. It is entirely made of metal catwalks and grated walkways that the waves and water splash right through during harsh weather. Security is fairly tight on this level and visitors who arrive after sunset are thoroughly examined and cleared before being allowed entrance. There are a number of quick, simple ways to determine whether such a visitor is a vampire, but the mercs must also be vigilant against those who serve the undead, as well as pirates and potential raiders. Water cannons are mounted throughout the lower level, connected to an internal piping system that runs throughout the entire platform and feeds off of the seawater all around.

The middle level is full of workshops, silversmiths, the actual oil-drilling equipment and armories full of anti-vampire weapons. It is the industrial heart of the entire city where the most important work is conducted. Boat engines are constantly being maintained, replaced or cannibalized for parts, and armor, weap-

ons and robots wait to be fitted with silver and wooden spikes and painted with crosses.

The upper level is packed with living quarters, briefing rooms for the mercenaries and a well-equipped medical facility. The luckiest of Tampico's citizens have private quarters here, though most of the accommodations are handed out on a first-come, first-serve basis when the populace retreats to the Platform. Those who do live onsite are lucky enough to sleep at night without worrying about constant vampire attacks, but must make do with the cramped, battleship-like conditions.

Mounted above the upper level is a landing platform for helicopters and flight-capable power armor. It also features a radar system that monitors the Gulf of Mexico for pirates or Coalition naval ships, and a weather station that helps the Gamblin Men and Vampire Hunters predict when rain will fall to assist them in their battles against the undead and rare incursions into vampire territory.

All around the Platform are the boats and rafts of the floating shanty town that has sprung up around it. As a small community, everyone knows everybody. Troublemakers are dragged away and taken back to shore. Anyone who pulls a weapon on one of the mercenaries who run the Tampico Protectorate is likely to be killed without hesitation. Strangers who get themselves noticed are questioned by the mercenaries. If the mercs don't like what they hear, the stranger(s) is taken back to shore or set adrift away from the Platform to fend for himself. If he protests too loudly or becomes violent, he is slain for the safety of the greater community. It is better to be safe than sorry.

Tampico's Oil

Tampico has a small refinery installed on a platform of its own out in the Gulf that processes the oil needed to maintain city operations. The refinery itself is, ironically, not powered by oil or gas. Instead, several nuclear power cores salvaged from combat robots have been cobbled together to provide a continuous supply of energy that doesn't burn up profits as a fuel source. Using this facility, the mercs are able to refine their own gasoline, diesel, propane, kerosene and even jet fuel, along with a few more exotic substances like paraffin wax, asphalt and naphtha, which can be turned into a range of other liquids, from lighter fluid to cooking stove fuel to a flamethrower mixture! Internal combustion engines and generators are very common both in the city fort and the offshore rigs, and Tampico's populace has learned to take the abundance of fuel and electrical power for granted.

By the standards of an independent community on Rifts Earth, Tampico pumps out a lot of crude. It may be small potatoes compared to operations in the Coalition States and other nations, and there are much larger refineries and oil fields in the Vampire Kingdoms staffed by human slaves, but Tampico is the only source of fuel for many small villages, mercenary groups, Vampire Hunters and local farmers.

For the last several years, Tampico's oil production has increased steadily, while its own inadequate refining facility has not been expanded or redesigned. Instead, crude oil leaves Tampico in tanker ships which mysteriously disappear, returning with gasoline, diesel and other refined petroleum products. These shipments fill the boats and tanker trucks that go north to other communities and keep Vampire Hunters' vehicles running. None

of it would be possible without a shadowy contact named *Felipe Salazar* and his efforts.

Salazar arrived at Tampico in a wooden boat almost seven years ago. The small crew who delivered him ashore rowed immediately back out to sea, leaving him to fend for himself. Some thought he was a prisoner, outcast or plague victim, but Salazar's charm and confidence gave them doubts. Within a few days he had met with virtually all of Tampico's mercs, questioning them about production, output and refining technology, buying drinks, offering a sympathetic ear and memorizing names and faces. After a while, one of the merc captains became suspicious and arrested Salazar, but he offered no resistance and even seemed to be happily expecting them.

Once he was face to face with General Gamblin and his top officers, Salazar proposed a deal. He knew people – pirates, Black Marketeers and other criminals – who were looking for a reliable source of crude oil. They would worry about the refining process on their end, and the only requirements were that the mercs at Tampico didn't start asking questions and that they would allow Salazar's people to pilot the tanker ships to their final destination for the sake of security. The secret refiners would take half of the crude oil for themselves, and return the other half in the form of fully processed, usable fuel. After a few test runs, Gamblin was convinced. However Salazar did it, he managed to take fully loaded tanker ships and bring them back in a week or two brimming with high-quality gas and diesel. Swapping out the ships' crews with Salazar's men out in the Gulf of Mexico was a time-consuming process, but the results spoke for themselves.

This arrangement has held up for five years now. The Tampico mercs have increased their personal profits enormously and the coastal areas of Northern Mexico and Texas are becoming awash in technology powered by gas and diesel engines and generators. All thanks to the fuel being exported by Tampico. Shipments north have strengthened human communities along the edge of vampire civilization, and the fueling stations that line Tampico's oil rigs keep an untold number of low-tech, diesel-fueled ships running over the water where the undead cannot get to them. Vampire Hunters use the boats to make landings on the coast and go upriver. Tampico uses them to deploy mercs and trade their oil. Fishermen who rely on them provide a vital food source that makes the city better able to withstand a siege. Added to their imports, this makes Tampico capable of feeding itself without the necessity for tracts of farmland deep in vampire territory. Independent Vampire Hunters also, unknowingly, receive much of their fuel from Tampico, though usually through a third party seller.

A secret ally. The secret behind this flowering of petroleum products in Northern Mexico via the Tampico oil rig is none other than the influence of the mighty *Splugorth*. Salazar is a loyal human slave who acts as a front-man and intermediary, the only face General Gamblin and his people regularly interact with. His crewmen are captured human sailors, down-on-their-luck pirates and slave volunteers who take the tanker ships loaded with crude oil and Rift them from the Gulf of Mexico to one of several Splugorth refinery facilities. Depending on the Rift and the whims of the spellcaster, a tanker may end up offloading its oil at **Za-Loke Ek**, a refinery on the Atlantean southern coast at the mouth of a river right on the border between the Preserves and the Gargoyles' Great Stone Mountains. This post is regarded as a backwater and normally only communicates with the outside world

via magic, air or water travel. A tanker could also end up at a facility on Atlantis' east coast off a peninsula near Splynn itself, or at a Splugorth refinery complex in **Nigeria** built on oil platforms that stick up out of the sunken remains of *Lagos*.

The Splugorth provide their refinery services primarily to keep Tampico and Vampire Hunters in the North thriving as a thorn in the side of the Vampire Kingdoms. Before the current scheme was concocted, Atlantean anti-vampire specialists quietly watched over the settlement from inland while Horune Pirates aggressively patrolled the surrounding waters, using magic and superior seamanship to simply vanish whenever human vessels came within sight, but keeping other threats away from Tampico. Offering the humans access to refining facilities has been chosen as a much cheaper means to protect the city. It would be far too suspicious for the Splugorth to build a normal refinery for the embattled mercs, and giving up the secrets of Atlantean magical oil refining is out of the question. The Bio-Wizard and TW refining methods used are relatively inexpensive as well, which makes the exchange even more desirable to the Splugorth. Now Tampico has the wealth and numbers to defend itself, and its very presence weakens the vampires' grip on Mexico's east coast should Atlantis ever decide to invade. At the same time, the Tampico Mercs have become dependent on their mysterious trade partners, and have not bothered to upgrade their own small refinery.

Nobody knows who the refiner may be. There are rumors that the oil is refined by the Black Market, Columbia, the Pecos Empire, the Coalition State of Lone Star, unknown underwater aliens, and local pirates ranging from the Yucatan to Cuba to Louisiana. But nobody suspects the Splugorth. Should the oil-rich mercs ever discover who they are truly working with, it will be a difficult decision to abandon the profits and influence that come with the massive fuel reserves and vast wealth they've been acquiring, even if their secret partners are monstrous, alien invaders.

Tampico in the Vampire Lands

It would be a mistake to think that Tampico is a peaceful haven by any stretch of the imagination. Neither General Gamblin nor his men had any clue when they first pitched their tents that their new home lay less than 80 miles (128 km) from the capital of the **Muluc Vampire Kingdom**. Even when the locals tried to tell them about the nearby city of the undead, the mercs dismissed it. Of course, Old Mexico was crawling with the damned things, but a Vampire Kingdom? Impossible. This misconception was perpetuated by the Gamblin Men refusal to explore much of the surrounding countryside beyond a radius of ten or twelve miles (16 to 19 km). Their little slice of the coast was their sole and narrow focus. That is not to say that they didn't take the threat of Wild Vampires seriously. In order to protect their claim, the mercenaries built defenses to counter not only mortal foes, but supernatural ones as well. In addition to practitioners of magic, cyborgs, Northern Gun combat robots and power armor, Tampico utilizes the most advanced anti-vampire equipment around. They are also helped greatly by the fact that their entire headquarters is built on or right next to the ever-flowing waters of the Gulf of Mexico.

The Coalition States became aware of the Protectorate in 98 P.A. Several generals in the CS had been hearing for years that not only did vampires exist in the Mexican interior, but that they were coherent and organized as well. These rumors, of course, began following the Battle of Eagle Peak, and one man in par-

ticular, a **Col. Neil Tarwater**, was the most vocal proponent that the CS should investigate the legitimacy of these claims. It took nearly a decade of insistence before anyone would authorize his reconnaissance mission, and even then, Tarwater received as little aid as possible from a High Command that refused to believe in Vampire Kingdoms. His forces were capped at two armored companies; no more than one hundred men were assigned to explore an area of over half a million square miles. Moreover, rather than be quickly airlifted to Mexico by Death's Head transports, the colonel was forced to sail down the Mississippi and along the Gulf Coast in a single, retrofitted transport ship that leaked constantly.

The expedition came ashore not far from the Tampico Protectorate, the first sign of civilization they had come across since leaving Baton Rouge. Tarwater and Gamblin immediately disliked each other, yet both men wished to avoid open hostilities. The CS force, which included a total of twenty-four Spider-Skull Walkers and APCs, and more than fifty SAMAS, was allowed to camp just outside of Tampico's protective walls for a week while they prepared to journey inland. When the colonel set out on the 8th of June, 98 P.A., he left only three junior officers behind to monitor their radio reports. Some time later, Tarwater sent word that he had encountered "sane and organized" vampire villages and was preparing to mount an attack. It would be the last that anyone would ever hear of him. For weeks, the three officers waited for any sign of survivors, but to no avail. Finally, one of them, a young lieutenant named **Philip Montain**, assumed command of the expedition. Marching into the Tampico compound, Montain demanded that the Gamblin Mercenary company put together a search and rescue team which he would then lead into southern Mexico in search of Colonel Tarwater. Everyone had a good laugh until they realized that the young man was serious. The mercenaries patted him on the shoulder and told him and his two underlings to make themselves at home while they commandeered the transport ship anchored just off-shore. Months later, the vessel had been refitted to carry crude oil, and set sail northwards for the Texas coast. The three Coalition officers left with it. In his report to the CS High Command later that same year, Lieutenant Montain expressed admiration for the mercenaries of Tampico, saying that they had tamed a small part of the so-called Vampire Lands. However, because it traded resources to other enemies of the CS, he considered it to be a hostile force that should be eliminated and replaced with a Coalition protectorate which he himself volunteered to lead. The government agreed that Tampico was an enemy, although one that was distant and quite low on the overall threat index. Montain's suggestion that the CS attempt to colonize Old Mexico was totally dismissed.

Until 105 P.A., elements of the CS Navy's 2nd Fleet (based out of Fort Pinnacle, in Texas) would occasionally draft plans to either occupy the site via an amphibious landing or simply blow it up with a naval bombardment. However, their main mission was, and always has been, to guard the Gulf against Splugorth and Horune incursion, and to maintain connections, no matter how limited, with the Republic of Columbia in South America.

In the aftermath of the civil war with Free Quebec (105–109 P.A.), a conflict which saw the destruction of a full third of the 1st Fleet, vessels from the Gulf have been transferred northwards, reducing the overall number of Coalition capital ships in the waters around Mexico. Therefore, Tampico has little to fear from the CS for the conceivable future.



The Tampico Mercenaries

Typical Alignments: 10% Scrupulous, 15% Unprincipled, 60% Anarchist, 10% Aberrant and 5% Miscreant.

Typical O.C.C.s: 40% Mercenary Soldiers, 5% Combat Cyborgs, 2% Crazyes, 2% Gunfighters, 5% Headhunters, 2% Juicers, 3% Military Specialists, 10% Robot Pilots (includes 8 Glitter Boys), 5% Vagabonds, 4% Wilderness Scouts, as well as 5% Operators, 3% Ley Line Walkers, 1% Mystics, 2% Techno-Wizards, 2% Water-Air Elemental Fusionists, 1% Earth-Fire Elemental Fusionists, 2% Psychic Healers, 2% Psi-Stalkers and 4% others (including medical personnel, Body Docs, Cyber-Docs, and other O.C.C.s in which there are only a dozen or fewer). **Note:** Around 50 highly prized, experienced Operators are also part of the mercenary company (levels 7-12). They work to maintain both the machinery in the oil field and the combat equipment. Most members of the mercenary company have, at some point, worked on the oil derrick and still fill in as necessary. Otherwise, the local people are hired to handle most of the unskilled and low-skilled labor. Hired hands get a fair wage but do not share in the profits of the oil.

Average Experience Level: 1D4+6 for the half who are seasoned veterans; 1D4+1 for the newer mercenary recruits.

Some Common Shared Skills: Many mercs possess a handful of the same skills, including various Demolitions skills, Physical Labor, Mining, Salvage, Swimming, Radio: Basic, Undersea Salvage, W.P. Archery, W.P. Blunt, W.P. Energy Rifle, and W.P. Heavy M.D. Weapons, among others. ALL have *Lore: Vampires*.

Annual Mercenary Salaries: Veterans and Operators who maintain the oil operations (6th level and higher) make 520,000 credits a year. Newer recruits earn 150,000 to 250,000 a year. Officers (captain and up) earn 20% more, and Gamblin's top eight commanders make triple that. Nobody knows how much the general makes.

Civilians: The remainder of the inhabitants of the fort and city of Tampico are civilians who make up much of the labor force (mostly Vagabond O.C.C.) as well as some number of merchants, entertainers, artisans and others you'd expect to find at a town or small city. Average level of experience is 1D6+1. Those living away from the city are mostly fishermen (50%), farmers (30%), ranchers (10%) or homesteaders and others (10%).

The mercenaries of Tampico are, in effect, the owners and rulers of the Protectorate. These men and women come from a wide variety of fighting backgrounds and all have a stake in the oil operation and the Protectorate itself. Much like feudal lords of old, the mercenary force claims ownership of the land, the oil and the oil rig. In return, the mercenaries fight to protect the people and land of Tampico and to preserve the oil operation that makes them all rich. A score like this is what mercenary companies all dream about. The oil might as well be a fountain of liquid gold, and it is all theirs. Nobody is going to take it away from them, especially no stinking vampires. Using their oil platform as a completely fortified base on the water makes them doubly hard to eliminate.

The majority of the 1,050 Tampico mercenaries are seasoned veterans of war, well versed in vampire fighting, and highly mo-

tivated to fight. Not just for their own lives, but for a fortune in oil that will make them and their families rich beyond their wildest dreams. (Each merc is a stakeholder who gets a cut of the profits for as long as they protect Tampico and the oil rig.) Half are the founding members and most of the rest have been at the site for four or more years. That means all are used to fighting together as a team, and have battling the undead down to a science. They are not quite as adept at vampire fighting as professional Vampire Hunters, but they are knowledgeable and skilled at it. Moreover, they have home base advantage, and the defenders of the Tampico Protectorate are deadly fighters. General Gamblin and his mercenaries also have the financial resources to purchase the silver, weapons, power armor, robots, ships and other means they need to fight anyone in order to hold their position and the oil rig. These are very much mercenaries out for themselves, so it's a shame they don't use more of their money to make life much better for the villagers and fishermen who turn to them, but nobody is complaining. The locals are happy to be free and have the mercs' protection. They have it much better than many in Mexico and they know it.

For their part, the mercenaries treat the elimination of vampires as just another part of their routine. They no longer go out on raids into Muluc territory to root out vampires or to exact retribution, but they are quick to destroy any who threaten them or their holdings. The fort suffers at least one attack by one or a few vampires every week, but there have been no mass sieges in years. The villages outside the land-based fort are most vulnerable, especially from Wild Vampires who may slip in to feed upon the innocent. Yet even these misanthropes seldom engage in wholesale slaughter. Rather they feed and leave their victims alive so they may come back to feed upon them again and again. Only people who anger the vampires or fight back are slain.

Tampico mercenaries run the entire Tampico Protectorate as a military compound. That means all the expected military checkpoints, security measures and protocols are in place. Civilians are protected under a perpetual state of martial law. General Gamblin is their leader and the mercenaries are the law and authorities. As such, security is tight at Fort Tampico and the small city around it. Villages and communities within the 20 mile (32 km) radius of the fort are claimed as part of the Tampico Military Protectorate and patrolled throughout the day and early evening. At night, the villagers are on their own, or expected to head out to the Platform. However, if a farm or village falls under attack, night or day, they can radio for help and a rapid-response team will come to their defense. This can take 3D4 minutes for locations near the fort, but three times longer for those further out and on the outskirts. This is why civilians are encouraged to radio for help at the first signs of possible trouble. That often includes the sighting of strangers. Patrols and response teams vary greatly. Some are mercenary soldiers wearing body armor and riding hovercycles or horses, others are on foot, while still others may be clad in power armor and/or giant combat robots. (**Note:** At least 50% of their combat gear is purchased from Northern Gun and it is all modified for fighting vampires and Werewolves.)

Though patrols are frequent and response to trouble is fast, the mercs cannot be everywhere, and vampires can easily slip in and out unseen or before they can respond to a call for help. Even the fort is vulnerable when fighting an enemy that can enter by turning into an animal such as a bat, or as a mist. At the fort, vampire

incursions are met with swift and deadly force with a full alert and combat readiness in 1D4 minutes.

To further protect their assets and avoid provoking the Muluc Vampire Kingdom, the Tampico Protectorate keeps its distance from Reid's Rangers. They do not support the Rangers in any way and send them packing whenever they ride into town. Less notorious vampire hunters are accepted with more tolerance, but even they are asked to move along after a few days, and none are allowed to use Tampico as their staging ground or base of operations. Some people find this despicable, but it is the only way Tampico can survive. At any given time, 3D6 Vampire Hunters who are not Rangers can be found at Tampico, usually to receive medical care, stock up on weapons and supplies, or simply to rest for a bit before moving on.

Roger Gamblin

General Roger Gamblin became a mercenary soldier as a means to revenge. The first-born of twins, he and his family lived an impoverished but happy life as farmers in what was once called Lower Michigan. When he was only twelve, he suffered the tragedy from which the rest of his life would take shape. A gang of motorcycle-riding bandits had been pillaging the land for several weeks when they finally arrived at the Gamblin family farm. A hired mercenary company was hard on their heels, intent on stopping their rampage, but they did not arrive in time. When he was found, young Roger was sitting under a tree in a state of near catatonia, watching the house and barn burn to the ground. The bandits had vanished without a trace. Not knowing what else to do, the mercenary soldiers took the boy in and gave him shelter back in *New Lazlo*. For years he remained grim and silent, and no one in the city wanted to adopt the obviously "disturbed" child. He stayed in the care of the mercenaries, and eventually, he began to learn their ways.

As part of a mercenary company, young Roger spent half the time on the road and half the time around Northern Gun in Upper Michigan. In that environment, Roger was taught to be a mercenary soldier, but whatever his destiny, it was not to be a fierce warrior. Physically, he was thin and possessed only average strength. Neither was he particularly agile. He was, however, more intelligent than many of his fellows. Within three years of his rescue, he had taught himself how to read and had a solid understanding of electronics. The mercenaries fostered this, and trained him to become a communications expert. For the next several years, he gained experience fighting Xiticix in the northwest, and the monsters and demons that emerged from nearby Detroit and Windsor. Still, while he was part of a mercenary company that kept good people safe from harm, and did work for Northern Gun, there was little money to be made in the enterprise. Before he turned twenty-five, he decided to head south to Kingsdale where he could put his skills to use for more pay. Unfortunately, when he arrived, he found that the city was awash with young men and women who all had the same plan as he. With so many guns for hire gathered in one place, the competition for employment was fierce. Instead of being able to demand exorbitant fees for his services, Roger constantly had to underprice himself. Moreover, potential employers were always quick to hire prestigious and flamboyant super soldiers like Juicers, cyborgs and Crazies, but were less willing to consider a good radioman as an essential

investment. He remained employed for the next eight years, but when all was said and done, his income and savings amounted to almost nothing.

Mercenary groups formed and dissolved on a yearly basis in that setting, and by 94 P.A., Gamblin had managed to assemble a sizable group of fighters who, like him, were unappreciated by potential employers and underpaid for their work. In that same year, he sat down to a poker game. When it was finished, he had won himself a “treasure map” and 26,000 credits. On the suggestion of one of his soldiers (Anita Hoak, as it turned out, who had joined the Gamblin mercenary outfit earlier that same year), and having little else to lose, Roger traveled south to Old Mexico. He expected to find nothing but more low paying jobs fighting Wild Vampires and Werewolves. Instead he found an oil bonanza and the key to his retirement.

For sixteen years now, the self-proclaimed General Roger Gamblin and his mercenary company have made their home in Tampico. With a few exceptions, their position on the coast has largely isolated them from the major events of the past few years. As his power and wealth have grown, Gamblin has found himself with more and more leisure time on his hands. Lately, he has been having something of a personal crisis as he looks back over the course of his life, and thinks about all the opportunities that he missed out on. He finally has all the money he could ever want, but instead of being able to relax and enjoy it, he suddenly finds himself hating his sedentary lifestyle. In a strange twist, Roger Gamblin wants to get in all the exploration and combat that he should have had in his youth. In fact, were it not for his fear of being supplanted, he would likely turn control of the operations in Tampico to one of his lieutenants, gather up some men, and go on a series of grand expeditions into the Yucatan and South America. Maybe one day, he will.

Real Name: Roger Gamblin.

Alignment: Anarchist.

Attributes: I.Q. 14, M.E. 10, M.A. 15, P.S. 9, P.P. 9, P.E. 15, P.B. 10, Spd 23.

S.D.C.: 42. **Hit Points:** 37.

M.D.C.: By armor only.

Height: 6 feet (1.8 m). **Weight:** 245 pounds (110.5 kg).

Age: 49

P.P.E.: 8. **I.S.P.:** None.

Disposition: There was a time when Roger was angry and bitter.

The glass was always half-empty with this man, and no matter how much wealth or security he acquired, he always wished he had just a bit more. However, the years have softened him a bit, and he’s starting to see himself and his mercs as true protectors of the local people. However, he is suspicious of many of those he meets. He always suspects that out there, somewhere, someone is plotting to undermine him and take away all that he has. When dealing with strangers, he is curt to the point of sometimes being offensive. To the local people, he is becoming increasingly kind and protective.

Experience Level: 8th level Mercenary Soldier.

Skills of Note: Athletics: General, Computer Operation 90%, Cryptography 75%, Electronic Countermeasures 80%, Land Navigation 65%, Language: Speaks American and Spanish 98%, Literacy: American 75%, Lore: D-Bees 80%, Lore: Vampires 85%, Math: Basic 85%, Pilot Hovercycle 85%, Sensory Equipment 85%, Military Etiquette 80%, Radio: Ba-

sic 98%, Running and Wilderness Survival 65%. W.P. Knife, W.P. Energy Pistol, and W.P. Energy Rifle all at 8th level.

Combat Skills: Hand to Hand: Expert.

Attacks per Melee: Five.

Bonuses: +2 to strike, +4 to parry and dodge, +3 to roll with punch/fall/impact. , paired weapons, kick attack (2D6 damage), and receives critical hits on a roll of 18 or higher.

Magic Knowledge: None.

Psionic Powers: None.

Weapons of Note: NG-57 Heavy Ion Blaster (with 7 E-Clips), C-12 laser rifle (with 4 Energy Canister), and a silver-plated Bowie knife (1D6+2 damage). Also carries a 9mm pistol with wooden ammo.

Body Armor: Old-style Dead Boy heavy with 80 M.D.C.

Bionics & Cybernetics: None. Prior to the founding of Tampico, he could never afford them, and currently has little interest in getting them.

Money: As the leader of the Gamblin Men (also known as the Tampico mercenaries) and de facto ruler of the Tampico Military Protectorate, Roger Gamblin has many personal accounts worth millions: 70 million credits with the Black Market (accessible across much of North America), 7 million in Ciudad Juarez under a secret name, 37 million credits in a bank at Northern Gun, 35 million at MercTown, and a cool 50 million credits divided among many smaller amounts at various other places. And that’s just his personal funds. The mercenary company/Protectorate has 180 million credits currently on account with Northern Gun, 90 million with Bandito Arms, and 117 million credits on hand at Tampico. This does not include the military weapons, ammunition, armor, robots, vehicles, ships, silver reserve, oil pumping facility and other resources of the Protectorate and its cost of operations. Nobody but General Gamblin realizes how much money the Tampico oil operation earns.

Other Notable Places

Monterrey

Stats – Circa 109 P.A.

Estimated Population: 1200 permanent residents.

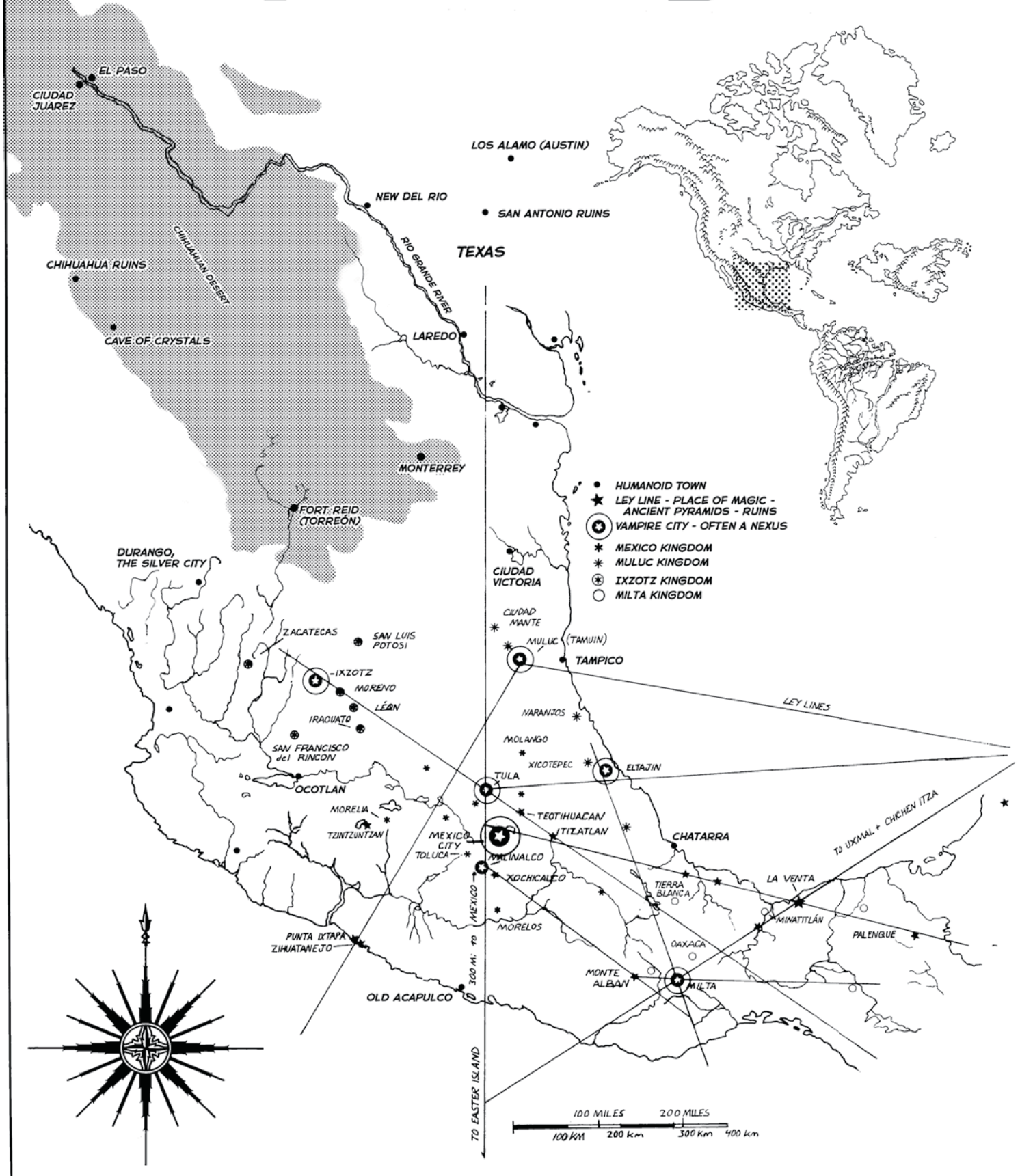
Racial Breakdown: 60% Human. 40% D-Bees.

Average Transient Population: 2D6x10.

Surrounding Communities (100 mile/160 km area): None of note, save for tiny, independent homesteads, and shepherds. Fort Reid and Ciudad Victoria are at least 150 miles (240 km) away, making Monterrey extremely isolated.

Near the edge of the Chihuahuan Desert, some 150 miles (240 km) south of the Rio Grande, are the remains of old Monterrey. They are located in the foothills of the Sierra Madre Oriental, and have a semi-arid climate. The Santa Catarina Riverbed runs through the new town of Monterrey, but is dry most of the time. What water remains flows underground and supplies many of the local wells. The weather is warm in the spring and autumn and

Vampire Kingdoms™



extremely hot during the summer when daytime temperatures can easily hit 108 degrees (42 Celsius). Even at night, it can still be 77 degrees (25 Celsius). Winters are mild and rainfall is scarce. Sparse forests of oak and pine can be found in the hills a few miles to the south and east, growing mostly down in rock canyons where it is cooler.

Once a city of more than two million people, it boasted several hospitals, two commercial airports, three universities and seventy-two public libraries. It was also home to both a military base and an airfield. Like many cities in the Mexican interior, it initially survived the Coming of the Rifts only to be flattened later on by a series of earthquakes. Today, much of the old ruins lie buried, but a newer settlement has sprung up on top of them.

Modern Monterrey is a small, filthy place established as a southern outpost of the *Pecos Empire*. Its streets are nothing more than packed dirt, its houses are ramshackle huts, and there is nothing that even resembles law and order. For nearly one hundred years now, scavengers and raiders have regularly come to Monterrey in the hope of unearthing some kind of technological treasure. This has led to a small, permanent population of about 1,200, half of whom are D-Bees. 70% of the people live simple lives as farmers or ranchers, raising cattle and breeds of Nodosaurus. The only other businesses of note are a blacksmith, a carpenter, a hidden mechanic's garage with a secret fuel depot (can repair most common vehicles and M.D.C. body armor, recharge E-Clips, etc.), and a half dozen saloons and boarding houses.

Large groups of bandits also reside here year-round. These are mostly hovercycle gangs and members of the various factions within the Pecos Empire. An additional 1D6x100 vagabonds, bandits, adventurers, and other transients can always be found in town or searching around the ruins. The town, although dilapidated, is five times bigger than its population might suggest. These extra buildings are used roughly once a month when Pecos Empire war bands come to town. The majority of these groups average 3D4x10 members in need of water, rest, and repairs. A smaller band might contain only 4D6 men, while the largest can be up to 1D6x1000 strong! Such large armed forces are an uncommon sight, however, and pass through only once or twice a year.

Monterrey is often plagued by gangs of Wild Vampires and solitary Secondary Vampires. However, there is no known vampire or mind-controlled slave living in the town. Whenever a vampire is discovered, the bandits hunt it down and destroy it without delay. Ninety-nine percent of the people wear crosses and carry some kind of vampire-killing weaponry. Crosses, wooden weapons, and simple bows are the most common. Only Pecos thugs and travelers tend to have more sophisticated anti-vampire gear.

New Del Rio

Stats – Circa 109 P.A.

Estimated Population: Approximately 50,000.

Racial Breakdown: 50% Human. 50% D-Bees.

Average Transient Population: Average 5,000 annually, mostly bandits.

Surrounding Communities (100 mile/160 km area): Few of note. The countryside in all directions is populated by nomadic bandit gangs, punctuated by tiny, independent farmsteads.

This city of 50,000 is built on the northern bank of the Rio Grande, roughly 400 miles (640 km) south of the powerful kingdom of Los Alamo. Half of the population are D-Bees. Its people are poverty-stricken, and its borders are constantly violated by vampires, none of which seems to matter much to the decadent and tyrannical family that rules over it. Sitting in the middle of nowhere in the old American State of Texas, New Del Rio is avoided by travelers. As a result, it has become a haven for the worst kind of outlaws and murdering scum to the point where it is even filthier and more dangerous than Ciudad Juarez. In recent years, it has established strong relations with the Pecos Empire, and thugs and gangs control the streets. None of the benefits of the new trading agreements have managed to trickle down to the common folk, and so aside from a handful of rich and powerful individuals, the level of technology here is quite low. Only one-third of the buildings have electricity, and half have no kind of indoor plumbing. There are few large stores or big hotels, but there are many small shops, boarding houses, taverns, brothels and rat-traps of hotels. The quality of merchandise, food, drinks and services varies greatly from shop to shop. Truly, it is the people who suffer. Most can barely scratch out a living and 90% are illiterate. The large farms owner and the cattle and dinosaur ranches owned by the wealthy of Del Rio.

With its semi-arid climate, long, hot summers, and lack of trees, New Del Rio is a perfect hunting ground for Wild Vampires. The local packs most often terrorize and feed on those inhabitants housed along the outskirts of town or on the farmers who live even further away. However, the vampires are so bold, and so unchecked, that they sometimes run through the streets victimizing who they please. There are also a few hundred Secondary Vampires that have established lairs within the city and stalk visitors, adventurers and Vampire Hunters.

One nearby area of note are the ruins of **Laughlin Air Force Base**, nine miles (14 km) to the east. The hangars and other buildings were all decimated long ago, though whether this was caused by the Coming of the Rifts or by some later conflict is unknown. Most items of worth have already been looted from the site, but an intrepid scavenger or down-on-his-luck scholar might find something useful were they to look long and hard enough. Such a search would be a difficult prospect, however, as the entire site not only provides shelter for a nest of 140 Wild Vampires, but for the six Secondary Vampires who jointly control them. During the daytime, the base is guarded by wolves and Chupacabras who will not think twice about attacking a party of interlopers.

Ciudad Victoria

The Floating City

Stats – Circa 109 P.A.

Estimated Population: 14,200

Racial Breakdown: 60% Humans, 39% D-Bees and 1% others.

Average Transient Population: Less than 8,000 per year.

Surrounding Communities (100 mile/ 160 km area): Tampico lies to the southeast. Ciudad Mante (belonging to the Muluc Vampire Kingdom) is found to the south. In the mountains to the east are Flores, Jaumave, San Antonio, and Miquihana. All are medium-sized villages (no more than 200 people living in each). Highway 120 is the only reliable pass through the Sierra Madre Oriental in these parts which means it also attracts adven-

turers, bandits and vampires. A massive ley line runs north-south through the mountains as well.

Fourteen thousand people, more than half of them human, call this isolated city-state their home. Sprawled along the area where the *Río Pilon River* empties into **Lake Vicente Guerrero**, more than 30% of the population lives directly on the water in order to better protect themselves from vampire attack. There are few hard streets here, and fewer buildings built on dry land. Houseboats and interconnected floating platforms make up the majority of **Ciudad Victoria**. A time traveler from Earth's past might be strongly reminded of the junks of Hong Kong or the canals of Venice. Fishing is the primary means of self-support, with traditional farming and raising of livestock making up the shortfall. The technology level is modest, roughly equal to the turn of the 20th Century. However, the occasional hover vehicle, robot horse and giant robot is evident. Victoria has seven master carpenters, numerous boat builders, three saloons, two dance halls, and a handful of merchants selling goods and services for the common needs of the inhabitants. In the center of the floating city is an open marketplace made of five large rafts. Most basic foods, clothing, farming supplies, fishing and boating gear, and common goods can be bought or acquired through trade. Fish, corn, tomatoes, avocados, vanilla beans, peppers, onions, rabbits and chickens are the most common foods. Cheese made from goat's milk is also available. Cattle, horses, sheep, goats and other livestock are found in the scattered ranches and farms on land, though there are a surprising number of animals kept on the rafts and platforms of the floating city. Animal pens and stables, as well as parking areas for ground vehicles, are found along the shoreline.

The handful of *vaqueros* (cowboys) who raise horses and cattle on land are considered to be heroes in the community, since they must not only protect their herd from mundane threats like wolves and coyotes, but also combat vampires on a regular basis. Panoplosaurs, on the other hand, are common creatures and often seen bathing in the river and lake. In addition to the free-range Panoplosaurs are those used for cattle and as work and riding animals.

Living on the water has kept the people of Ciudad Victoria safe despite being surrounded in all directions by packs of Wild Vampires. Irrigation ditches and canals are cut into the land near the land-based portions of the city, and sprinkler systems are integrated all throughout the city, both on land and on the water. Those who live the farthest ashore are obviously in the greatest danger, but a nightly militia patrols the streets and outer areas. Among them are fifty young men and women trained by experts from *Reid's Rangers*, and the famous *Grizzly Carter* is a frequent visitor. No vampires are known to inhabit the town, but they have been discovered in the nearby ruins of the pre-Rifts city of Victoria, from which the town takes its name. Vampires have also been identified in traveling shows and among nomadic groups of bandits and mercenaries.

Like most of Northern Mexico, the land is semi-arid and sees very little annual rain fall. Thirty miles (48 km) to the west are foothills that quickly turn into the *Sierra Madre Oriental* – a chain of mountains that run from **Monterrey** to the **Vampire Kingdom of Milta**. The mountains, described once as a land of “abrupt topography,” are filled with deep canyons, valleys, and ravines. Such areas are inhabited by *Ostrosaurus* and *Silonar* that prey on the plant-eating dinosaurs (and people), as well as

various other *dinosaurs*, *Giant Canyon Worms*, *Grigleapers* and *Whisker Coyotes* (see **Rifts® New West™** for their descriptions; the latter makes a beloved pet). Of course, there are also scorpions and snakes (see **Rifts® New West™**).

All manner of animals and dinosaurs also make their home in the mountains, providing a lush hunting ground for anyone attempting to settle the area and willing to brave the *Chupacabras* and *Wild Vampires* that nest there. At higher elevations, the mountains are covered with vast forests of pine and oak. During the Golden Age of Humankind, this was one of the most deforested regions on Earth, but since the Coming of the Rifts, it has returned to its former woodland glory. Timber from these trees is critical for building materials to the people of Victoria.

The undead tend to stay clear of the pine-oak forest, and so one might suspect it to be a safe place to live or explore. Quite the opposite. The massive ley line that bisects the mountain chain means that many other alien, demonic and monstrous creatures can be found there. Most notable are *Devil Unicorns* and a few small flocks of *Leatherwings* (see **Rifts® New West™** for both), *Loogaroo* (see **Rifts® Conversion Book**), *Death Weaver Spiders*, and at least one small clan of *Wereocelots* and several tribes of *Werewolves*. *Sun Dogs* are also a constant threat to fishermen on Lake Vicente Guerrero. And at least one *Worm Wraith* (see **Rifts® New West™**) has been reported.

The Cave of Crystals

La Cueva de los Cristales

Stats – Circa 109 P.A.

Estimated Population: 930

Racial Breakdown: 53% Humans, 45% D-Bees and 2% others.

Average Transient Population: 3,000 per year (250 people/month) actually make it to the mine.

Surrounding Communities (100 mile/160 km area): The ruins of Chihuahua are only 65 miles (104 km) away, and are a haven for Wild Vampires. Anyone trying to get to the Crystal Caves can expect to come under constant attack as the undead try to stop them from obtaining any silver from the mine. Otherwise, half a dozen sizable villages can be found in the foothills to the west and south.

One of the last operational silver mines in Mexico can be found in the middle of the **Chihuahuan Desert**, three hundred miles (480 km) south of **Juarez** and an equal distance northwest of **Fort Reid**. Although in Pre-Rifts times, this place was called *Naica Mine*, today it takes its name from the mysterious caves found at the bottom of the facility. Caves filled with the largest natural crystals in the world, and which are imbued with supernatural properties.

The mine was a nesting ground for hundreds of Wild Vampires until 92 P.A., when explorers from Arzno found themselves drawn to the site. Included in their number were Mining Cyborgs, Techno-Wizards, Warlocks, and Wilderness Scouts. Every time that they tried to go into the mines, they were attacked. When they fled however, they weren't pursued outside. The Arzno adventurers soon realized that the vampires weren't trying to kill them so much as they were just stopping them from extracting any silver. Rather than give up and move on, the warriors decided the caves were an invaluable piece of real estate. When support arrived in the form of 60 Reid's Rangers and 30 local Native

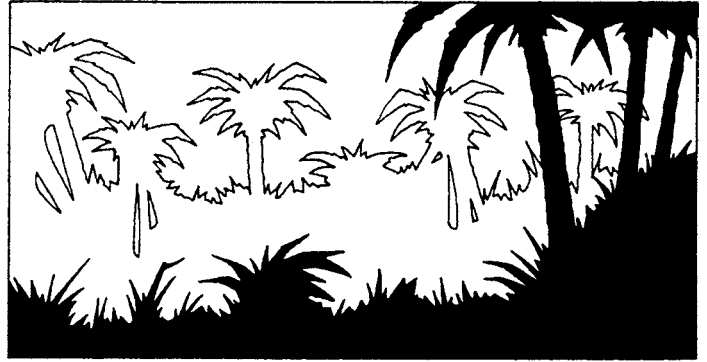
Americans, who promised to help wrestle control of the silver mine from the vampires in exchange for a regular percentage of the mineral, the groups joined forces. What followed was a three month long series of very bloody battles, until the vampires were driven out.

For the past eighteen years now, the site has remained in human hands, but it has been a constant struggle to keep it so. The ruins of Chihuahua are only 65 miles (104 km) to the northwest, and are well known to be infested with Wild Vampires. Not a month goes by that a force of more than two hundred undead doesn't attack. The casualties on both sides are high and horrific. Still, Doc Reid continues to provide a garrison of highly experienced Rangers (each of them level 1D4+4); so does the Native American tribe. All know that if the mines return to vampire control, or worse yet, are destroyed by the monsters, one of the last silver supplies in Mexico will all but vanish. Critically important to those who wage war against the undead, the community is therefore more of a Techno-Wizard military base than a town or trading post. There are very few services here that cater to adventuring parties. Likewise, there is little to buy, apart from silver, zinc, and lead, which the mines produce in abundance; and, of course, the Cave Crystals.

The Crystal Caves. Below the lowest levels of the silver mine are a series of caves. It is said that half a million years ago, hot, mineral-rich water filled these caves, and this, in turn, allowed the formation of the largest crystals ever discovered. People first stumbled upon this amazing discovery in the early 1900s, and by the beginning of the Golden Age, a total of three chambers had been found; the *Ice Palace*, the *Cave of Swords*, and largest of all, the *Cave of Crystals*. The environment inside these caves is otherworldly, with temperatures averaging 136 Fahrenheit (58 C) and a humidity level close to 100%. It is so hot, in fact, that condensation will begin to form on the inside of a visitor's lungs because the inside of their bodies is so much *cooler* compared to the surrounding air. Without some kind of protection, such as power armor or a cyborg body, the average person cannot stand more than ten minutes within the Crystal Caves. Each cave is filled with gigantic, milky white gypsum crystals (also called *selenite*), the largest of which is 36 feet (11 m) in length, 13 feet (4 m) in diameter, and weighs 55 tons. Unique in all the world, there is no doubting that the three caves are imbued with some kind of supernatural quality, despite the fact that they are nowhere near a ley line or nexus point. Because they are underground, very hot, quite steamy, and filled with air, Elemental Fusionists and Warlocks from any of the four life signs receive +20% to summon an Elemental being when within the caves, just as they would if they were on a nexus point. An ever-increasing number of Elemental Fusionists have been born into the community as well, with the oldest of them just now turning eighteen years old. It is assumed that this too is a result of the mystic crystalline caves, but no one knows why.

For local practitioners of magic, the silver in the mines is worth nothing when compared to the crystals from the caves. Selenite, named after the ancient goddess of the Moon, is known in mystic circles as a *cleanser of impurities*, which may explain why no vampires can enter the caves. Used in healing, the stones help rid the body of impure energies, and in a like manner, slivers and small pieces of the stone are an important component in the construction of Techno-Wizard devices. The Vampire Cross and the TW Ice Blade (**Rifts® Book of Magic**, page 319) were both

invented here, and remain integral items in the encampment's defense.



Acapulco And the Sons of Quetzalcoatl

Stats – Circa 109 P.A.

Estimated Population: 1,760 (started at around 590).

Racial Breakdown: 65% Humans, 15% D-Bees and 20% others (mostly dolphins and a few other aquatic beings).

Average Transient Population: 1D6x10

Surrounding Communities (100 mile/160 km area): 5,000 (50% human, mostly coastal fishermen or sheep herders, low tech level).

The climate here is hot but comfortable. There are distinct wet and dry seasons, and tropical storms and hurricanes are threats from May through November. However, major storms have been uncommon since the Dark Age. Citrus trees and other fruit-bearing plants are abundant in the surrounding hills, and there are evergreen pines in the highest elevations. Fauna mostly consists of deer, small mammals, a wide variety of birds, and marine animals such as fish and turtles. A seething *ley line* lies less than thirty miles (48 km) to the east, and connects to both the **Mexico City** super nexus and the major junction on **Easter Island**.

During the Golden Age, Acapulco was one of the world's most opulent vacation destinations. Built around a horseshoe-shaped bay and ringed by lush mountains, it was a fantastic place to hike, swim, fish and sail. The city was also famous for its beaches and its nightlife. All that vanished during the Great Cataclysm, and for centuries after, the area laid abandoned. Nature returned. The hills exploded in a wild variety of plant life. Several pods of intelligent dolphins took up residency in the warm Pacific waves. Then, a century ago, humans returned to the bay as it offered safety and an abundance of natural resources. It was also far from the vampiric scourge that was consuming the interior of the country. The dolphins in particular were quite happy to see "land people" again, and made easy friendships with all who arrived.

For a hundred years, life in Acapulco was idyllic. The weather beautiful, food literally growing on trees, with fish, crab and shrimp plentiful in the surrounding waters. It was a small corner of paradise in an otherwise hellish landscape. Then, two decades ago, things started to change. Horune Pirates discovered Acapulco and began to raid and harass the inhabitants. Sometimes the monsters came ashore and captured slaves. Other times, their massive ships would just bombard the town until several buildings were flattened or set on fire. The dolphins do what they can

to protect people and drive the pirates away, as does Acapulco's tiny militia, but the losses incurred are always heartbreaking. And the Horune Pirates always return.

Things looked up when the **Sons of Quetzalcoatl**, a famous group of traveling heroes, arrived. They fell in love with beautiful Acapulco and, with the people's permission, made it their home. This motley band of heroes is composed of many potent beings, including a Full Conversion Cyborg, a dozen men of magic, several robot pilots, a Psi-Hound, and two dragons! (See **Rifts® Dimension Book 2: Pantheons of the Megaverse®** for details on these characters.) The people of Acapulco embraced them with open arms, certain that their troubles with pirates were now over. Indeed, the mighty heroes have sent many Horune Pirates fleeing for their lives, and many others have been sent to a watery grave.

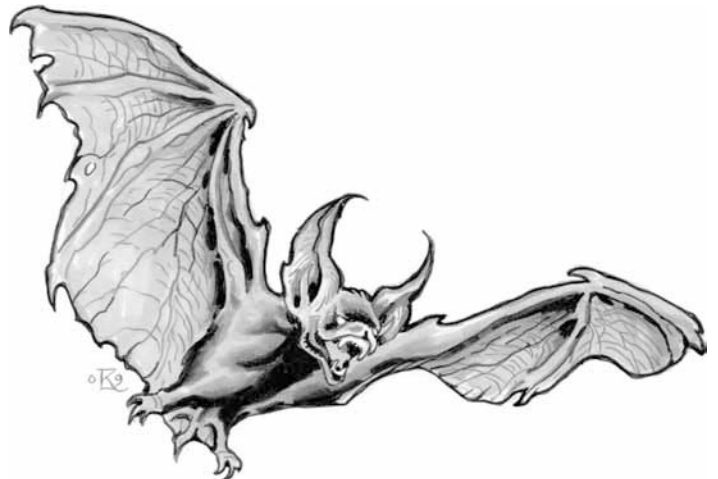
As formidable as the group is, their mission is to fight vampires and rescue people kept as human cattle from the monsters' clutches. This has created two problems. **One**, it means the Sons of Quetzalcoatl travel deep into the Vampire Kingdoms and are gone for 3D4 weeks at a time, leaving Acapulco pretty much defenseless. **Two**, the heroes too often return with 2D6x10 refugees in tow. This constant addition of new people – completely unskilled and naive as children if they were livestock – is putting a strain on the ecology and resources of Acapulco. The population has nearly tripled over the last decade. It would have increased six-fold except that many of those rescued are so unfamiliar with the world outside their cattle pens, they are unable to cope, wander off and are killed in the wild, fall easy prey to Wild Vampires and Horune raiders, die in accidents (half of them swimming accidents) or get sick and die. Meanwhile, the natural food and resources that once kept the small number of inhabitants (under 800 people) well fed are being consumed quickly and waste disposal has become a serious issue. Every time new immigrant strangers are brought back to live among them, the bounty of the land is stretched that much thinner. The people have complained to the heroes, but their words have fallen upon deaf ears. Things have gotten to the point that the people of Acapulco have become disenchanted with the Sons of Quetzalcoatl and there are many who wish the heroes would find a new base of operations. They'll take their chances with the Horune Pirates.

Acapulco does have a militia of a hundred men armed with salvaged or homemade body armor (non-environmental, 1D4x10+25 M.D.C.) and armed with a variety of energy weapons they've acquired over the years. (Vagabond fighters of 1D4 level experience.) However, they are completely impotent against seasoned and well-armed invaders of any kind, let alone the Horune. There are no heavy cannons, rail guns, or powered armor suits in the town, save for those owned by the Sons of Quetzalcoatl. Acapulco does not have any true warriors. They are a peace-loving people with many experienced fishermen and boat builders, a few farmers, a dozen Ocean Wizards (see **Rifts® Underseas™**), and two Body Fixers. Most people are kind and gentle (80% scrupulous alignment) and make their homes out of wood or salvaged materials, built close to the water and seldom exceeding a single story in height. Despite the simplicity of the houses and life, the entire town has electricity to spare thanks to a nuclear power supply salvaged from a haunted and abandoned pre-Rifts naval base three hundred miles (480 km) up the coast.

Acapulco is run as a simple democracy. A mayor is elected every six years and controls things with the help of a five-person advisory council of elders. For most of the town's history, this

has been a pretty quiet and mundane event, but the next election promises to be very controversial. *Manuel "Manny" Odalis* has announced his intention to become the next mayor, and is loudly claiming that his first act will be to stop accepting refugees and throw out the Sons of Quetzalcoatl. He promises to find new heroes to protect them, but does not explain who and how. He's heard about *Lemurians* from the dolphins and is hoping they might arrange a meeting with these aquatic heroes. However, Lemurians do not usually function as protectors or mercenaries so it seems unlikely. (**Note:** Could this be a job for the player characters?)

Manny is an average-looking, paunchy man in his mid-fifties, who lacks charisma. Manny, nonetheless, has two things going for him – he can trace his ancestry back to the founding of the town, and he's the only Operator for a hundred miles. That last part is important, because it is Manny who, in his younger days, salvaged the fusion reactor that powers the town, and it is he, alone, who maintains it. This is bad, because Manny has made noise that if he's not elected and the Sons of Quetzalcoatl given the boot, he's leaving Acapulco and moving north. The people may face the difficult choice of either electing him mayor or risk losing their source of electricity. The reactor, given its advanced age and complexity, requires constant care. It will begin to falter within 2D6 days after Manny's departure, and completely shut down within a month without his attention.



Ocotlan

Mexico's Greatest Secret

Stats – Circa 109 P.A.

Estimated Population: 470

Racial Breakdown: 80% Human. 20% D-Bees.

Average Transient Population: 3D6x10 at any one time.

Surrounding Communities (100 mile/160 km area): The vampire town of San Francisco del Rincon and part of the Ixzotz Vampire Kingdom lies directly north. The surrounding countryside has a population of 2,550 (70% human, simple farmers or scavengers).

Located on the northeast shore of **Lake Chapala** – Mexico's largest freshwater lake – Ocotlan has a long history of paranormal activity. Near the end of the 20th Century, several flying saucer/UFO sightings were reported in the skies above the city, none of which were ever explained. Ocotlan was also home to a magnetic anomaly called the *foco tonal*; a circular patch of ground

19 inches in diameter (48 cm) that seemed to amplify the voice of anyone standing within it. Occultists the world over came to study it, some claiming it was a result of the fly-bys of the UFOs, while others claimed it was a portal to another world.

The most infamous supernatural event in Ocotlan's history, however, and the one which is most important in these post-Cataclysm days, first took place back in 1847. In October of that year, a massive earthquake rocked the city, destroying most of it. Included among the wreckage was one of the oldest and most beautiful churches in all of Mexico, "La Purisima." The following day, a Sunday as it just so happened, Ocotlan's faithful held their worship service in the streets outside the destroyed church. All of a sudden, a vision of the Messiah was seen in the sky. The miracle was documented in the written accounts of many, and people later said that the Lord appeared so as to bring mercy to the suffering people. As a sign of thankfulness, Ocotlan's men swore to hold a commemorative festival every year, and from that day on, an annual parade marched through the streets to end up at the restored church. The ceremony was repeated a total of 250 times before the Coming of the Rifts once again leveled the area, and whether because of the intervention of some higher power or as the result of a ritual performed for two and a half centuries, Ocotlan today can claim something that not many other places in the world can. The entire town appears to be sacred ground.

Supernatural beings, even greater ones such as Demon Lords, Master Vampires, and a Vampire Intelligence's Demonic Familiar, cannot come within twenty feet (6 m) of Ocotlan's old city outskirts. Lesser supernatural forces, including ghosts, Secondary and Wild Vampires, Zombies, Mummies, Brodki, Ghouls, and the like, cannot even come within line of sight to the town! Meanwhile, the people within the protected area have all of the benefits of being inside a superior circle of protection (+5 to save against all psychic and magic attacks, impervious to possession, +8 to save versus Horror Factor, and all mages and psychics are granted an additional 10 P.P.E. or I.S.P.). Additionally, any character who engages in any form of meditation (including an hour or more of prayer) sees P.P.E. and I.S.P. recover at twice the usual rate and everyone in town is +10% to survive coma/death, symptoms (penalties and duration) of disease are half, and they heal at twice the usual rate from disease and injury.

Today, Ocotlan boasts a population of about 470 people, mostly humans. Almost everyone born here since the Great Cataclysm has remained in the town from cradle to the grave, having no real reason to leave this little corner of the world. The housing consists of salvaged pre-Rifts buildings and houses and barns made of clay and wood, and gardens can be found everywhere. Small flocks of sheep graze in areas that were once parks, and in the center of it all lies La Purisima; a fully-restored, medium-sized, rectangular church made out of rough, red brick. Life here is pleasant, self-sufficient, and relatively safe. Vampires only attack those who wander beyond the city limits, but there are many Wild Vampire clans that lay in wait, which is one reason the town isn't larger than it is. That, and that few outsiders have ever heard of Ocotlan, as well as its close proximity to Ixzotz, and the fact that life is too simple for many people.

All that may be about to change. The Ixzotz Vampire Kingdom lies less than sixty-five miles (104 km) due north of Ocotlan. They've known about "the vampire-proof town," which is why they have it surrounded by dozens of Wild Vampire tribes. However, with Vampire Hunters becoming more numerous and

aggressive, the rulers of Ixzotz fear that Vampire Hunters will flock to the site as word spreads. Safe from retribution, this tiny lakeside town would become a mecca for any and all who seek to annihilate the undead. Therefore, Ocotlan must be destroyed. Not conquered or subdued, but erased from existence.

The problem is how exactly to accomplish this. No vampiric minions can enter the town (most cannot even bear to lay eyes on it), and most monstrous allies are likewise repulsed. For the time being, Ixzotz has erected a kind of reverse siege – groups of vampires have been positioned at various points in the surrounding countryside with the goal not of driving Ocotlan's population out, but rather of keeping other adventurers from getting in. This is only a stopgap measure. The obvious solution is to hire mortals to raid the town and drag everyone out or slaughter them all. However, Ixzotz fears that giving an armed force knowledge of and access to Ocotlan would make matters worse, and almost certainly let outsiders know of its existence. Right now, Ocotlan is Mexico's greatest secret. Even Reid's Rangers don't know about it.

All of the above leaves Ocotlan isolated and its future uncertain.

Chatarra (Veracruz)

A Coalition Outpost

Stats – Circa 109 P.A.

Estimated Population: 330

Racial Breakdown: 90% Human. 10% other (Psi-Hounds of various breeds).

Average Transient Population: Nearly zero.

Surrounding Communities (100 mile/160 km area): A ley line and two Aztec pyramids are less than 20 miles (32 km) inland. The vampire towns of Terra Blanca and Oaxaca, both belonging to the Milta Vampire Kingdom, are 50 miles (80 km) and 100 miles (160 km) away respectively. The soldiers stationed here assume that Gayle Beltzer and her top aides have absconded to one of these places and may be attempting to sell their advanced weapon designs to the vampires.

During the Golden Age, Veracruz was one of Mexico's largest and most important ports. At its peak, more than sixteen million tons of cargo (including 70% of Mexico's automobile exports) moved through it every year and at least thirty ocean-going vessels were docked there at any one time. Today, instead of being just another submerged and inaccessible ruin, the place resembles a massive scrapyards or auto-wrecker's junkyard. When the Great Cataclysm struck, Veracruz was smashed apart by gigantic tidal waves and hurricane force winds. However, because the surrounding countryside was relatively flat, the wreckage and debris was pushed many miles inland. Now, piles of rusted metal and faded plastic lie everywhere. Hover cars, once destined for Africa, Europe, and South America, stick up out of the soil like tombstones. Cargo containers by the thousands are scattered all about. With so much raw, salvageable, and recyclable material so easily at hand, it was inevitable that someone would want to call this place home.

In 105 P.A., following the destruction of their homeland by the Coalition, a group of weapon merchants from **Iron Heart Armaments** found themselves alone and isolated on the Mexican Gulf Coast. They had been about to deliver a substantial amount of

military hardware to the mercenaries in *Fort Tampico*, but when news arrived that all their friends and loved ones had been killed in a CS pogrom, they cancelled the sale. Shortly afterwards, they encamped amidst the Veracruz ruins. Under the leadership of *Gayle Beltzer*, they decided to use their remaining fighter jets, bombers, and ships to wage a campaign of piracy against the Coalition Navy. They called themselves the **Iron Heart Avengers** and became quite proficient at battling Coalition forces in and around the Gulf of Mexico, including the States of Lone Star and El Dorado (CS Arkansas). They stayed highly mobile, used hit and run tactics, and attacked only isolated CS vessels. The Iron Heart Avengers moved back and forth between four bases: Veracruz, Newfoundland, the Azores, and one on the west coast of Africa. Most of the time though, especially during the winter months, Veracruz was their home.

If the Avengers had one problem, besides being terminally short on money, fuel, food, and resources, it was that they became too good at what they were doing. In 109 P.A., they undertook their most audacious plan yet. A team of expert saboteurs was sent to the Coalition shipyard at *Fort Pinnacle* with a mission to cripple the aircraft carrier CSS Arkansas, then nearing completion. Their actions were successful, and set the launching of the massive, new ship back by a year or more. However, the team was caught as they tried to extricate themselves, and under torture, the Coalition finally came to know just who it was that had been disrupting their operations in the Gulf for so long. *Vice Admiral Nathan Copeland*, the man in charge of the entire 2nd Fleet, ordered that the Iron Heart Avengers then be removed from the face of the earth. Shortly thereafter, a flotilla of ten Coalition warships sailed down the coastline towards Veracruz. They included the aircraft carrier *CSS Lone Star*, the amphibious assault transport *CSS Missouri*, two missile cruisers, and six destroyers. The Iron Heart Avengers put up a valiant defense, scrambling all fifteen of their Grey Falcon jets, while a half dozen battle tanks defended the shore. Yet they were so heavily outnumbered by the Coalition that it was all in vain. By day's end, Admiral Copeland had established a beachhead at Veracruz.

Although destroying pirate havens is a part of the Admirals' mandate, the CS High Command has never given them the authority to conduct invasions into other lands, nor to use the 2nd Fleet to engage in territorial expansion. First, that would put too much power into the hands of one man. Second, invading a foreign land without ample intelligence beforehand means there is no telling what kind of hornets' nest one might end up kicking. An overzealous Admiral invading the wrong place could lead to the destruction of the Coalition States – not likely, but always conceivable to the paranoids who run the CS.

Therefore, although he had reason to suspect that Gayle Beltzer and her top engineers had fled into the Mexican interior, he could send his men no farther without committing treason. The fleet was forced to return home, but before it did, a contingent of CS troops was left behind at Veracruz to dissuade any other pirates from using the wreckage as a hideout. Consisting of three hundred soldiers, technicians, and medical personnel, and surrounded by a defensive wall made of hover cars and cargo containers, the outpost is commonly called **Chatarra** (Spanish for 'scrap metal'). Other defenses include six GR-155 electromagnetic howitzers, twenty Super-SAMAS, and four Hellfire robots. Among the troops stationed here are ten Nautical Commandos who are currently studying up on how to combat vampires so

that they can begin searching the country side for any surviving Iron Heart Avengers and to assess the alleged vampire threat. The base also has a powerful, long-range radio transmitter that allows it to keep in constant contact with elements of the 2nd Fleet.

Copper Canyon

La Barranca del Cobre

Stats – Circa 109 P.A.

Estimated Population: 35,000 – 70,000.

Racial Breakdown: 83% Human (mostly Raramuri Indians), 15% D-Bees and 2% others (Faerie Folk, dragons, etc.).

Average Transient Population: Unknown.

Surrounding Communities (100 mile/160 km area): Few of note. The canyon is very isolated and difficult to get to, and "towns" such as most people think of them are simply nonexistent.

The **Sierra Madre Occidental** is a mountain range that runs parallel to the west coast of Mexico. It is a dramatic landscape of steep peaks cut through with plunging ravines, the deepest of which is the so-called **Copper Canyon**. Although its name sounds singular, the Copper Canyon is really a series of six distinct chasms carved out of the rock by rivers which continue to flow to this day. Taken all together, the system is larger and has deeper portions than even the Grand Canyon in America. The mountains here have moderate temperatures in the late fall and early spring, but the canyon floors are humid and warm all year round. Drought can be a problem from April until June, but after that, the rainy season begins. Named for the color of the vegetation that grows on the ravine walls, this area is home to twenty-three species of pine tree, and nearly two hundred different kinds of oak. Huge fig and palm trees live on the floor, while Mexican douglas fir trees can be found high up the mountain slopes, beginning at 8,000 feet (2,400 m).

The presence of so many trees and flowing sources of water means this place has been left untouched by vampires. Also, with no ley lines for hundreds of miles, supernatural monsters seldom visit these canyons and mountains. The canyons contain two of Mexico's tallest waterfalls, and for whatever reason, otherworldly beings are drawn to them. The first, **Basaseachic Falls**, has a drop of 807 feet (246 m). A sizable community of Great Little People (Native American spirits somewhat akin to Faerie Folk; see **Rifts® World Book 15: Spirit West** for details) live there. Persistent rumors suggest the Worm Wraith originate there, though there is no record of an actual encounter with one at the falls.

The other waterfall, known as the **Piedras Volada** reaches an impressive height of 1,486 feet (453 m), but only flows during the rainy time of the year. A Whip-Tailed Dragon hatchling named *Lanaqa* lives there until the falls dry up, when she then migrates westward to the Pacific coast. Cougars and Mexican wolves, once relegated to the most remote portions of the area, now also run freely through the canyons. As do Giant Canyon Worms and a variety of dinosaurs.

Most importantly for adventurers, the Copper Canyon is home to the **Raramuri Indians**. In centuries past, these traditionalists disassociated themselves with outsiders, maintaining a lifestyle that dated back to the 1600s. However, since the Coming of the

Rifts and the return of magic to the world, they have begun to take a more active role in regional affairs. The Raramuri believe that this world is a reflection of the afterlife, and that evil must therefore be fought and vanquished in the here and now so that it ceases to exist in the hereafter. Raramuri Spirit Warriors and Shamans often aid to, and accept aid from, like-minded people of any race, species or O.C.C. The Copper Canyon can therefore be the perfect refuge for adventurers to hide or recuperate.



Durango

The Silver City

Stats – Circa 109 P.A.

Estimated Population: 12,000

Racial Breakdown: 84% Humans, 9% Psi-Stalkers and 7% D-Bees.

Average Transient Population: Less than 100 per year.

Surrounding Communities (20 mile/32 km area): Four farming villages with a population of less than 800 each. These are defensive sanctuaries for farmers who live too far from Durango to retreat to the city every night. They bear the brunt of the worst vampire attacks and are basically huddled collections of improvised bunkers and wood and silver defenses.

Before the Coming of the Rifts, Mexico was one of the world's largest producers of silver, second only to Peru. And in the modern day, even as the vampires extend their control over the country, giant veins and deposits of silver lie beneath the monsters' feet. Old silver mines are closed with explosives, sealed up and forgotten. Those safely within vampire territory are sometimes mined by human laborers and their output used to make weapons that can be employed against other vampires and Werebeasts.

The practice is still dangerous for vampires, as dozens of human slaves could potentially arm themselves with improvised silver weapons.

For human kingdoms, however, finding a lode of silver is a godsend. The material offers some measure of safety and protection against vampires, and many human communities are built on or near small silver mines.

Victoria de Durango, once one of the largest cities in pre-Rifts Mexico, is situated in the midst of rich silver mining country. After the Great Cataclysm, it grew quietly, far removed from most human occupied regions, and for a time, was an important strategic obstacle as the Vampire Kingdoms expanded. For decades, the human community at Durango was just another feeding ground – an unwilling food source for the vampires at *Ixzotz* and *Muluc*. The residents hurried about their business during the day and cowered inside during the night, never sure when their undead overlords would appear to feed. The townsfolk were helpless . . . until a massive silver deposit was discovered nearby. Almost overnight, Durango was transformed into **Silver City**, and vampires were not included on the guest list.

For nearly twenty years Durango has been vampire free. Despite almost nightly attacks and raids from *Ixzotz*, the burgeoning human city-state stood strong, clinging fiercely to its independence. The people remain vampire free, independent and proud – the vampires held at bay. However, the last six years, they have been a city under siege. The pace of vampire attacks has accelerated and Silver City is under constant danger from vampires and their mortal henchmen. With the permission of the people, Doc Reid has established a garrison of 432 Rangers (half are only 1-3rd level), but the inhabitants are threatened by the undead at every turn.

To protect themselves, every man, woman and child in Durango wears a silver cross around their neck, carries a silver dagger on their hip, and is armed with bows and arrows, and guns loaded with silver bullets. The local militia, the **Silver Swords**, have become proficient at fighting the undead, patrolling the human kingdom vigilantly each night. The city under siege looks like a militarized zone. Every pointed surface in the city has wooden or silver tipped defenses, and many wooden surfaces have been intentionally frayed and splintered to create edges that can stick vampires. The road surface itself is made of wooden planks, and the natural effects of traffic wears them down and makes them dangerous to typically barefoot Wild Vampires (1D4 H.P. damage for every 10 feet (3 m) traveled over wooden roadways). Many fences, gates, and masonry have wood spikes or silver-plated points on upper levels and rolls of steel razorwire that have been electroplated with silver. There is also a massive clock tower in the town square in Durango, but it does not display the time. Instead, the digital display is a countdown, ticking away the minutes and seconds until sunrise or sunset, letting the populace know how safe it is to move about.

During the night the citizens retreat to centralized M.D.C. bunker locations to sleep. Each bomb shelter-like bunker is airtight with its own internal air circulation system and emergency oxygen supply to prevent vampires from entering as a mist. In the morning, they head out back to their homes, businesses and farms. For those who stay home at night, every lantern and window is emblazoned with crosses, and spotlights search back and forth from the tops of the tallest buildings, looking for bats. The defenses are heaviest, however, along the Silver Road.

The silver mine is a few miles outside the city proper, and the **Silver Road** is the only safe path that leads to it. Large, wooden crosses are mounted every ten meters (33 feet) along the road's entire length, and rough hewn to be splintery to the touch. Cloves of garlic and sprigs of wolfsbane are also pinned to crosses and lanterns from time to time, replacing those that have dried up or been eaten by animals. Giant robots and power armor-clad Silver Swords stand guard day and night along the road and at the mines. Their armor and weapons designed to handle both supernatural and mortal enemies.

The mines themselves look more like a maximum security prison or militarized border than an ore extraction site. Fences, spotlights and rolls of silver razorwire are everywhere, and the defenses around the mine entrance are even more elaborate. Armored defenders and giant combat robots (mostly Bandito Arms and Northern Gun) stand guard outside and inside the mine. Wooden fencing encloses the area from the sides and above, and a nearby stream has been diverted to form a moat. Workers entering the mine must walk right through three artificial waterfalls, a welcome relief for tired miners, but a painful obstacle for vampires. Should the undead manage to pass all three of the "water-curtains," a high-powered crossbow stares down the entire length of the entrance tunnel. The entrance to the mine itself is an M.D.C. bunker (1,000 M.D.C. per 30 feet/9.1 m) with an airtight armored door (600 M.D.C., with an identical second door 50 feet/15.2 m deeper in).

No vampires have EVER managed to enter the mine tunnel system after the defenses were put in place. However, vampire attacks frequently cut the mine off from the rest of the city for short periods of time. During the worst attacks, the defenders abandon the wooden stockades outside and take shelter within the mines themselves. These are terrifying ordeals, as vampires and their minions do whatever they can to seal off the mine's air supply or attack it with explosives, Chupacabras and wolves. The ground above the mine is a twisted no-man's land of craters, trenches, ripped up silver razorwire, wood and silver booby-traps and broken crossbow bolts. Every day, a special crew of engineers goes up to the area above and fills in the explosion craters, gathers the bodies and recovers any equipment that can be salvaged from the last night's battle.

While Durango/Silver City has stood strong and free for many years, the Vampire Kingdom of Ixzotz has plans to destroy it and make it an example to any other human communities that might dare to defy vampire domination. The Silver Swords Militia, civic leaders, and even prominent farmers have all been deliberately assassinated by the vampires or their henchmen in addition to the nightly raids and acts of terror. It is only a matter of time before the vampires find a way to isolate or destroy the silver mine that keeps the city alive, and when that happens, Silver City's days are numbered.

Silver City Under Siege. Durango's silver mines are worth more than gold in the Vampire Lands. That means they are able to purchase just about anything they could need or want and are a favorite customer of Bandito Arms and Northern Gun, who trade for silver as well as sell goods for credits. The problem is that with so many vampires around, and the constant attacks, it is difficult for people to visit the city and is even difficult for heavily armed merchant caravans and Black Market smugglers to gain access to the Silver City. In fact, the vampires have been targeting and utterly destroying caravans and groups that look like

they have cargo heading in the direction of Silver City. Traveling by sea along the coast helps only until one docks and unloads, as vampires lay in wait a few miles off the coast. So do a number of humanoid raiders who have struck a deal with the vampires to attack and try to hijack any merchant supply trains heading for Silver City. In return, the raiders are allowed to keep the goods they steal, provided they are immediately taken north to the Pecos Empire or MercTown for resale. The Silver Swords and Reid's Rangers sometimes hunt down and chase off these traitors to humanity, but fighting heavily armed mercenaries and raiders is beyond their capabilities. Instead, they often hire adventurers, mercs and heroes with good reputations to battle and destroy these enemies.

The Silver Swords Militia

The defenders of Durango are the Silver Swords, a citizens' militia and Vampire Hunter group that patrols the night. They protect the populace, ambush vampires when they can, and fight to keep the Silver Road open at all times. During the day they travel out into the nearby countryside, locating vampire lairs and destroying them. Since they are unsure of the extent and power of the Vampire Kingdoms, most Silver Swords patrols stay close to Durango, heading out into northern Mexico or hugging the western coastline. Many patrols that have gone inland have failed to return.

Service in the Silver Swords is an obligation for all citizens not involved in mining or civil leadership. At the age of sixteen, teenagers are enrolled in training platoons, where they learn to use anti-vampire weapons. Most already know. Two years later, they enter the Silver Swords and remain on active duty for a three year term. Afterwards, they are lifetime members of the Silver Swords Reserve, and are expected to help respond to vampire attacks and assist in daytime defensive planning.

The Silver Swords get their name from the silver-bladed weapons they carry to help fight the undead. A broadsword, machete and two bowie knives are standard issue, giving the user extra reach along with the damaging power of silver against the supernatural. Most of the active-duty troops are stationed at either end of the Silver Road and the majority of combat takes place along its length.

The nearby vampires have learned that the city-state survives on a lifeline of silver, and work tirelessly to find ways to cut Silver City off.

Silver Swords Militiaman O.C.C.

The Silver Swords are the first and last line of defense for Silver City. Active-duty units hunt vampires and protect critical sites, and the reserves rally to areas under attack and investigate local reports in small teams and squads. They are both a military unit and a kind of civil service like fire or police protection.

Composed of the youth and career military of Durango, the Silver Swords hail from tough farmer and miner stock, and are not afraid of hard work and physical exertion. Their training involves drilling with wooden 'practice' weapons that are quite safe for humans to work with but still deal solid damage to vampires. They are instructed in tactics like arrow barrages, pike formations and the use of silver weapons.

After their term of service is up, most *retire* to the reserves, going about their normal lives and only responding to the call



when the alarm bells of the city start to ring. The most skilled Vampire Hunters and best strategists become permanent officers in the Silver Swords, making the defense of the kingdom their personal responsibility and career. The Silver Swords have been taking many losses in the last few years as the Vampire Kingdom of Ixzotz closes in, and those who live to stand and fight become a close-knit group of seasoned combat brethren.

Special O.C.C. Abilities of the Silver Swords Militiaman:

1. Lore: Vampires: The same skill as found in the Vampire Hunter O.C.C. The average Silver Swords Militia member does not have quite the same expertise as a dedicated Vampire Hunter, however. **Base Skill:** 50% +3% per level of experience.

2. Strength in Numbers: Silver Swords Militia receive an additional +1 to save vs Horror Factor in groups of 5 or more, +3 in groups of 10 or more and +5 in groups of 20 or more.

3. Average Level of Experience: The young recruits are level 1D4 militiamen. The veterans who make a career as Silver Swords Lawmen are level 1D6+4.

Silver Swords Militiaman O.C.C.

Attribute Requirements: None. Almost all male citizens and a quarter of the females serve in the Silver Swords at some point.

Alignment: Any.

O.C.C. Bonus: +1 to save vs Horror Factor, +1 to roll with punch/impact, +1 to M.E., +1 to P.S. and +2D6 to S.D.C.

O.C.C. Skills:

Horsemanship: General

Firefighting

First Aid

Lore: Demons & Monsters (+10%)

Military Fortification (+10%)

Mining (+10%, almost every citizen of Durango has this skill.)

Running

W.P. Knife

W.P. Sword

W.P. Handguns

W.P. Rifles

Hand to Hand: Basic can be changed to Hand to Hand: Expert at the cost of one O.C.C. Related Skill or Hand to Hand: Martial Arts at the cost of two.

O.C.C. Related Skills: Not applicable to young recruits in service, because they soon go on to pick another occupation and O.C.C. for the rest of their life. When this is done, keep the skills above, but they are frozen until the new O.C.C. reaches the same level where these stopped.

Silver Swords Career Lawmen (this is their chosen profession) get the additional skills of *Law: General* (+15%), *Pilot: Motorcycle* or *Hovercycle* (+10%), *Streetwise* or *Roadwise* (+20%; Durango only), *Tailing* or *Prowl* (+10%), *W.P. Energy Rifle*, and *W.P. Paired Weapons*. Also select four other

skills at level three (all get a +10% bonus), +2 additional skills at levels 5, 7, 9, 12 and 15; and get an additional +10% bonus to the skills Firefighting and Lore: Vampires. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

Communications: Any (+5).

Cowboy: Any.

Domestic: Any.

Electrical: Basic Electronics and Electricity Generation only.

Espionage: None.

Horsemanship: Any.

Mechanical: Armorer/Field Armorer, Basic Mechanics and Locksmith only (+5%).

Medical: Any (+2%); except Juicer Technology and M.D. in Cybernetics.

Military: None.

Physical: Any, except Acrobatics, Gymnastics and Kick Boxing.

Pilot: Any (+10% to Motorcycle, Hovercycle, Truck & Motor Boat only).

Pilot Related: Any.

Rogue: Cardsharp, Gambling, I.D. Undercover Agent, and Palming only.

Science: Any, except Artificial Intelligence, Xenology and Zoology (+10% to Math skills only).

Technical: Any.

W.P.: Any.

Wilderness: Any.

Secondary Skills: The character also gets to select two Secondary Skills from the list on page 300 of **Rifts® Ultimate Edition** at levels 2, 6, 10 and 14. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get any bonus other than a possible bonus for a high I.Q. All Secondary Skills start at the base skill level.

Standard Equipment: Light Mega-Damage body armor, probably with silver knuckle, elbow and knee spikes, one silver-plated broadsword (or similar sword; does 2D6 S.D.C. damage, double to vampires), two silver-plated Bowie knives (2D4 S.D.C.; double to vampires), one silver-plated machete (2D4 S.D.C.; double to vampires), one Vibro-Knife or Vibro-Sword, S.D.C. assault rifle or shotgun, S.D.C. pistol of choice, with six extra clips of silver ammo for both, compound bow or crossbow as a backup weapon, 12 wooden stakes, one mallet, 12 ounces of garlic and/or Wolfsbane (340 grams), Silver

Swords uniform, jungle camouflage, silver point tipped jungle boots and access to a horse, motorcycle or hovercycle.

Reservists are more likely than active-duty troops to be armed with wood weapons and older equipment. They make up most of the Silver Swords' pike formations.

All active-duty troops have access to more firearms, weapons, ammo, arrows, stakes, gear and transportation upon assignment. Silver weapons of all varieties are available at Silver City.

Money: Silver City/Durango is quite isolated and has little access to credits. Militia will have 2D6x1000 credits' worth of trade goods, possibly including some silver coins.

Cybernetics: Very rare. Durango has no cybernetics facilities and any augmentation would have to be done at a northern city like Juarez.

Silver Weapons and Equipment

Silver-plated weapons are everywhere at Silver City. Not only do the Silver Swords have them, but every citizen has at least one silver-plated dagger and one spear with a silver-plated spearhead. Since all males and a quarter of the females have served in the Silver Swords Militia, they are allowed to keep the silver weapons given to them, except for the guns, which means they are very well armed and also have a bow and arrow or crossbow and at least three dozen arrows. While this is low technology, it is effective against vampires and werebeasts. Visitors should not be fooled, there are plenty of M.D. energy weapons, M.D.C. body armor and even some Northern Gun and Bandito Arms power armor and giant robots. The Mega-Damage weapons and robots are just kept out of sight.

All silver weapons inflict double the normal damage listed to vampires, werebeasts and other beings vulnerable to silver. Wood equivalents of many of the same weapons are also made for use against vampires and do the normal damage listed. Against humans and other S.D.C. opponents, damage is half from wooden weapons and they dull quickly and break easily.

Silver Mace or War Hammer. 2D6 S.D.C. damage.

Other Silver Weapons: See page 100 of **Rifts® World Book One: Vampire Kingdoms™, Revised** for a complete list of silver weapons by type and the damage they inflict. Arrows are on page 106.



Slayers of Vampire Hunters

Inspired by Mark Dudley, written by Kevin Siembieda

An excerpt from a letter from Erin Tarn to the Council of Learning at Lazlo; Autumn, 108 P.A.

Though Doc Reid and his lieutenants denied or laughed off talk of new vampire tactics being leveled against them, I could tell they were lying and worried. I have it on good authority that the vampires have begun hiring humans and D-Bees – mortal people like you and I – to serve them as hired guns. The manipulation and bribing of mortals to serve them is nothing new, but this is. These gunmen are assassins hired for the sole purpose of hunting down and killing Vampire Hunters. These are despicable people who have forsaken humanity for coin in their pockets. From what I can tell, money is their sole reward. Money, and perhaps the twisted sense of power that comes with holding the life of another in your hands. I must be honest, I cannot understand the level of wickedness that must exist in the hearts of such villains. They are not just killing another person. They are killing heroes. Good men and women who are protectors of the

innocent from true demons. What depraved logic allows such assassins to even consider such awful employment? Truly these blackguards lack empathy for their fellow humans, or perhaps lack a soul at all.

I had one Vampire Hunter tell me it is as simple as choosing sides in a war. The assassins of Vampire Hunters have decided we humans cannot win. That vampires will one day rule the planet, and they are simply picking a side. They are doing so now, when such a choice can earn them a place of respect and power among the monsters. As slayers of heroes, the assassins are given status as elite contractors free to roam the land unmolested by the undead or their servants. They can come and go in the Vampire Lands as they please, and shall always hold an elevated position above ordinary human cattle, slaves and servants of the vampires. It matters not that to remain free, they and their offspring must always hunt the enemies of vampires. I've been told this is often the case, yet I have also had many others, including one such Slayer of Vampire Hunters, confess they are "just in it for the money." The captive Slayer told me after he had enjoyed

“some fun killing” and had made a “small fortune” doing it, he was planning to head back north to buy a saloon or dance hall.

From what I can tell, the reasons for hunting and killing Reid’s Rangers and other Vampire Hunters, and enemies of vampires, vary with the villains who choose to do so. Some are in it for the money. Some for the power. And some, for revenge. Yes, you read that correctly, for revenge against humanity. Some of these Slayers of Vampire Hunters are so disenfranchised, bitter and hate-filled toward human beings, that they’d rather serve demons and help them enslave or destroy humanity than fight a common enemy. Many D-Bees and other non-humans are counted among these killers. They have suffered so greatly at the hands of the Coalition States or other humans, that they have turned their backs on them. They support vampires and slay the enemies of the undead in the name of justice and retribution. They want to see humanity suffer and fall. And why not, when the vampires pay them well for their treachery and treat them with more respect than they have ever known? This group breaks my heart, for I can understand their pain, if not their decision.

Other hero killers are miscreants and psychopaths who enjoy killing. They are assassins, mercenaries and gunslingers who enjoy the challenge of matching their wits and fighting prowess against the likes of experienced Reid’s Rangers, Cyber-Knights, True Atlanteans, the mysterious Lemurians, Shemarrian Warriors, Vampire Hunters and all manner of heroes. For these villains, half the fun is the hunt. The rest is making the kill or eliminating one more “good guy.” Half fight fair and one-on-one, or even take on superior numbers of heroes to prove their own superiority or to maximize the thrill of the kill. Others fight dirty, using trickery, deception and ambush.

It sickens me to think that anyone could willingly side with monsters like vampires who enslave and feed upon the living as if they were livestock. Whether it be for profit, power, revenge or thrills, it makes little sense to me. Vampires are the enemies of life itself. We must stand together against them or be reduced to animals in the service of demons.

– Erin Tarn, *Autumn*, 108 P.A.

Slayers of Vampire Hunters work for vampires like bounty hunters or mercenaries with one singular purpose. That means all *Vampire Hunter O.C.C.s* are their prime targets. Other heroes who fight at the side of Vampire Hunters or are also engaged in the regular practice, or occupation, of killing vampires are secondary targets. Heroes of renown such as Cyber-Knights and heroes in general, are NOT their targets. Nor are lawmen, gunfighters, adventurers or mercenaries, even if they are known to have killed one or more vampires. Killing vampires in self-defense or to protect your possessions or protect the innocent is commonplace in Mexico. Slayers seek only professional Vampire Hunters. Of course, anyone who tries to help the Vampire Hunters will be dealt with severely. Killing comes easy to these Slayers, and most of them will hurt or murder anyone who gets in their way.

Also Known As: Vampire Hunter Exterminators, Hero Killers and Slayers.

Numbers: Unknown, believed to be fewer than two hundred, but they are effective and deadly.

Alignment Breakdown: Anarchist 7%, Aberrant 8%, Miscreant 35%, Diabolic 50%. **Note:** Being an Anarchist or evil alignment is not enough to become a Slayer of Vampire Hunters. The

vast majority of selfish and evil characters find the idea of working for vampires to be abhorrent. They won’t do it. They don’t slay Vampire Hunters either, and, in fact, will usually side with heroes and strangers to fight the undead. Even they regard the Slayers of Vampire Hunters to be the worst of the worst, and a rare breed even among criminals and villains. Thus, other blackguards will kill them or intercede to help heroes escape their wrath. This makes Slayers of Vampires Hunters despised even more than vampires themselves. A distinction many of these sick villains relish.

Racial Restrictions: Slayers of Vampire Hunters are always mortal beings, namely humans (49%) and D-Bees (50%), and, though rare, a few creatures of magic (1%). Supernatural beings don’t count as Slayers of Vampire Hunters even if they hunt them. Evil supernatural beings by nature are predisposed to enslave, torment and kill all mortals. *Slayers of Vampire Hunters* are by definition, *mortals* who willingly serve the undead for pay to exterminate Vampire Hunters.

O.C.C.s: Absolutely any Occupational Character Class (O.C.C.) can become a **Slayer of Vampire Hunters**, sometimes also known as *Hero Killers*. O.C.C.s that involve fighting, war, killing and crime are the quickest to become Slayers of Vampire Hunters. This includes Assassins, Bandits, Bounty Hunters, Enforcers, Gunslingers, Merc Soldiers, Soldiers, Pirates, Raiders, Slavers, Special Forces, and Spies, as well as practitioners of dark magic.

Identifying Marks and Features: Though unknown to most heroes, the vampires have come up with a sign to identify their assassins. That sign is an inverted (upside down) cross, usually painted or smeared with a dark color such as the color of dried blood (often made dark with the actual blood of their victims), black or brown. Many wear or carry on their person, a small black cross that hangs upside down on a chain. Some have one or more inverted black crosses tattooed on their neck or wrist. The most brazen have it tattooed on their face or the tops of their hands. And some get a tattoo for every Vampire Hunter they have slain, usually on their lower arm or neck.

The upside down cross, made dark with boot polish, paint, blood or charred dark with fire, may also be stuck in the ground or hung from a tree or tent pole to identify the individual or group as Slayers of Vampire Hunters. This keeps them safe from vampires on the prowl, as even Wild Vampires have been made aware of these assassins and their safe passage in the Vampire Lands.

Vampires are nobody’s fool and demand proof of a kill for their assassins to get paid. That proof is typically the head of the slain Vampire Hunter. Vampires like to see the decapitated head, because many Vampire Hunters are known to them and the face can be recognized. And because Vampire Hunters destroy vampires by chopping their heads off and burning them, this is seen as fitting payback. As a result, a successful individual or group of Slayers of Vampire Hunters will have a bag or trunk full of heads. Some even display them on their riding animal or vehicle.

Strategies and Tactics: Slayers of Vampire Hunters use their own humanity as a weapon against Vampire Hunters. As fellow humans/mortals, they can get close, trick, trap and backstab the heroes.

While some Slayers like a fair, one-on-one fight or shoot-out, most prefer to kill the heroes in their sleep, from behind, or in an ambush. Poison, bushwhacking, crossfire, infiltration, subterfuge, lies and treachery are all tricks of the trade for these Hero

Killers. This often means tailing a group of Vampire Hunters and picking them off one by one, or catching them when their guard is down. This almost always means hitting them during the day, after a night of vampire slaying, or when they are injured or tired, separated or distracted, or when the heroes believe they are safe.

Being ordinary people themselves, these traitorous killers are able to observe and stalk their prey during the day. They can even enter Fort Reid and other strongholds of humanity without anyone being the wiser. Being able to walk among the famed heroes without fear of being identified as an enemy means they can learn about their targets' routines, habits and plans, then strike when they least expect it.



The most deplorable but effective tactic is to lure the heroes into a trap or ambush by pretending to be innocent people in need of their help. When the hero's back is turned, the assassin attacks. Some killers even go to the length of leading the Vampire Hunters to a real vampire's lair or a vampire occupied town. Again, when the heroes are occupied with fighting vampires or protecting innocent people, the Slayer strikes them down without warning. This trick can also get the Slayer bonus pay, as killing a Vampire Hunter in front of a vampire guarantees recognition for the confirmed kill, and therefore the bonus bounty payment.

Similarly, one of the Slayers may pretend to be a victim of a vampire attack or an escaped slave. Many will even go so far as to let a comrade beat them up so they look genuinely abused, then lead the heroes into an ambush. A female assassin can pretend to be a distraught mother afraid for her children, while a sexy temptress can pretend to want to show her gratitude by getting the hero

alone – where she can kill him herself or make him vulnerable to attack from her teammates.

Another vile ploy is to pretend to be a fellow Vampire Hunter or adventurer seeking to join their ranks and help kill vampires. This gets the assassins in close and enables them to strike without warning. It also enables the infiltrator to meet and gather information about other Vampire Hunters. To get the upper hand, the pretender may offer to guard an entrance or exit only to abandon his post, let vampires or other assassins in, or gun down the heroes himself. These deceptions have proven extremely effective, as the Vampire Hunters do not expect to be struck down by their fellow mortals, and battlefield alliances with strangers/adventurers are commonplace. Trust in this line of work is crucial, but it is also a vulnerability.

Another deception is to cozy up to the hero at a tavern, party or public event, get him alone (out back or in the alley to smoke a cigarette, walking back with him to his camp or hotel room, stepping out into the hall, etc.) and attack, preferably from behind. Every deception, trick, and surprise attack is used by these villains.

Pay: Slayers of Vampire Hunters are paid 2,000 credits a month, plus given free food, drinks, room and board in vampire dominated locations, and a 5,000-20,000 credit bonus payment for the head of each confirmed Vampire Hunter that is slain. Confirmation is the tricky part of collection. If the head cannot be confirmed as belonging to a Vampire Hunter, the killer gets zero.

The most common form of confirmation is the word of another vampire who can attest that the head belongs to a bona fide Vampire Hunter. This can be done via a written statement (uncommon as they are not usually trusted, and so few people are literate) or as an eyewitness statement by a Secondary Vampire; the word of a mortal servant is seldom trusted, a Wild Vampire is trusted but they are easily fooled. If the vampire witness is slain before giving confirmation, the killer gets no payment. Well-known Vampire Hunters are likely to be recognized by the head itself and need nobody to vouch for the identity of the victim.

Standard Payments by Type:

5,000 credits for a no-name Vampire Hunter; may be new and unknown to these parts, or inexperienced, but is one of the Vampire Hunter O.C.C.s (any).

5,000 credits for a green (level 1-4) Reid's Ranger.

5,000 credits for Werecats who hunt vampires.

5,000 credits for Shemarrian Warriors.

5,000 credits for Lemurians.

5,000 credits for True Atlanteans.

5,000 credits for Native American Vampire Hunters.

10,000 credits for Atlantean Undead Slayers.

10,000 credits for a seasoned Reid's Ranger (level 5-10) or unaffiliated Mage Vampire Hunter.

10,000 credits for a Reid's Ranger Hero Necromancer or Mage Vampire Hunter.

10,000 credits for Native American Spirit Warriors, Elemental Shamans and Paradox Shamans who hunt vampires.

10,000 credits for Bone Werejaguars.

15,000 credits for a known Reid's Ranger or known officer within the Rangers.

20,000 credits for a Reid's Ranger with a reputation as a hero, and for high-ranking and experienced Hero Necromancers (Level 7 and higher).

Special Bounties:

- 12 million credits for the head of Kenneth “Doc” Reid
- 8 million credits – Planktal-Nakton the Necromancer
- 5 million credits – Sir Raoul Lazarious
- 2 million credits – Carlotta la Blanca (Snow Dragon)
- 1 million credits – Pequita the Faceless One (Shapeshifter)
- 1 million credits – Robert “Grizzly” Carter
- 750,000 credits – Vyurr Kly the Hunter
- 600,000 credits – Mii-Tar the Destroyer
- 500,000 credits – Lt. General William Wilding
- 400,000 credits – Little Meetal



Deathspike

By Matthew Clements and Kevin Siembieda

In the middle of the remote desert during a balmy night in 105 P.A., a very special meeting took place. Arriving in three separate convoys, a trio of Master Vampires met – some of the highest-ranking undead in the *Mexico Empire*, *Milta* and *Ixzotz* Vampire Kingdoms. They were sent as envoys for the Vampire Intelligences they served, with orders to discuss an important proposition. An invitation to the meet was not extended to the less civilized kingdom of *Muluc* or the vermin in the *Yucatan*.

Even though the *Mexico Empire* and *Milta* have a standing non-aggression pact, the meeting was a tense one. Master Vampires rarely leave their feudal domains, and their respective bodyguards eyed each other with distrust, crossbows held at the ready. Neither of the more sociable factions were quite sure how the *Ixzotz* representative would respond to the idea they had in mind.

Secondary Vampires set up a table with elegant place settings right there in the middle of the desert. A human slave was brought

forth and drained of life, his blood poured into brandy glasses. In finery worthy of their privileged positions, the Master Vampires began to negotiate as they enjoyed their refreshment.

The Vampire Intelligence dominating *Milta* had come up with a plan. The success and notoriety of *Reid's Rangers*, in particular, had created a certain mystique around those who hunted vampires full-time. Competitors and wanna-be's were popping up all over the American Southwest and Northern Mexico. Eager to win freedom for their people, or fame and fortune as heroic Vampire Hunters, these heroes and freedom fighters were becoming a nuisance. The time had come to take direct action against these Vampire Hunters.

While the *Milta* Intelligence liked the idea of hiring mortal assassins to hunt and exterminate Vampire Hunters, how could they ever be completely trusted? Moreover, it didn't like entrusting treacherous mortals with such an important task. The solution, to establish a *Vampire Special Forces*. One that used the very weapons and technology of man against them. As a rule, vampires are too arrogant and convinced of their own superiority to lower themselves to use the trappings of mortals. However, the

Milta Vampire Intelligence (urged by its first Master Vampire) was suggesting they use fire to fight fire. To create a vampire *Special Ops Strike Force* composed largely of Secondary Vampires and some of their most trusted human servants. Both would arm themselves with technology to make these elite forces even more deadly. Mega-Damage Capacity body armor, power armor, combat vehicles and M.D. energy weapons could disguise and give their forces an edge. An edge in tracking down and eliminating those who stalked the undead. They would become elite Slayers of Vampire Hunters. Specialists in identifying, hunting and slaughtering the very people who have made it their profession to hunt and destroy them.

While at least half the force would be composed of Secondary Vampires with a taste for technology and vengeance, another third would be chosen from their most loyal human servants. After centuries of occupation, there were some mortal slaves who truly respected and revered them as gods. Men and women who would gladly fight with and for the undead deities they lived to serve in order to preserve undead rule and to destroy their unenlightened fellow man. As a reward, these mortal servants would enjoy a high position within vampire society, and the best would be rewarded by being turned into vampires themselves one day. The remaining 20% would be experienced hired guns handpicked by the *vampire leaders* of this covert combat force. Together, they could fight Vampire Hunters *day* and *night*. Together they would breed terror not just among the human sheep beyond the Vampire Kingdoms, but in the human wolves who dared to defy them and bring the sheep hope. Destroy the Vampire Hunters, they laughed, and you snuff out the flames of hope before they spread out of control.

The Master Vampire suggesting the plan insisted such tactics would stop the flow of would-be heroes following in the shoes of glorified Vampire Hunters. Most delicious of all, by using the technology of mortals, they could go boldly into the *light of day*, attack when the brazen hunters least expected it, infiltrate human camps and circumvent or survive common vampire hunting strategies and tactics via their own technology. After all, it is impossible to kill a vampire clad in M.D.C. armor with a wooden stake or spear. Silver bullets bounce off an M.D.C. bulletproof vest worn under a jacket or cloak. And how surprised would a Vampire Hunter armed with a crossbow be when he was struck down by a laser blast from a rifle at a distance rather than torn apart by fang and claw? That would be part of the operation: to use the strategies and tactics of mortals, as well as their weapons, combined with the animal instincts, powers and cunning of vampires to turn the hunters into the hunted.

There was resistance to the proposal, of course. It was argued that it made vampires look weak and that they were above using the tools and trappings of mortals. That to do so was an insult.

In the end, however, the three groups left in agreement. Each would create its own chapter of a covert organization they dubbed **Deathspike**. It would be a secret, elite strike force even within their own Vampire Kingdoms. Oh, some vampires would know of it, but Deathspike would be their unspoken, dirty, little secret. A *shame* they would bear to strike terror in the burgeoning Vampire Hunters gathering strength in the North. A truly elite group of hunters of Vampire Hunters, not out for wealth or vengeance, but dedicated to the destruction of those who hunted them.

Though hostilities between Ixzotz and its southern neighbors still exist, Deathspike agents were to never fight amongst each

other, and were to share information and resources as brothers, never as rivals.

Other Vampire Kingdoms would hear rumors of Deathspike, nothing more.

Deathspike Facilities

Ixzotz Field Office. The Ixzotz field office is the command center for Deathspike's primary theater of operations: Northern Mexico and the old American Southwest. It is concealed in one of the many crumbling buildings of the city abandoned even by vampires looking for lairs.

From the outside, the field office looks like any of the other ruins preserved by the hot, dry climate. Upon closer examination, though, it is airtight – no obvious entrances or exits, no broken windows or fallen walls leading inside. The secret office is reached through several concealed access points. Three of them are wall sections that rotate inward when a combination is entered in a button panel of four discolored bricks. The other two ways in are doors hidden under fallen architecture, protected from view by the shadows. Bat-houses have also been installed all over the area in out-of-sight nooks and crannies. The bat traffic helps reduce the appearance of vampires coming and going.

Every access point is environmentally sealed to keep out nosy vampires in mist form. In Ixzotz, this is a much more likely problem than rebellious humans, or, God forbid, Vampire Hunters, trying to break in. Security staff are on duty twenty-four hours a day, and include a group of four trusted Brodkil Sub-Demon deputies that liaise with the Sheriff and help coordinate his office's activities with those of Deathspike. At least one of them is on duty at all times.

On the inside, the actual field office is high-tech, air-conditioned and monitored by cameras. It includes briefing rooms, offices for individual agents, a training center, vehicle pool, cafeteria with refrigerated blood storage, plus a food pen with 16 human cattle, and the largest of Deathspike's three armories. Most of the agency's operations are managed from here, the larger actions assigned their own briefing rooms, and the most shadowy black ops conducted out of offices with locked doors or in hushed conversations in public areas elsewhere in the city.

Vehicles and large units of troops exit the facility through a tunnel that leads to a mechanical door disguised as a brick wall. The tunnel extends away to a seldom traveled part of the city near the outskirts. Hidden cameras let operatives using the exit see if there is anyone within sight and leave at their own discretion.

Deathspike HQ, Mexico City. The Deathspike command center is located in a secure, purpose-built headquarters building in Mexico City. The windowless exterior is broken in one place by a pair of double doors. They lead into a fake office section designed to throw off anyone who wonders about the building. An elevator connects to the top floor, an extension of the fake office area should anyone try to infiltrate through the roof. The office staff are low-ranking Deathspike agents (vampires and human servants), and will politely redirect anyone who should accidentally walk in. Undead intruders are met with a hail of silver bullets, humans with laser beams, and will trigger a silent alarm in the rest of the facility.

Beneath the facade is the building's core, the actual headquarters. It has rows of plush offices for Deathspike's senior agents, a human cafeteria, and a vampire feeding area with a food pen

and fresh blood supply. A war room contains a giant digital map of the entire Northern Mexico/Southwest US theater. The battle map is constantly updated with new info on Deathspike deployments, and is a valuable tool for managing multiple ongoing operations. Secret black ops generally don't get displayed on the board, but deep-cover agents are sure to check that their activities do not interfere with other missions.

Lord Damacio Vega, Head of Operations, has his personal office at the Mexico City HQ. It is a large, hyper-modern suite of rooms with one-way glass overlooking the command center floor and operations map. Director Vega meets with Master Vampires and other high-ranking undead who wish to tour the facilities, and personally supervises the agency's most sensitive operations from his own private briefing room.

Those who wish to enter the secure facility have three options. The first entrance is hidden in the men's room of the fake office. An out-of-order bathroom stall has a false back wall that slides away when a lever that looks like a coat hook is pressed upwards. The second entrance is another sliding wall in a dark alley behind the building. The third is in the sewers beneath the streets and is most easily accessed by moving through the grates in bat or mist form. A large metal panel that looks like part of the waterworks is actually an airtight door that leads into the HQ.

Deathspike Acquisitions

With the highest technology level amongst the Vampire Kingdoms, it is here in the Mexico Empire that most of Deathspike's high-tech weapons and equipment are stored.

Deathspike Academy, Milta

At Milta, safe and secure far to the south of human kingdoms and settlements, Deathspike has its academy and training grounds. When the Trilateral Pact was signed, the agency's headquarters was moved to a central location at Mexico City. The old headquarters building was redesigned into a training complex.

Firing ranges, hand to hand combat areas, gyms, city mock-ups and classrooms are all part of the academy's facilities. With Deathspike's small size, there is no fixed training schedule and classes of every type are going on at all times.

Vampire agents train in weapons and tech equipment and practice rain and sunlight survival. They train to disarm Vampire Hunters of silver knives and swords and are exposed to conditions that help prepare them for the field of battle.

At the academy, human agents practice working in tandem with vampires for the first time. As cattle people and domestic servants, they are somewhat used to seeing vampires and submitting to their will, but they are often unready for the full extent of their supernatural masters powers. Deathspike vampires shape-change on the fly in order to move over uneven terrain, and it can be difficult to keep up with vampire agents and squad leaders. After a few months at the academy, however, human and D-Bee operatives are ready to work with vampires as a cohesive military unit and are fully trained in the various tactics of Deathspike.

Infiltration & Impersonation School

There is a wing of the academy that appears to be as much of a theater company as a spy school. The infiltration and impersonation training center is full of sets, costumes and makeup. It

is where moles and covert observers practice their trade and develop covers for their activities. They try out different disguises, stakeout techniques and learn the art of the ruse, spying, intelligence gathering, and undercover operations. Mainly learning to pretend to look and act like ordinary people, adventurers and fans of Vampire Hunters.

For extremely valuable and difficult targets, elaborate reconstructions are sometimes built and operatives run drills over and over until they get them right. The construction crew has even assembled a detailed 20x20 foot (6x6 m) model of Fort Reid, home of the infamous Reid's Rangers. The model has not yet been used for actual operations planning, but its accuracy and level of detail would be quite unnerving to Doc Reid or any of his people if they knew of its existence.

Deathspike Tactics

The following are some of the notable tactics deployed by all Deathspike operatives. Other Slayers of Vampire Hunters use similar strategies and tactics, but Deathspike are expert at surgical strikes, hitting and getting out before anyone is the wiser.

Deathspike Field Bases, Safe Houses & Temporary Outposts. Deathspike maintains several safe houses in each major vampire city, including a few in Muluc for operatives working in northeast Mexico who cannot reach Ixztotz. There are always a few safe houses available in cities like *El Paso*, *Ciudad Juarez*, *Ciudad Victoria* and *Monterrey*, and locations are rotated continuously to prevent suspicion.

Rooms and apartments with a clear view of Vampire Hunters or busy areas will be rented on a temporary basis for use as stake-out sites. Likewise, homes can be rented out for use as forward bases, providing a refuge for vampires working far from the kingdoms of Mexico. Sometimes a remote farmhouse or cottage's occupants will be killed and replaced by Deathspike operatives (or turned into mind controlled slaves and used by agents) who take in vampire agents and Deathspike teams when they are working in the area.

Remote areas, plentiful in Mexico's deserts, also make good spots for placing camouflaged camps, day-shelters, secret underground lairs and observation posts. Lines of travel between Fort Reid, human cities and the outer vampire settlements are monitored carefully by Deathspike, and new locations are continually being established as old ones are compromised or washed out by flash floods.

Daytime Operations. Their training and order of battle has been refined through trial and error and many early Deathspike agents gave their lives making mistakes that the agency as a whole has learned from.

Vampire Hunters use the daytime as their primary protection while scouting, resting or traveling. They take for granted their undead foes' inability to move about in the sunlight. During the day, most Vampire Hunters are relaxed, off-guard, and unready for combat. This is one of Deathspike's greatest assets.

With human and D-Bee operatives in their employ, Deathspike can put together full patrols, strike teams and assassination squads with no need to fear the day. Moreover, at least one Secondary Vampire inside a suit of power armor or full environmental body armor is usually the day team squad leader or second-in-command.

Daytime teams use infiltration and disguise techniques, and their ultimate goal is to bring Mega-Damage weapons and body armor to fights where the Vampire Hunters expect to use arrows and squirt guns. Such is the sign of good planning carried out.

Just as Vampire Hunters try to catch vampires while they sleep through the day, Deathspike hunts in the daytime for Vampire Hunters at rest. Trying to repel vampire attacks necessitates working at night, and several nights of planned, sustained vampire activity can leave Vampire Hunters worn-out and as vulnerable to a surprise attack or ambush during the day as their vampire quarry.

Nighttime Operations. Night is still the vampire's optimum environment where they have most of the advantage. Deathspike squads that are predominantly vampires know how to use the night to terrorize and devastate their enemies.

Hit, Run, Heal and Repeat, Repeat, Repeat. All vampires know how to use their natural powers to their maximum effectiveness, and their healing factor combined with metamorphosis is one of the most important. Vampires will often fight until their Hit Points are down by 75-80%, at which point they retreat or metamorph into an animal for a quick escape or into mist to avoid taking more damage, and vanish into the night. Twenty to sixty minutes later, they reappear, attack again, and vanish when they sustain a considerable amount of damage. This is repeated over and over. Every time, the vampires return completely healed and ready for combat, while their mortal opponents are whittled down with each attack. Even with magic and/or psionic healing, Hit Points, S.D.C., M.D.C. of armor and vehicles, ammunition, P.P.E. and I.S.P. all become depleted. In short, the vampires can fight all night and be as fresh as they were when they started, while mortals are worn out, injured and become less combat capable with every siege.

Metamorphosis and Terror. The ability to change, at will, into a wolf, bat or mist, gives them stealth, speed, and flight capabilities. All also enable to them hide, gain access to locked down and fortified positions, drop down from above, transform into human form and tear opponents to pieces. A vampire attack, even from a small squad of 6-12 can seem to be coming from everywhere. To vampires, terror is as much a weapon as their fangs and claws. To magnify the sense of terror, chaos and the illusion of greater numbers, the attacking vampires may not, initially, strike to kill. They strike to hurt, scare and create confusion. A strike force can seemingly appear in the thick of a mortal town or armed camp, strike, inflict damage, seem to vanish and strike elsewhere minutes later; usually at many different locations by striking in pairs or as lone attackers. The cries of their victims echoing from every corner can cause civilians to act in blind panic, and even seasoned soldiers can fall apart and cease to fight as a cohesive unit. When that happens, the vampires are in control and a bloodbath ensues. Only Vampire Hunters know this is a calculated tactic, fight the sense of panic, and should be able to keep their heads and avoid giving the enemy the advantage.

Reanimate, Often. Vampires and their minions are oriented to remove stakes to the heart to reanimate their fallen brethren. Trained Deathspike Special Operatives are obsessed with it. As soon as they see a teammate go down from an arrow, stake or spear, someone on the team will start to make his way over to remove it. Likewise, human and vampire Deathspike assassins will try to recapture any head decapitated from a fallen vampire's body and return it so the head can reform to the body, to rise

again. And a risen vampire is more angry and bloodthirsty than he was to begin with.

Covering their Tracks. As a secret organization, Deathspike does not want Vampire Hunters or groups like the Splugorth or Coalition States to become aware of their existence. They operate quick and clean, planning their actions carefully and following strict protocols in regards to targets of opportunity. Even safely within the Vampire Kingdoms, their recruitment efforts are covert and never advertised. Deathspike finds you, you do not find them. Candidates to join the agency are approached by shadowy operatives who know intimate information about them and come with detailed dossiers already in hand.

In the field, black ops policies are standard practice. Deathspike agents destroy all signs of their presence and passage, burying trash and spent ammunition, covering their trail behind them and carefully camouflaging their campsites and observation posts. Their diligence and professionalism is a rare thing in the violent, selfish and anarchic world in which most vampires live.

"Hits" on Vampire Hunters made in public, day or night, are often designed to look like an altercation with a gunslinger, bandit or adventurer, not a kill from a vampire, and certainly not as a part of a surgical strike. Along those lines, Deathspike agents are happy to set events in motion that provoke bloodshed at the hands of local, human or D-Bee criminals, or get a Vampire Hunter falsely accused and arrested, or damage the hero's reputation.

Rumors and Disinformation. One of the easiest and cheapest ways to lure Vampire Hunters out into the open or predict their movements is to spread rumors and disinformation. Deathspike agents disguised as locals tell overeager Vampire Hunters about stories of vampire attacks and lairs in areas that have already been designated as kill zones. Their efforts confuse and confound Vampire Hunters, leading them to waste their time and resources and keeping them away from true lairs and vampire feeding centers.

Likewise, disinformation agents can convey the idea that a nearby town has a bad vampire problem when the opposite is true, or convince Vampire Hunters that they have completely eradicated the local infestation when they have not, or a secret counterattack is actually planned. Deathspike operatives are trained to note anyone asking questions about the existence of Deathspike. Such individuals become the next highest priority targets and must be eliminated quickly and quietly.

Infiltration and Impersonation. Human agents who can walk about in daylight and pass tests designed to identify vampires are one of Deathspike's greatest assets. Just like normal special forces units, they often use third-party uniforms, weapons and equipment to hide their true identity and purpose. At times, Deathspike units will even masquerade as Vampire Hunters for the ultimate ironic deception.

Moles will try to infiltrate Vampire Hunter groups singly or in pairs, posing as innocent locals, mercenaries or adventurers looking for work, local guides or as Vampire Hunter wannabes. Sometimes they pretend to be experienced Vampire Hunters or clients looking to hire slayers of the undead, leading whole teams of gullible amateurs to their deaths; though this is more often a tactic of Slayers of Vampire Hunters than Deathspike agents. Most Deathspike agents, especially the mortal servants who revere the undead as deities, are quite expert at undercover ops and pretending to be frightened citizens and ordinary people. They are also surprisingly good at pretending to be adoring fans of

Vampire Hunters, fawning all over them, asking innocent sounding questions, and getting close to them.

Agents sent out to scout and spy have learned to keep a low profile, disguising themselves as harmless peasants, service staff, the homeless and ordinary people. Armed only with a radio or micro camera, they act as spotters and intelligence gatherers for heavily armed Deathspike commandos and vampire operatives.



False Lairs. A thorough Vampire Hunter's end game is to locate the vampire's lair and finish the job once and for all. To help stymie their efforts, Deathspike intentionally establishes false lairs in areas likely to be investigated by Vampire Hunters; graveyards, natural cavern systems, ancient ruins, cellars, darkened slums and sewer tunnels, etc.

False lairs are deathtraps, designed to lure Vampire Hunters deep inside and seal closed behind them. Once caught by the ruse, automated booby-traps, poisonous gas and ambush teams lay in wait to finish the job. Coffins wired to explode, cave-ins and the like are all common. Deathspike engineers have become proficient at pouring fake Maya and Aztec ruins out of concrete and distressing them to make them appear aged. Decoy sites range from the carefully-planned trap locations to simple holes in the ground that allow Deathspike teams to ambush disappointed Vampire Hunters on their way back out.

The Honeypot. The honeypot is a classic spy technique that is as old as time. From the days of pharaohs and kings right up to the Cold War, agents used it to compromise enemy personnel. The honeypot is seduction pure and simple, used to trick targets into revealing sensitive information or leaving themselves off-guard.

The standard method is to use an attractive female operative, sometimes even a vampiress, to seduce a Vampire Hunter. Such casual encounters happen most often at night anyway, and represent one of the few occasions where Deathspike can catch Vampire Hunters at night, inebriated, kicked-back and not prepared for an attempt on their lives. Mortal agents do the same during the day.

When the two are alone together, the Deathspike agent can gather intelligence or go in for the kill. She may lead her quarry into an ambush or try to kill him herself. Most female vampires prefer to drink the blood of the honeypot's victim as personal revenge after a night of pretending to be charmed by a drunken Vampire Hunter's advances. While most slay the hero, some prefer to turn the Vampire Hunter into a vampire himself as the ultimate irony and revenge. However, that requires a Slow Kill over three or so nights, and most Vampire Hunters will know what's happening to them after the first bite.

Mind Control. When a vampire bites a human victim it initiates a lasting mental bond between the two. After three nights of repeating the ritualistic biting process, the human is either drained of all blood, killed and reborn as a vampire, or allowed to live on as a *mind controlled human slave*. Secondary Vampires can enslave one human at a time and control them from nearby. While Vampire Hunters are much too savvy to fall for this trick, most ordinary people are not, and can become a valuable pawn in the vampire's scheme. Such *unwilling accomplices* can be used to access secure areas, plant evidence, lure heroes into traps and so on, but their mental faculties are limited in the mind-controlled state, and their behavior may arouse suspicion amongst those who know them or are wary for victims of mind control. The three nights it takes to create the bond between slave and master means there is a certain time and energy investment that must be put into each human slave, but that doesn't stop Deathspike vampires from sacrificing their pawns on dangerous tasks or abandoning them when their usefulness is over.

Following Packs of Wild Vampires. Not all vampires are the sophisticated commandos and trained soldiers who make up Deathspike. Wild Vampires are crazed animals that are normally doomed to die as cannon fodder or stalk the wilderness for human prey. For Deathspike, and especially the higher order vampires who can mind control them, they serve a different purpose: *bait*.

Deathspike scouts and field teams have learned to track packs of Wild Vampires in the hopes that Vampire Hunters are on the same trail. If the Wild Vampires walk mindlessly into an ambush and fall under attack by mortals, the Deathspike agents following are able to launch a surprise attack on the ambushers and rescue the Wild Vampires.

Most of the time Deathspike seeks out local Wild Vampires to follow, but occasionally, they intentionally release packs as bait into areas known to be patrolled by Vampire Hunters. The hunter becomes the hunted, with the Wild Vampires playing an unwitting role in the trap. Sometimes one or two Wild Vampires are controlled by a Deathspike squad's vampire leader and made to lead Vampire Hunters into ambushes. Other times, Wild Ones are used as drones and scouts, their lives casually thrown away to test enemy lines of fire and defenses.

Wild Vampires as Drones. Vampire field agents use their ability to mind control Wild Vampires to full effect to steer the creatures toward Vampire Hunters, to lead them on, or throw against them in suicidal raids and attacks. A particularly brutal

tactic is to capture a Wild Vampire, load it down with explosives and send it running full-speed into a Vampire Hunter camp. Mind-controlled Wild Vampires can also have messages attached to them and be sent off like carrier pigeons or used for diversionary attacks, distractions or as expendable scouts. And like Coalition Skelebots, they are sometimes organized into haphazard patrols, pointed towards enemy lands, and released on missions of seek and destroy. If captured, a Wild Vampire knows nothing about Deathspike or any covert operation. It just did what it was told to do, no questions asked or background necessary.

Starting Vampire Infestations. Another favorite tactic of Deathspike is to enter a vampire-free city and start a new infestation. The goal is not to create more vampires or expand new territory, but to catch Vampire Hunters who rush to the area hoping to stop the new infestation before it gets out of hand. A Secondary Vampire squad leader or Military Specialist is sent in to quietly create several Wild Vampires or confused Secondary Vampires and leave them to fend for themselves. The Deathspike agents then fade into the background as the pawn vampires cause trouble and attract attention with their need to feed.

When Vampire Hunters arrive, sometimes with great fanfare, daytime Deathspike agents take notes, snap photos and plant tracking bugs on their vehicles. That night, when the Vampire Hunters go out in search of the new vampires, Deathspike operatives pick them off one by one from the shadows or follow and attack from behind after the heroes start a fight with the pawn vampires. Hitting the Vampire Hunters during the daytime with human and D-Bee agents can be even more surprising, and is often *disguised* as a brawl or altercation with an adventurer, merc or bandit that spun out of control, not a vampire hit or retribution. Day attacks prevent Deathspike from utilizing their most powerful undead operatives to their full natural ability, if at all, but can be just as effective.

Showdowns. Sometimes notorious Vampire Hunters are given the honor of death face-to-face with their killers. After a Vampire Hunter's fellows have been eliminated or he has been isolated from the others, his executioner, usually a vengeful vampire or human Deathspike agent eager to earn the dark conversion, will call the hero out. Stepping out into the light of the moon, the Deathspike operative issues a challenge for one-on-one combat. It is both an honor and a terror to die this way, as the challenger is certainly a skilled mortal assassin or experienced Secondary Vampire.

Vampires who kill sought-after Vampire Hunters or bring them back alive to a slow death sentence amongst the cattle humans win fame and vast rewards from their leaders and kin. If a human agent manages to bring back the target's head after a fair and honorable battle, he or she is almost guaranteed to win the distinction of receiving the dark gift: conversion into a vampire and full acceptance into the ranks of the undead.

Common Deathspike Units

Assassin Squad: 2-3 Vampires, 2 Humans. This small team slips in, kills their target and slips away, ideally before anyone even knows they were there.

Standard Squad: 1-2 Vampires, 4-10 Humans. The most commonly deployed Deathspike unit is a squad-sized group of 4-10 human agents led by one or two vampire squad leaders. Despite its small size, the squad has enough human members to op-

erate on its own in daylight, and still has vampires to utilize their formidable supernatural powers.

Vampire Squad: 2-10 Vampires. Some assignments require entire units to slip through cracks in mist form or drop in from the sky as bats, or blend in with migrating bats or wolf packs. This makes bringing along normal humans impossible. Covert activities within the Vampire Kingdoms themselves often also call for purely vampire deployments. Vampire squads have all the frightening capabilities of individual vampires multiplied by their numbers.

Human Squad: 4-10 Humans. Extensive daytime operations sometimes make it impractical to bring along more than one or two vampire agents; sometimes none, depending on the circumstances. In those situations, human-only units are deployed, often disguised as ordinary people, adventurers, mercenaries or Vampire Hunters. They may not have the incredible abilities of vampires, but human/mortal squads can easily strike when and where Vampire Hunters least expect it, using sunny days, rainstorms and rivers to cover their activities.

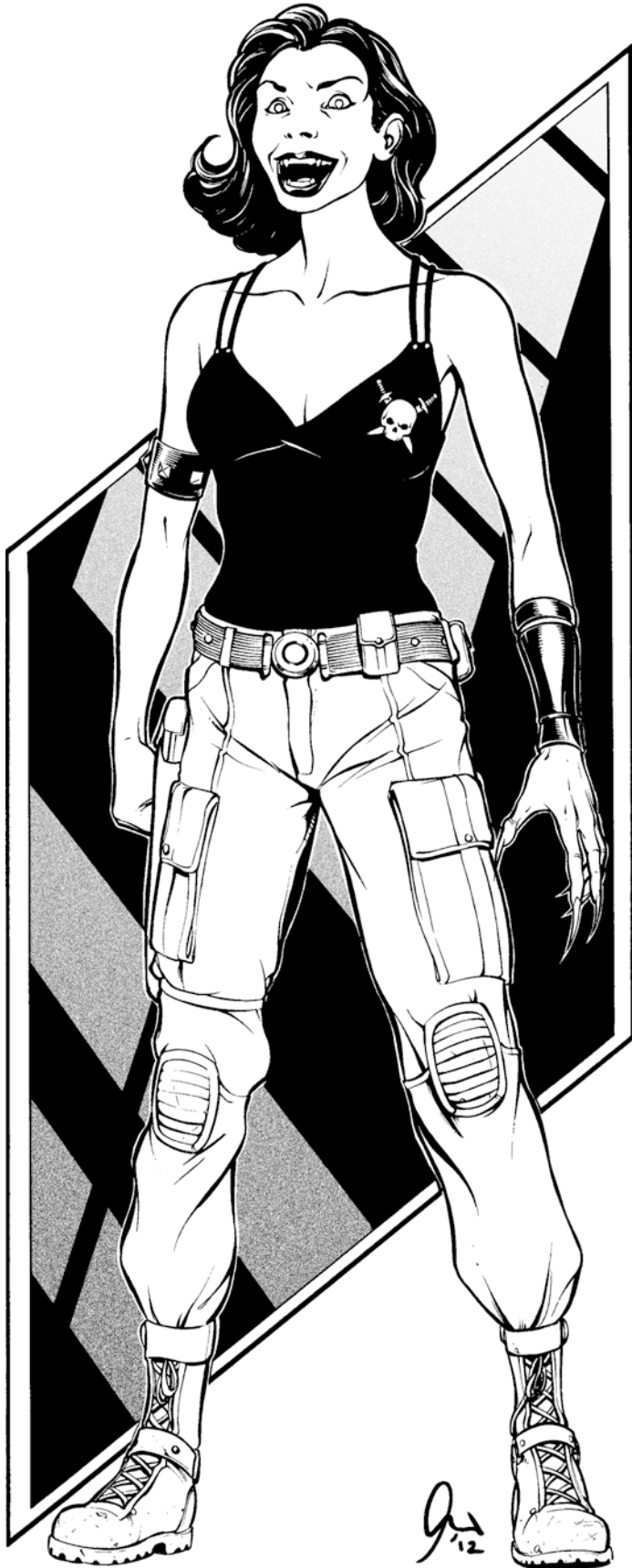
Undercover and Impersonation Cell: 1-4 Vampires Disguised as Humans, 2-12 Human Assistants. An undercover op requires all or most of the members of the cell to appear to be ordinary people. The cell's primary duty is to find a lair for the vampire operatives to utilize and set it up to look like a normal home or business. The vampire impersonators do most of the dirty work, while the human assistants help keep up appearances, mingle among the mortal population, moving about in the daytime and protecting their undead teammates. Clean-up and disposal of bodies is also entrusted to the human agents, as well as tasks like daytime guard duty.

Infiltration Cell: 2-12 Human Infiltrators and 2-8 Human and/or Vampire Contacts. The most classic spy deployment involves one or more human infiltrators to become embedded in a community or enemy force to spy on them. The contacts or "handlers" give those under deep cover their assignments and assist them in the gathering and transfer of intelligence. They also engage in research and reconnaissance to assist their infiltration agents, and provide command and control from a perspective not caught up in the day-to-day affairs of the undercover agents. Any direct contact between the undercover agents and their handlers is done in secret.

Deathspike Vampire Agents

The top field agents, commanders and administrators of Deathspike are all Secondary Vampires. Their loyalty to undeath and the organization's cause is unquestionable. They are the masterminds, the tacticians, the squad leaders and supernatural assassins of Deathspike. Trained to use their supernatural powers to find and kill Vampire Hunters.

Candidates for agent positions are usually vampires with military experience in their previous lives. After being recruited and tested by Deathspike, they are transferred down to the Deathspike academy at Milta. There they are trained in small classes by drill sergeants and specialist instructors. They learn the use of Deathspike technology and how to utilize their vampire abilities in ways most Vampire Hunters do not expect. Once they gradu-



ate, they are deployed in the field. Vampire operatives use every dirty trick at their disposal to convince others that they are human, catch Vampire Hunters off guard and wreak general havoc within communities known to support Vampire Hunters.

Deathspike employs some of the most skilled and disciplined espionage agents and Special Forces operatives in North America, and certainly the best in all of the Vampire Kingdoms. Yet while the best may be revered like rock stars amongst their fellow agents, the **Secondary Vampires** in its service live in shame for stooping so low as to use human weapons and technology. It matters not that they put their lives on the line to hunt and take down trained Vampire Hunters, they are pariahs. Looked upon as weaklings and cowards.

As supernatural predators, Deathspike vampires have to rein in their animal instincts and reorient themselves to the use of human gear and tactics. And while their fellow vampires often shun technology, Deathspike agents must be completely comfortable with it to have the advantage in hunting Vampire Hunters.

Deathspike Vampire Agent – NPC Villain

Alignment: Anarchist or evil. Most are Aberrant.

Attributes and Abilities: As per Secondary Vampires. All Deathspike Vampire Agents are Secondary Vampires.

Predisposition Toward Technology: Only Secondary Vampires who retain an affinity for, and like of technology, serve in Deathspike.

Skills Known to all Vampire Agents: As vampires, Deathspike Vampire Agents have forgotten much of their previous existence. They all have certain skills in common, however, and most of them were proficient with weapons and military tactics before they were turned into the undead. See page 41 of **Rifts Vampire Kingdoms, Revised** for full details on Secondary Vampires and skills.

Language: American and Spanish at 90%.

Language: One of choice (+20%).

Literacy: American and/or Spanish (+10%)

Communications or Technical Skills: 1D4 total skills.

Computer Operation (+15%)

Piloting: 1D4 skills of choice (any, except aquatic).

Radio: Basic (+10%)

W.P. Energy Pistol or Energy Rifle.

Two W.P.s of choice, Modern or Ancient, may include Archery and Quick Draw.

Skill Level: Skills are frozen at the moment on became a vampire; typically level 1D6 or as set by the Game Master for NPCs. Not likely to be available as a player character.

Secondary Skills: None.

Bonuses: +1 to resist garlic/wolfsbane, +3 to resist the Horror Factor of Vampire Hunters.

Standard Equipment: Stake-Proof Vest and Blood Canteen, one weapon and 1D4+4 ammo clips for each W.P., access to mission appropriate body armor and vehicle, as well as clothing and disguises. The Deathspike organization has an extensive arsenal of common S.D.C. and M.D. weapons, mostly Black Market, Northern Gun and CS weapons. May include a few magic items including captured Splugorth Bio-Wizard items.

Money: As per assignment; seldom carry more than 1D6x1,000 credits with them for dealing with locals.

Cybernetics: Not possible.

Human Agents

Chosen human Deathspike operatives raised by vampires see their role in Deathspike as the greatest honor possible. As such, all are zealous operatives happy to sacrifice their lives in the line of duty. All are trained as soldiers or undercover agents, with skills that cross over both categories. For example, all **Deathspike soldiers** have the additional skills: *Performance*, *Radio: Basic* and *Tailing* (each with a +5% skill bonus), while **Deathspike spies** and undercover agents are skilled in weapons and combat.

The majority of Deathspike's ranks are made up of normal humans. Fewer than 15% are D-Bees. All have sworn themselves over to the service of their vampire overlords and most have been indoctrinated since birth to believe vampires are superior, deific guardians (or masters) of humanity. Only the most loyal of mortal servants are chosen, and some even crave the reward of the dark conversion (vampirism) for themselves. All enjoy many privileges otherwise reserved for vampires. Beyond food, shelter and safety from their masters' wrath, human and D-Bee Deathspike agents are allowed much more freedom than "cattle" humans, and they often function outside vampire law.

Human operatives have a major advantage of being able to work during the day or night. They don't have to worry about deceiving vampire detection tests; they aren't vampires. Holy water, garlic and crucifixes are useless against them, and, while silver bullets and arrows are dangerous, they are laughable when leveled at the Mega-Damage body armor worn by human Deathspike agents. While they normally work under vampire team leaders, some deep-cover operations require totally human units to function autonomously. As the vampires' highest ranking servants, they can be trusted to get the job done and come back afterwards. As humans born amongst vampires, Deathspike agents are used to subservience and their role as sustenance for their masters. Operatives working as a part of larger units willingly allow their vampire commanding officers to feed off of them while in the field, but are spared such indignities when not on assignment.

To Vampire Hunters and other normal people, human Deathspike agents/Slayers of Vampire Hunters are the ultimate traitors to humankind.

Deathspike Human Agent – NPC Villain

Alignment: Anarchist (30%) or evil, usually Aberrant (40%).

Attribute Requirements: As per O.C.C.

Special Bonus: +2 on Perception Rolls involving Vampire Hunters and +2 to save vs Horror Factor.

Available O.C.C.s: *Freelance Spy, **Gunfighter, **Gunslinger, Headhunter, Mercenary Soldier, Military Specialist (see CS soldier), *Master Assassin, Mystic, **Psi-Slinger, *Professional Thief, Robot Pilot (rare), *Special Forces Soldier, and similar combat O.C.C.s. **Note:** O.C.C.s with a single asterisk are found in **Rifts® Mercenaries**. Those with two asterisks are described in **Rifts® New West**. All others are in **Rifts® Ultimate Edition**. Cyborg is a special category, below.

O.C.C. Skills: As per chosen O.C.C., plus all agents have the skills *Language: Spanish* and *American* (+20%), and *Performance*, *Radio: Basic* and *Tailing*, each with a +5% skill bonuses.

O.C.C. Related Skills: None. Instead select one of the special skill packages below.

Espionage/Intelligence: Escape Artist (+15%), Intelligence (+20%), Interrogation (+10%), Palming (+15%), Pick Locks or Pick Pockets (+15%), and Prowl (+10%).

Pilot: Four piloting skills of choice (any), all at +12%, Navigation (+10%) and Weapon Systems (+10%).

Soldier (Elite): Boxing or Wrestling, Demolitions (+20%), Demolitions Disposal (+10%), Forced March, Recognize Weapon Quality (+20%), W.P.: any one of choice, and Hand to Hand: Assassin or Martial Arts; pick one.

Tracker: Find Contraband (+10%), Surveillance (+20%), Running or Outdoorsmanship, Tracking (people; +15%), Track and Trap Animals (+15%), and Wilderness Survival (+20%).

Undercover/Infiltration: Disguise (+20%), I.D. Undecover Agent (+16%), Impersonation (+20%), Intelligence (+20%), Seduction (+14%) or two Rogue skills of choice (+5% each), and Undercover Ops (+20%).

Secondary Skills: Half as many as the O.C.C. normally allows.

Standard Equipment: Same as vampire agents.

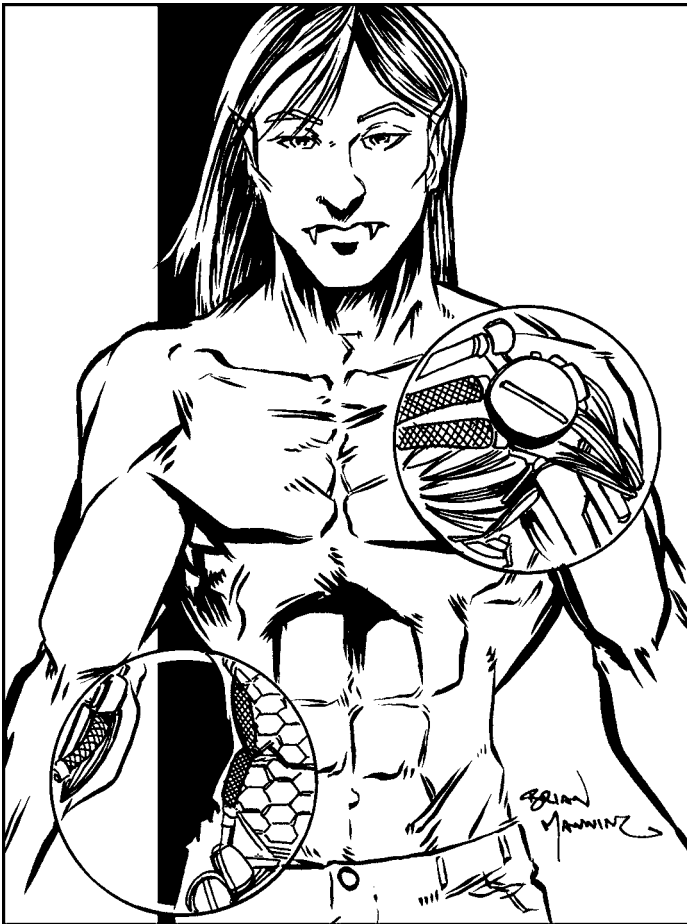
Money: Human operatives are not paid for their service, as the Vampire kingdoms do not use credits. Agents in the field may carry 1D6x1,000 credits for trading with locals.

Cybernetics/Bionics: Start with none, but Deathspike agents may acquire as many as six cybernetics or bionic implants designed to help with combat, disguise or spying.

Vampire Cyborgs

Vampires are able to "acquire" weapons, gear, precious metals, and valuables the good old-fashioned way, they take them. They raid merchant caravans, border towns, adventurer groups, Vampire Hunters, CS troops, pirate ships docked off the coast, and so on (the latter by hired guns, slaves and henchmen unless it is a shipwreck on the beach). Getting henchmen bionic augmentation is a bit trickier. It requires trading those goods for Universal Credits, silver, gold or gems, to pay for bionic augmentation. Yes, they could threaten and blackmail or mind control a Cyber-Doc at a Body-Chop-Shop, and do, sometimes, but then they have to kill everyone involved. It's quieter and more covert to pay for bionic augmentation. And undercover agents within the **El Oculita** branch of the Black Market can often arrange for steep discounts. No Cyber-Doc or nurse thinks twice about a customer wanting to get a bionic jaw with large, sharp canine teeth, or even retractable bionic teeth, retractable claws, and weird colored eyes, or pale skin pigmentation. Most don't even think that it resembles the traits of a vampire. And that's the point of Deathspike Vampire 'Borgs, to look like a vampire.

Unlike their normal human counterparts, impersonator cyborgs use a full suite of bionic enhancements to make themselves appear to be vampires. Depigmented skin, backlit eyes, sharpened canine teeth and enhanced strength and speed are all part of the standard cybernetic reconstruction that Vampire Cyborgs go through. Mist generators and retractable claws are also options, and some cyborgs have mounts installed for adding a small jetpack to simulate supernatural leaps and hovering. The whole purpose is to get the drop on Vampire Hunters. To get them to believe they are undead, then walk right out into bright sunlight and laugh cruelly as arrows bounce off them and holy water splashes



harmlessly in their face. They are, in effect, light, human-sized, human-looking *Combat Cyborgs* or *Headhunters* (see **Rifts® Ultimate Edition**). This may seem like a petty and malicious use of bionics, but such is the way of vampires. Of course, cyborgs cannot be rewarded with the dark gift, so their sacrifice is even greater than other agents.

Deathspike Vampire Cyborg – NPC Villain

Alignment: Anarchist (30%) or evil, usually Aberrant (40%).

Attribute Requirements: As per O.C.C.

Special Bonus: +2 on Perception Rolls involving Vampire Hunters and +3 to save vs Horror Factor.

Available O.C.C.s: Combat Cyborg and Headhunter only.

O.C.C. Skills: As per chosen O.C.C.

O.C.C. Related Skills: None. Instead select one of the special skill packages below.

Espionage/Intelligence: Escape Artist (+15%), Intelligence (+20%), Interrogation (+10%), Palming (+15%), Pick Locks or Pick Pockets (+15%), and Tailing (+10%).

Soldier (Elite): Boxing or Wrestling, Demolitions (+20%), Demolitions Disposal (+10%), Forced March, Recognize Weapon Quality (+20%), W.P. Heavy M.D. Weapons, W.P.: any one of choice, and Hand to Hand: Assassin or Expert; pick one.

Tracker: Find Contraband (+10%), Surveillance (+20%), Tracking (people; +15%), Track and Trap Animals (+15%), and Wilderness Survival (+20%).

Secondary Skills: Half as many as the O.C.C. normally allows.

Standard Equipment: Same as vampire agents.

Money: Human operatives are not paid for their service, as the Vampire Kingdoms do not use credits. Agents in the field may carry 1D6x1,000 credits for trading with locals.

Cybernetics/Bionics: Deathspike Vampire Cyborgs are *human* operatives (NOT vampires) who have been extensively augmented to *mimic* the appearance and abilities of vampires. In addition to the equipment listed below, Vampire Cyborgs often use concealed and light cybernetic armor, finger, wrist and forearm weapons, rebreathers, oxygen supplies and various other gear to help complete their vampire disguise.

Ultimately, any bionics as per the O.C.C. are okay as long as the final result is a human-looking Vampire Cyborg, complete with faux skin.

Amplified Hearing. This is a standard feature.

Backlit Eyes. The unnatural red glare in the eyes of a vampire when using their powers or hungry for blood can be simulated somewhat by implanting tiny lights behind the eyeballs. The effect is fairly convincing, but will not hold up to close scrutiny by other vampires or Vampire Hunters with knowledge from time in the field. This bionic eye usually includes *Infrared* or *Multi-Optics* bionic systems.

Cold-Skin, Human Appearance. The simulation for warm human flesh is unnecessary and the skin is left feeling cool to the touch. In some cases, additional cooling systems directly under the skin break up a Vampire Cyborg's heat signature, making them appear more like real vampires, but they do register on infrared and thermal detection equipment as a cold spot.

Finger or Headjack. Pick one, this is a standard feature.

Language Translator. This is a standard feature.

Gyro-Compass and Clock Calendar. This is a standard feature.

Mist Generator (Optional). Unlike actual vampires, Vampire 'Borgs cannot shape-change. To create the illusion, however, small mist generators may be installed at various points throughout the body. The cyborg uses the generators like a ninja smoke bomb, disappearing into the cloud to make observers believe that he/she has changed into mist form. The implants require smoke charges to function, and can be used three times before needing to be reloaded.

Retractable Canine Teeth. Vampire Cyborgs have special canine teeth that are pointed and lengthened like a real vampire's. When trying to blend in, the teeth retract and rotate to appear as normal as possible. When desired, the canines extend to appear as vampire fangs. They can even be tipped with silver to damage real vampires and werebeasts. **Damage:** 2D6 S.D.C. from bite attacks, 4D6 S.D.C. from a power bite.

Retractable Claws. Hard, retractable claws built into the fingertips are used to simulate supernatural vampire talons. They can be vicious close combat weapons, and are sometimes tipped with silver to damage other vampires. **Damage:** 2D6 +P.S. damage bonus.

Skin Depigmentation. The fake human flesh and skin has special nodes inserted into the face, neck, chest, hands and arms that can change the pigmentation of the artificial skin from a healthy skin color to a pale, almost white complexion. This is helpful in undercover ops, as well as to color shift to convince naive onlookers of their undead nature. For more experienced Vampire Hunters, the depigmentation must be activated first, or they will become suspicious.

Deathspike Equipment & Technology

Deathspike Weapon Acquisitions. Vampire Hunters are forced to use highly specialized weapons against their undead foes that are generally not effective on the modern battlefield. Deathspike has the luxury of being able to use virtually any weapon against their enemies. A wide range of common weapons and body armor. Even the vampire Deathspike agents are likely to wear full environmental and non-environmental body armor; some even pilot power armor. The most common gear comes from the most prevalent weapon manufacturers: *Bandito Arms/Black Market*, *Coalition Army* (stolen gear), *Northern Gun* and *Wellington*. They are also likely to be armed with a range of wood and silver Vampire Hunter weapons (other than crosses and holy water) to blend in or to pretend to be Vampire Hunters themselves. Deathspike agents may also have access to *magic weapons*, TW devices, and even Bio-Wizard weapons used by the Minions of Splugorth. Most of which come from their victims.

They have also commissioned a number of special items purchased from the El Oculata Black Market Faction. They are as follows.

Blood Canteens

Blood canteens are specialized, refrigerated containers that can keep vampire blood rations fresh for long periods of time. When deployed out in the field on black ops missions, vampire operatives can sustain themselves on blood they have brought with them. Without blood rations, they would have to break cover to feed upon humanoid victims every few nights, or feed upon their human teammates deployed with them. Feeding on the human agents makes them tired, unalert and leaves visible bite marks upon them. On high priority stakeouts and infiltration missions, such behavior is unacceptable and puts the unit at undue risk.

Blood canteens look like ordinary canteens, though they also come in a gallon-size (3.8 liter) container to the size of a SCUBA tank-sized reservoir (20 gallons/75.7 liters of blood) that can be hidden away in a closet, thrown in a vehicle, or even strapped to one's back for long-duration missions. Whatever size, the blood is stored under high pressure in order to maximize efficiency. A standard E-Clip powers the refrigeration unit around the clock for 2D6+30 days.

M.D.C. of Container: Canteen: 2 M.D.C., Gallon-Size: 5 M.D.C., Large Tank: 11 M.D.C.

Stake-Proof Vests

For vampires, full Mega-Damage armor is constricting and prevents the use of some of their most formidable powers like shape-changing. While both human and vampire Deathspike operatives wear full body armor, the vampires like to find situations where they don't have to do so. In addition, there are situations where they want to appear vulnerable to Vampire Hunters. For that purpose, a vampire with combat engineering skills designed the Stake-Proof Vest. It is made of light, textile S.D.C. materials (inexpensive to make) that incorporates a dense mesh of interlocking fibers that provides no protection from Mega-Damage weapons, but stops standard firearms, silver bullets, wooden stakes, spears, arrows, crossbow bolts, blades and similar cutting, stabbing and impaling weapons.

Concealability: Excellent; easily concealed under clothing, the Stake-Proof Vest is impossible to detect under even light clothing.



A.R. (Armor Rating): 17, but protects the *upper body only*. Unless a helmet is worn, the head, arms and legs are all vulnerable to attack, but to hit them, a Called Shot must be made. Most Vampire Hunters go for the heart/chest. **Note:** Only a strike roll of 18 or higher penetrates the armor to do damage or stake the heart. Any lower roll to strike hits, but only does 10% of its normal damage due to the resilient wonder fabric and padding of the vest.
S.D.C. of Vest: 65

Movement Penalties: None.

Field Coffins

Field coffins are tough, resilient containers with multiple layers of light protection to shelter vampires during the day. They have handles and wheels for easy transportation by human agents and are shatter-resistant so that they can be dropped from heights. The coffin has no apparent lid, hatch or opening and is a completely uniform cylinder or coffin-shaped container with no obvious structural weak points. Vampires enter and exit in mist form through a concealed, two-way valve. This prevents almost any other creature from accessing the coffin. To pry a vampire out of the coffin, it has to be ripped or blasted open, and by then the vampire is likely to have slipped out via the small tubes that function as the way in and out. Of course, exit is not an option during sunlight hours, so the lining can be removed and used as a hooded poncho to cover most of the vampire's body and head as he makes a run for it. An alarm built into the coffin wakes and warns the inhabitant of trouble whenever the coffin is jostled, moved, struck, dropped or is being cut open. At the right moment and the flick of a switch, a cloud of smoke is released into the cavity of the coffin. The smoke spills out of any opening(s) that may have been made and, conditions permit-

ting, the vampire can turn to mist and escape in the smoke, or use the smoke as a distraction to break out of the container and attack or flee. As soon as smoke is released, people around the capsule usually take several steps back (01-90% likelihood) in case it is about to explode or is releasing a toxic gas.

M.D.C. of Field Coffin: 120 M.D.C. is standard, but there are some heavy models with 200 M.D.C. for elite leaders.



Soulcraft

The Darkest of Magicks

Conceived by Chris Kluge

Written by Chris Kluge and Kevin Siembieda

The Yucatan Peninsula is a place where alien dimensions, magic, darkness and supernatural evil all collide. Few humans remain in this strange dimensional pocket of monsters, demons, and vampires, which is why it is so surprising that it was really the arrival of one man that plunged these chaotic lands into even deeper turmoil.

It was only four years ago that the being known as **the Craftsman** Rifted into the city of *Chichen Itza*. He emerged from a di-

mensional portal in the middle of the plaza next to the fabled *Well of Itza*. Unlike a normal Rift that glows with mystic blue light and acts as a perfectly clear window into another dimension, this Rift was composed of swirls of blackness.

The hour was late, and although there was decent light from the moon and stars to illuminate the plaza, the Rift seemed to swallow all nearby light into itself, covering the area with unnatural darkness. Even the supernatural nightvision of the dozen Secondary Vampires guarding the Well could not pierce the veil of this mystic darkness until the Rift slammed shut. Once it closed and the dim light on the plaza was restored, the confused vampires saw one human and a half dozen animated corpses. They all reeked of an unknown scent and were clad in full suits of black plate armor.

While the two dozen vampires assigned to the dull duty of guarding the plaza were caught by surprise for a second, they

jumped at the chance for some action and charged these intruders en masse. Vampires are arrogant by nature and confident in their power, especially when they have their prey outnumbered. However, their superior numbers proved little help against the intruders' ebony weapons. The man struck with a speed that rivaled the supernatural reflexes of the vampire defenders, and the newcomers' dark blades cleaved through the vampires' invulnerable flesh with unexpected ease. On a world filled with supernatural creatures and magic weapons, this did not really surprise the vampires. They pressed their attack, assured that their incredible regenerative powers would keep them in the fight as it always had in the past. It took a few minutes for the vampires to realize their healing powers were no longer working. Every slice of the black blades used by the intruder and his zombie servants remained opened, raw and painful. New cuts were quickly piled on with each passing minute. Even the vampires' formidable psionic powers felt as though they were somehow being whittled away with each strike of the enemy's blades.

Despite the repercussions that would surely follow from abandoning their posts, the remaining vampire guardians fled to warn their master, Camazotz, and gather reinforcements. The intruder stood motionless, as if waiting in the moonlight with his zombie entourage. As he surveyed the area, he could feel the power of this new world and smiled. Lines of energy from the nearby ley lines made him feel safe and content. Although he had been forced to abandon his own world, and with it, his cherished Soul Forge, he now felt fortunate. The random Rift he had opened so hastily was clearly the handiwork of the Fates. How else could he have landed in such a new and magic-filled land. He knew in an instant that it would serve his purposes well. He just needed a chance to rebuild and perhaps conquer a new world, before exacting his revenge upon those on his old world. That, he imagined, would require him to once again initially submit to the rule and whims of a native ruler, or in this case, a Dark God. It was nothing new. He had figured out, long ago, how to make himself valuable, bide his time, and play the game until his own time to come. If he could prove himself valuable to the right power and pretend would serve him as his new "master," he would have time to reconstruct his power base and build for the future.

And so the intruder clad in black armor waited until the vampires returned in greater numbers. In the darkness, he could not tell how many hundreds were in the huge mob, but he was not worried. At the head of the pack was a lone Master Vampire. The undead approached with their typical brazen arrogance, but the intruder knew they feared him. As they should. Nevertheless, he knew the role he had to play and so he bent his knee in surrender. The blade in his hand suddenly vanished and his zombies sat down and slumped forward into motionless heaps as if the puppet strings that had been holding them up had been cut. The stranger told the vampire leader that he wished to pledge his loyalty and magic to their master and provide his most valuable services to their cause.

The man was quickly ushered before the ruler of Chichen Itza, the demonic god, *Camazotz, Lord of Bats and Darkness*. This was even better, thought the intruder, who had expected to be brought before a Vampire Intelligence. Camazotz had enslaved the Vampire Intelligence more than a century ago and had made the undead his minions. It was the God of Bats and Darkness who ruled the city of Chichen Itza ever since. While he had not sought to expand his kingdom since his initial conquest, he defi-

nately did not sit quietly. As the god of Darkness and Bats, Camazotz had been using his captured army of 2,000+ vampires to wreak havoc against the other Vampire Kingdoms and demonic rivals throughout the Yucatan, Central America and Mexico. Including tormenting communities of humans, the Werejaguars of Palenque, and others, but the Vampire Kingdoms most of all. He especially enjoyed sowing dissension between the Vampire Kingdoms by disguising his troops as members of rival kingdoms to the holdings of other vampires. In every case, the wicked god would successfully cause greater chaos and distrust or send one faction attacking another, thinking it was they who were responsible for his transgression. It was great fun. Though his efforts amused him well enough, he longed to unleash real chaos upon the region.

When the intruder was brought before him, Camazotz laughed. As a god, he recognized the ebony armor and knew that a harbinger of true chaos stood before him.

"It has been many millennia since I've stood in the company of a Soulcrafters," said the Dark God.

The stranger was impressed to be recognized, identified himself as **the Craftsman**, and bowed, saying, "By your tone, I presume you would welcome my services."

"Indeed, your skills will be most appreciated, as long as you know your place, wizard."

"Of course, my liege. Of course. I am your weapon to command."

The God of Bats and Darkness and the Craftsman struck a quick bargain, and the two have worked well together ever since. Camazotz is no fool and realizes the Craftsman is only playing the part of loyal servant, but he plays it well enough for now. All that matters to the Lord of Bats is that the mage continues to churn out his wonderful *Soulcraft* weapons for the army of Camazotz and no other.

Soulcraft Magic

Soulcrafting, like Rune Magic, uses the energy of living, sentient beings to power formidable mystical items. While Rune Magic traps the soul of its victims within the item and uses the imprisoned essence like an everlasting battery, Soulcrafting steals life energy and detonates it like a nuclear bomb to harness and channel the massive amounts of energy released. That energy is then used to create strange and powerful magic items. That is what makes Soulcrafting so horrific. It is one of the dark magicks that steals lives to create weapons of destruction used to extinguish more life. Worse, to do so, it turns life into anti-life energy and is said to devour souls. Actually, not even the practitioners of Soulcrafting are sure if the soul is truly destroyed or if some small fragment escapes into the wherever souls travel after death. Of course, anyone who would practice this dark magic could not care either way.

No one knows who first discovered the dark art of Soulcrafting, and thankfully, there are few practitioners left anywhere in the Megaverse. When a practitioner of Soulcrafting is discovered, the mage is usually descended upon by heroes or the forces of light and is destroyed. Only some Demon Lords or deities of the darkest nature, like Camazotz, try to get the *Soulcrafters* to use his dark gifts for their own insidious purposes.

While there are many ways to create powerful mystical weapons and artifacts, none can replicate the effects bestowed by Soul-

crafting. Weapons created from the cold, violet flames of a **Soul Forge** become empowered by what can only be described as *anti-life energy*. Like matter coming into contact with anti-matter, the anti-life energy of soulcrafting disrupts most other types of energy, whether it is magic energy, psychic energy, or life energy.

To make this happen, the life energy – and some say, the very souls – of the living must be torn from their bodies and imbued into a weapon of chaos and darkness. The life energy of mortals bestows a certain set of effects, but life energy taken from powerful supernatural beings has even more destructive power. With the proper life forces used to fuel a Soul Forge, magic weapons are created that disrupt the energies of spirits, angels, Elementals, the undead (like vampires) and even the gods.

Over the eons and across the Megaverse, super-rare Soulcrafting weapons have been used to great effect to take down powerful creatures of magic like dragons, supernatural beings and even gods. This is what makes these items so feared, yet coveted by the few who learn of them. It is also why practitioners of Soulcrafting and their Dark Weapons are routinely hunted down throughout the ages, everywhere, and destroyed. Yet every time the dark art and its practitioners are believed to have been wiped from existence, once and for all, a Soulcrafter seems to make an appearance.

The Soul Forge

A typical Soul Forge is a large, circular bowl, created in a pit 20-40 feet (6.1 to 12.2 m) in diameter and 10-15 feet (3 to 4.6 m) deep. The initial construction of the bowl is made from pure iron, but once the Soul Forge is lit, the iron turns impossibly black (like all Soulcraft items) and seems to absorb light. Even the bright violet light from the Forge's flames does not reflect on the surface of its metal walls. Each Forge has a simple metal grate covering the top of it so that the energy that rises up from it can pass through, but the life forces that "fuel" it cannot not escape its embrace.

This is another of the more horrifying aspects of this vile magic. Soulcrafting may detonate the life energy of the victims placed inside the forge to release their vast reserves of energy, but it does not do it instantly. Instead, the living victims writhe in agony in the belly of the Soul Forge for 1D4 weeks as its violet flames consume their bodies (and souls?). The energies given off by the poor victims trapped within this living hell, at first, turn their bodies into M.D.C. so that they live longer. (If rescued, they instantly turn back to normal S.D.C. mortals the moment they exit the Soul Forge.) This enables their mortal flesh to survive the icy flames of the Soul Forge long enough for their life essence to be sufficiently tortured to reach an energy level to fuel the fires of Dark Creation. The Forge is enchanted to muffle the sounds of their screams so the Soulcrafter can concentrate as he works his vile magic, but their tortured cries still rise above the flames, day in and day out.

Normal humans and D-Bees are the typical fuel placed inside a Soul Forge. The energy released from their tortured life essences enables a Soulcrafter to forge *Dark Weapons* and suits of *Dark Armor*.

To infuse such dark creations with special abilities, the Soul Forge needs more powerful beings, such as creatures of magic or the supernatural (demons, Elementals, demigods, godlings and the like). Soulcrafters can rip natural abilities from magical and

supernatural sentient beings trapped in the Soul Forge and infuse some of their power and abilities into a Dark Weapon.

At one time, long ago, Soulcraft weapons were used to devastating effect in wars between Darkness and Light as well as between rival Demon Lords and Alien Intelligences. Entire armies could be equipped with these horrible weapons with relative ease. Fortunately, these once abundant instruments of death became quite rare because, unlike Rune items, they are not indestructible and can be destroyed. Heroic champions and enemies of darkness throughout the Megaverse are quick to destroy any Soulcraft weapon they are able to acquire. Even many forces of darkness destroyed the items – that's how hated and feared the magic has become. Almost everyone who learns about Soulcraft magic decides to extinguish it from every corner of the Megaverse. In fact, the practitioners of Soulcrafting have been terminated with such relentless determination for so many millennia, it's hard to believe it continues to exist. And yet, somehow, a few of these horrid practitioners remain.

Creating the Soul Forge

All of a Soulcrafter's power comes from his Soul Forge. These mystical furnaces require a great deal of effort and sacrifice to create, so most Soulcrafters will only create one or two in their lifetimes. They also do absolutely everything in their power to hide and defend their Forges. While the ritual to create a Soul Forge is long and costly for the Soulcrafter, the materials used are inexpensive. The Forge itself (like all Soulcraft items) is shaped from simple iron. Soulcrafters learn a handful of secret spells that allow them to shape and mold iron like clay. Most Soulcrafters build their Forges into the ground rather than resting the enormous bowl on the surface. Digging out the hole is generally the toughest part of the physical construction, but the extra effort is well worth it later on.

The most difficult part of its creation is the ritual to light it, which is long and taxing. Once the basic structure of the Forge is complete, the Soulcrafter starts carving an intricate series of magic symbols into the inside walls. The symbols are completed one section at a time and then sealed with the blood of the Soulcrafter. It takes about a pint of blood to consecrate the symbols of each section. The walls are slightly angular to allow the mage's blood to run down and fill each carved symbol. As this is done, the Soulcrafter performs a ritual to bind a portion of his own essence into the Soul Forge. The ritual for each of the eight sections requires two hours of uninterrupted concentration, 100 P.P.E. and for the Soulcrafter to permanently sacrifice 2D4 points of P.P.E., one point of M.E., and one point of P.E. When the ritual is complete, a quick flash of violet flames burst from the spilled blood, leaving the walls of the Soul Forge scarred black and the magic symbols glowing like hot embers. This ritual must be performed a total of eight times before the Soul Forge is ready to be lit. The Soulcrafter grows weaker and weaker as this process goes on. Some have to resort to human sacrifices to find the P.P.E. to complete the ritual as their personal reserves are permanently depleted. A few have died trying to light a Soul Forge.

After the eight sacrifices, the bond with the Forge is complete and the Soulcrafter can attempt to light the flame. It only takes placing one live, sentient being inside to light the Forge, and the expenditure of 300 P.P.E. to ignite the flames. To accomplish this feat, most Soulcrafters slaughter a few hundred people or several

mages and other beings with greater amounts of P.P.E. Most also have many prisoners waiting to be placed inside the Soul Forge once it is activated. Keeping at least one living being inside the Forge at all times ensures its fire never goes out.

The ritual to light or relight a Soul Forge requires 300 P.P.E. and at least one living victim to fuel it. The P.P.E. may be thought of as the spark and lighter fluid to ignite the flames, while the people condemned inside the Soul Forge are the timber that keeps the fire burning. Coming up with this much magical energy for the weakened Soulcrafter is usually the most challenging part. Since life energy is required, the sacrifice of many living beings is necessary to acquire the P.P.E. Energy from ley lines and nexus points will not suffice, though it may help with the casting of other spells. However, it is not wise to anchor such a despised and dangerous artifact in a heavily trafficked area, even for a short time. A Soul Forge can be moved once it is lit, but this requires a tremendous amount of effort and, again, attracts unwanted attention. Most Soul Forges are created at a secret location that can be well hidden, and remain in the place they were first created.

Soulcrafters who are the servants of powerful Demon Lords, Dark Gods or evil Alien Intelligences can simply ask their masters to provide the P.P.E. required by the ritual. However, the vast majority of Soulcrafters are independent megalomaniacs with delusions of godhood themselves, and seldom willingly accept another as their master. Some pledge their service to a Demon Lord or evil deity for a time, but it is always to trick and use the monster for their own scheme, and then disappear with the Soul Forge or, better yet, trap their supernatural master inside to power the Soul Forge for decades. (One Demon Lord or deific being keeps the Soul Forge burning for 1D4 decades before he is consumed by it. Such beings also enables the Soulcrafter to instill a wide range of supernatural abilities into Dark Weapons as long as the Forge burns with deific energy.)

Most self-reliant Soulcrafters would rather slaughter hundreds of innocent mortals to get the P.P.E. necessary. Two to three hundred people usually do the trick; 90-130 if they are children. Such poor souls can be prisoners slaughtered by minions, or followers/cultists who volunteer for the honor. Whatever the means to light it, once ignited, at least one live victim is required to be kept inside the Soul Forge to keep it lit. Most Soulcrafters keep their Forge lit with a dozen to several dozen victims at any given time, with cages and cattle pens for dozens (even hundreds) more waiting in the wings. Victims are usually placed in the Soul Forge 1-3 weeks apart so that all the living embers do not go out at once.

Those slain for their P.P.E. are the victims who get off easy. Those placed inside a Soul Forge burn in agony and die slowly, wasting away over 1D4 weeks before their life essence is completely consumed. When that happens, their magically sustained bodies turn to ash, and the last of their essence fades away. Those cast into a Soul Forge erupt with violet flames coming from their eyes and mouths, and the victim's skin chars and splits like kindling wood. The pain is so great, all the poor soul can do is scream and writhe in agony. To be rescued, the victim must be physically removed from the Soul Forge. Any means can be used, but Telekinesis, Levitation, magical flight, rope and lasso, and similar methods are best. It is not recommended that rescuers enter the Soul Forge lest they themselves fall victim to its draining, cold fire.

Anyone who enters a Soul Forge immediately feels as if he has plunged into freezing water. He will find it difficult to breathe and

gasp for air, as his skin feels as if it begins to burn and crack from being frozen. Reduce all attacks/melee actions, bonuses and skill performance by half each melee round (15 seconds) inside the icy fire of the Soul Forge. When the person has only one melee attack/action left, he too becomes an immobilized victim with violet fire crackling from his eyes and mouth. Unless the would-be rescuer is pulled from the Soul Forge, he becomes another source of fuel to be consumed in a matter of weeks. It should be mentioned that those in the icy flames of the Soul Forge often float along the energy streams, their hands instinctively reaching up and out of the metal grate that holds them inside. However, they are unable to speak or help themselves while inside the Soul Forge, and are aware only of their agony, nothing more.

As long as the Soulcrafter keeps the Forge stocked with at least one living victim, the Forge continues to burn. If it goes out, the mage must go through the lighting ritual all over again. Most Soulcrafters take care to never let their Forge go out, sacrificing thousand upon thousands over the years.

Escape and Surviving a Soul Forge

Many heroes risk their lives and their own souls to pull the victims from the flames of a Soul Forge. This is another reason for the grated covering, to make such rescue attempts more difficult. So first, the grate must be unlocked/unchained and lifted or slid open. Some heroes succeed. Others fail and become victims trapped in the Soul Forge themselves. It is always risky business.

When people are rescued from a Soul Forge, they are never the same. The powerful energies coursing through their bodies cause the physical damage to heal quickly (this is why they can survive in the flames in the first place), but often the damage done to the mind and spirit is too much for them to ever completely recover from the experience. Thus, those rescued from a Soul Forge after two days (48 hours) bear the emotional scars of the traumatic event for the rest of their lives. Their bodies may be in perfect health, with even past disease, arthritis, injury and scars completely healed, but their minds and souls are forever marred.

Temporary Trauma: Those trapped in a Soul Forge for less than 48 hours suffer a phobia about dark places or being imprisoned, and may have trouble sleeping for the next 4D6 months. But with support from friends, they can overcome this and push the experience out of their minds, leaving them plagued by only the occasional nightmare (one every 1D6 months) for the rest of their days.

Permanent Trauma and Side Effect: Those trapped in a Soul Forge for 48 hours or more suffer 1D6+2 permanent side effects. Roll to determine how many afflictions/side effects are instilled. Then start with the first in the list below and continue in numerical order to see which afflictions haunt the individual for the rest of his life.

Note: All penalties are cumulative.

1. The character always feels cold and can never get warm, and the cold is always worse at night and in dark places. The character always feels chilled even on a warm summer day, in front of a raging fire or traversing the pits of Hades. Penalties: -1 to save vs cold based magic and attacks, and -5% on skill performance in cold or dark environments due to the distraction from the cold.

2. The character can feel the presence of a Soul Forge or Soulcrafted Dark Weapons and Armor whenever within 300

feet (91.5 m) of one. He hears a faint, crackling and/or hissing from it/them and feels a sudden chill. However, the character cannot use this sensation to locate or pinpoint the Dark Weapon(s) or Armor, he only knows one, two, a few, or many are nearby. +1 on Perception Rolls to avoid or hide from those with Soulcraft items, or to locate them. -5% on skill performance due to the anxiety of knowing such a terrible magic item is nearby.

3. Phobia: Darkness and Dark Places. Cannot go to sleep in, enter or travel through total darkness without light. Always needs a light in darkness. Without light the character is overcome with anxiety and fear. Penalties at night and in dark places without light: Except for Perception Rolls and initiative, reduce all combat bonuses to zero – the character fights with unmodified die rolls only! -10% penalty on the performance of all skills and the character wants to flee the darkness or find light as soon as possible. Nor can the character fall asleep in darkness; must sleep with the lights on, often a bright light. Many victims of a Soul Forge cannot sleep at night at all, and suffer from flashbacks and nightmares when they do sleep at night or in dark confines even with the lights on. Most sleep during the day, don't get more than five hours of sleep a day, and stay awake at night because they do not trust the darkness. Bonuses in darkness: +1 on Perceptions Rolls, +1 on initiative, and +1 to roll with impact in darkness due to heightened anxiety and awareness in the dark and of the dangers that might lurk within.

4. Obsession: Hates Soulcrafting Magic in all its forms. The survivor seeks to destroy practitioners of Soulcraft Magic and the Dark Weapons and Dark Armor, Iron Zombies, and Iron Guards forged by it. Likewise despises *Rune Magic*, *Soulmancy* and all magicks that steal the life force or enslave living beings. Dislikes and distrusts all forms of "dark magic," including Necromancy and Witchery, as well as evil supernatural beings.

5. Obsession: Hates and distrusts creatures of darkness, including vampires, other undead, zombies, animated dead and their animators, as well as practitioners of dark magic, Shadow Beasts, dark gods and supernatural beings who represent or use darkness. The character may not hunt them down, but he'll undermine and destroy them at every opportunity. And even if the character is of selfish or evil alignment, he will try to protect the living from these forces of darkness.

6. The Curse of Soulcrafting. Unless the character has been transformed into an *Enemy of Darkness* (in which case none of this applies; see below), he is more vulnerable to those who wield Dark Weapons and/or use Soulcraft Magic. THIS IS IN ADDITION to other penalties that may apply, such as penalties from #3 *Phobia: Darkness and Dark Places*, insanity, and so on. Penalties: No initiative, -1 to strike, parry and dodge, -2 to disarm or entangle opponents who wield a Dark Weapon, wear Dark Armor or when facing an Iron Zombie, Iron Guard or an actual Soulcrafting, or any opponent who can hide in darkness/shadows or has power over them. Bonus Transition: The penalties from the Curse of the Soulcrafting are *negated* whenever the character is fighting to protect *others* from Soulcrafting Magic or Dark Weapons. Moreover, the penalty numbers turn into *bonuses* whenever the character is fighting to protect *the innocent*, such as children and non-combat personnel, from being placed *inside a Soul Forge* or when trying to free victims from a Soul Forge. The survivor's emotional response, based on his own torment while inside the Soul Forge, is so powerful that it gives him the strength and drive to prevent or save others from a similar fate. **Note:** This individ-

ual suffers half the penalties and can survive twice as long inside a Soul Forge when he willingly enters it to rescue others from it.

7. Soul Scarred. The character is never the same after his experience. Drop Alignment by one level and even good characters tend to see the dark side and ugly side of people, politics and events, especially among practitioners of magic and supernatural beings. Has trouble trusting others and may keep secrets. Penalties: -1 to save vs psionic attacks and all forms of mind control, and -2 to save vs demonic possession. Bonuses in the presence of Beings of Light: Negate the Soul Scarred penalties and add +1 to all bonuses and saving throws when in sunlight or when in the presence of angels and Gods of Light, even in dark confines. However, in the event that the supernatural symbols of light are defeated or slain by the forces of darkness, the penalties are doubled for the next 24 hours as this character suffers additional shock and emotional trauma from the loss.

8. Roll once on the Random Insanity Table and twice on the Phobia Table. Insanity Tables start on page 330 of *Rifts® Ultimate Edition*.

Special Changes within Survivors

People who survive more than 48 hours spent within a Soul Forge, are forever scarred and changed. Their aura will, from that day forward, show the torment they suffered from the ordeal, and beings who can see the survivor's aura will immediately have respect for him or her, as well as feel a bit of sympathy and fear, especially if the survivor was trapped for 10 or more days and lived to tell the tale.

Being trapped in a Soul Forge also changes the individual in positive ways. To determine how, roll percentile dice on the table below.

01-45% Altered Body. The survivor is not an Enemy of Darkness, but has been changed. +1 to save vs all types of dark magic, including Soulcraft, Soulmancy, Demon Magic, Rune Magic, Necromancy and Witchcraft, and increase the character's S.D.C. (or M.D.C. if a Mega-Damage being) by 20%.

46-85% Altered Mind. The survivor is not an Enemy of Darkness, but has been changed. +1 to M.E. attribute, +2D6 to I.S.P. (if the character is not psychic, then +2D6 to P.P.E.), and +1 on Perception Rolls that involve Dark Magic and supernatural evil.

86-00% Becomes an Enemy of Darkness. A rare few are so saturated with the energies from the Soul Forge that they are permanently altered into Mega-Damage beings able to destroy evil supernatural beings with their bare hands.

- If once evil, the character's alignment becomes Selfish or Good.
- Combine Hit Points and S.D.C. and make them M.D.C. points. The character is now an M.D.C. creature. If he was an M.D.C. being to begin with, increase the character's M.D.C. by 30%.
- Bio-Regenerates 2D6 M.D.C. per hour.
- The Enemy of Darkness can damage evil supernatural beings with physical punches and kicks as if he possessed Supernatural Strength at 30% higher than his actual P.S. attribute number. Double damage to Soulcrafters, their minions, Dark Weapons and Dark Armor. Yes, an Enemy of Darkness can damage a Dark Weapon and eventually destroy it. Triple damage to dark gods and evil Alien Intelligences and their avatars.

- Resistant to Soulcraft Magic: The Soul Forge, Dark Weapons, Dark Armor, Iron Zombies and Iron Guards do half damage to this character, and the delayed healing effect from Dark Weapons lasts for only 1D4 hours on this character.
- +1 to save vs all types of dark magic, including Soulcraft, Soulmancy, Demon Magic, Rune Magic, Necromancy and Witchcraft, +2 to save vs possession, +3 to save vs Horror Factor when facing the creations of Soulcraft Magic, and +1 on Perception Rolls that involve dark magicks and supernatural evil, +2 when dealing with Soulcraft magic.
- The Enemy of Darkness has a Horror Factor of 14 to Iron Zombies and Iron Guards, but not Soulcrafters or other evil supernatural beings.

Creating Dark Weapons

Soulcraft weapons, better known as *Dark Weapons*, are always simple, ancient weapons and always blades or spikes of some kind. The first step requires the forging of the physical blade from a single piece of iron. The style of the blade does not matter. They can look simple and basic, but most Soulcrafters take pride in their work and put a little artistic effort into the physical styling. Soulcrafters can mold and shape the blade with a few simple magic spells, but they actually do not need to be involved in this step at all. Busy Soulcrafters will have multiple assistants doing the grunt work of forging iron weapons and items while they focus on the more complicated aspect of empowering them with the Soul Forge.

Once the blade is crafted, it is ready to be charged. Empowering any item requires the complete destruction of at least one mortal being inside the Soul Forge. Instilling additional powers requires additional and perhaps special beings inside the Forge, such as creatures of magic, demons or other supernatural beings. However, to create a basic Soulcrafted Dark Weapon requires the life of only 1-4 mortals. The chosen victim for this sacrifice is usually the least significant victim trapped in the Soul Forge or the one that has been drained of his or her special abilities and is already a fading ember ready to be snuffed out. The Soulcrafter can mentally select any specific person from among the many victims contained within the Soul Forge and command the Forge to take his life, or he may toss in a new victim for the specific purpose of using his life essence to give the Dark Weapon its mystical power.

The Destructive Power of Dark Weapons

Even the simplest Dark Weapons made from the cold energy of a Soul Forge contain the anti-energy capable of disrupting and destroying other types of energy and life itself.

Damage from a Dark Weapon: Roll damage as usual, except a Dark Weapon does damage simultaneously direct to Hit Points or M.D.C. (damage automatically adjusts to the nature of the target), AND the victim's P.P.E. AND I.S.P. with each successful strike. The same amount of damage (roll once) is taken from each. Furthermore, the damage caused by the disrupted energy cannot be healed or regenerated for 24 hours. Even magic spells

of healing and restoration as well as psionic healing from a third party or potion are only half as potent as usual.

Damage to Energy and the Living: Because Dark Weapons are created by and imbued with what roughly translates to *anti-life energy*, the weapons do damage to ALL living creatures and anything that possesses energy, even if it's Necromantic energy, including all supernatural beings, deities, Elementals, Astral Beings, spirits, creatures of magic, vampires and other so-called *undead*.

Soulcraft weapons also inflict damage to energy barriers, whether they are created via technology, magic or psionics, such as force fields, Telekinetic shields, and magic walls.

More Damage: Soulcraft weapons, also known as *Dark Weapons*, can be empowered with additional effects depending on the souls which are trapped in the Soul Forge; more on that later.

The M.D.C. of Dark Weapons: While Soulcraft weapons are incredibly durable, they are not indestructible and can be destroyed. However, they only take damage when targeted directly, and energy attacks inflict only 10% of their normal damage. Any damage done to the weapon will not regenerate, but it can be repaired by a Soulcrafter by returning it to a Soul Forge and fusing it with new life energy – one mortal life restores 100 M.D.C.

Creation Note: To make one of the following Dark Weapons, the Soulcrafter must infuse it with the sufficient amount of life energy to satisfy the M.D.C. requirements for that weapon. Thus, to make one Dark Knife, the mage needs to extinguish the life of one victim trapped in the Soul Forge. To make a large sword, four mortal life forces must be extinguished, and so on.

Sources of Power & M.D.C.:

- One mortal life, regardless of age, race or psionic abilities less than Master = 100 M.D.C.
- One Sub-Demon, Master Psychic or mortal practitioner of magic (regardless of level) = 200 M.D.C.
- One Lesser Demon, Dragon Hatchling, Faerie Folk or other creature of magic = 300 M.D.C.
- One Greater Demon, Adult Dragon, Godling or Demigod = 1,000 M.D.C.
- One Ancient Dragon = 2,000 M.D.C.
- One Demon Lord or Lesser God = 10,000 M.D.C.
- A Greater Deity (All-Father, All-Mother, head of a Pantheon) or Alien Intelligence = 150,000 M.D.C.

Note: Supernatural beings can survive, trapped inside the Soul Forge and providing energy/fuel for much a much longer period, unless used up in the creation of Dark Weapons. When the supernatural being's M.D.C. is depleted to zero, it is destroyed.

Only sentient beings can be used in a Soul Forge, not animals, machines or inanimate objects. It is the life energy of *intelligent life* that makes the icy fires of a Soul Forge burn.

Dark Weapon Damage Stats by Type

All Dark Weapons MUST be *blade weapons* and are also known as *Dark Blades*.

Dark Throwing Knife, Throwing Spikes or Shurikens. 1D6 damage direct to Hit Points/M.D.C., P.P.E., and I.S.P. The M.D.C. required to create the weapon: 100.

Dark Knife. 1D6 damage direct to Hit Points/M.D.C., P.P.E., and I.S.P. The M.D.C. required to create the weapon: 100.

Dark Triple-Bladed Claw. 3D4 damage direct to Hit Points/M.D.C., P.P.E., and I.S.P. The M.D.C. required to create the weapon: 200.

Dark Short Sword or Sickle. 2D6 damage direct to Hit Points/M.D.C., P.P.E., and I.S.P. The M.D.C. required to create the weapon: 300. Includes machetes, scimitars and cutlasses.

Dark Large Sword. 3D6 damage direct to Hit Points/M.D.C., P.P.E., and I.S.P. The M.D.C. required to create the weapon: 400. Includes the broadsword (one-handed large sword), bastard swords and other large swords, most of which require two hands to use with any accuracy and control.

Dark Flamberg and Executioner's Swords. 4D6 damage direct to Hit Points/M.D.C., P.P.E., and I.S.P. The M.D.C. required to create the weapon: 500. This sword is larger than most large swords and requires two hands to use.

Dark Giant-Size Sword (8 feet/2.4 m or larger). 5D6 damage direct to Hit Points/M.D.C., P.P.E., and I.S.P. The M.D.C. required to create the weapon: 600.

Dark One-Handed Axe or Small Axe or Throwing Axe. 2D4 damage direct to Hit Points/M.D.C., P.P.E., and I.S.P. The M.D.C. required to create the weapon: 200.

Dark Large Battle Axe. 4D6 damage direct to Hit Points/M.D.C., P.P.E., and I.S.P. The M.D.C. required to create the weapon: 500.

Dark Pole-Arm. 5D6 damage direct to Hit Points/M.D.C., P.P.E., and I.S.P. The M.D.C. required to create the weapon: 600.

Dark Scythe. 4D6 damage direct to Hit Points/M.D.C., P.P.E., and I.S.P. The M.D.C. required to create the weapon: 500.

Dark Spear. 3D6 damage direct to Hit Points/M.D.C., P.P.E., and I.S.P. The M.D.C. required to create the weapon: 300.

Dark Spike and Chain. 3D6 damage direct to Hit Point/M.D.C., P.P.E., and I.S.P. The M.D.C. required to create the weapon: 300. This is a length of chain, usually 3-6 feet (0.9 to 1.8 m) in length for human-sized warriors, that has a sharpened, heavy spike or weighted blade at both ends. Think Japanese Manriki-Gusari that ends with a sharp spike or blade.

Dark Arrow. 2D6+1 damage direct to Hit Points/M.D.C., P.P.E., and I.S.P. The M.D.C. required to create the arrow: 200. Arrows can be retrieved, but are likely to require being cut out of the bodies of their victims, not just pulled out. Can be used with any type of bow.

Additional Powers for Dark Weapons

The people placed in a Soul Forge represent the fire/fuel and components with which the Soulcrafter creates his Dark Weapons and focuses his dark magic. The mage can see the aura of those inside the Forge and sense the powers and abilities of each. He can then pluck those natural abilities from them as if they were tangible objects to imbue in his magical creations. More than one "ability" or "power" can be *drawn upon* from the same victim (though not for the same weapon), and the same ability can be plundered many times until the victim is drained of life.

Each time an ability/power is drawn upon, it extinguishes a portion of the victim's life force: 10% of his Hit Points or M.D.C. are permanently removed each time a power is placed inside a Dark Weapon. Hit Points/M.D.C. lost in this fashion are forever destroyed and cannot be restored by magic or by the Soul Forge. When reduced to zero, the sentient prisoner inside the Soul Forge is destroyed and turns to ash.

The Soulcrafter can mentally select abilities from any specific person among the many victims contained within his Soul Forge and command the Forge to use that soul for the task at hand. It only takes 1D4 minutes of concentration per each power to channel the energy into the blade and imbue it with an ability.

There can only be three extra powers per weapon. No matter how many life essences the Forge has available (one per person in the Soul Forge), each blade can only contain a maximum of *three powers*, in addition to the damage and M.D.C. common to all Dark Blades. Attempting to add more than that causes the blade to become brittle and crumble into dust within seconds.

Completing the Creation of a Weapon. To complete the creation of a dark weapon, the Soulcrafter must extinguish enough lives to satisfy the M.D.C. requirement of the weapon (the larger the weapon, the more M.D.C. required; needs one mortal life for every 100 M.D.C.), and each special power instilled in the weapon, up to three total, also requires one mortal life to be extinguished. When a life is extinguished, the body turns to ash. The only exception is the creation of a Dark Zombie, described later in this section.

Which Natural Abilities/Powers are Available for Dark Weapons? Certain D-Bees, mutants, creatures of magic and supernatural beings possess one to many special, natural abilities or super-powers. Mega-Damage hides, Bio-Regeneration, see the invisible, breath weapons, the expulsion of energy, the emission of poison, Supernatural P.E., and imperviousness or resistance to certain things such as fire or cold, are all common special abilities that can be plundered and placed into a Soul Forge creation. Some beings also possess powers such as to turn invisible, shape-change/metamorphosis, fly, swim, teleport, Dimensional Teleport, heal others, and so on. **Note:** Magic spells, learned skills, wish powers, and abilities provided by machines/bionics, are NOT natural abilities and cannot be placed into the weapon. However, *super abilities* can be tapped. *Minor Super Abilities* can be harvested completely, but in the case of many *Major Super Abilities*, each one of the *sub-powers* must be harvested for the weapon, not the entire range of a Major ability. Since the Dark Weapon has no mind and no intelligence, it can not be instilled with psionic abilities or mind control powers.

Only one special ability can be harvested from one victim per Dark Weapon. That means, if two or three special abilities are placed into a Dark Blade, each must come from a different prisoner trapped within the Soul Forge; up to three total.

When all the special powers are placed inside the weapon, one mortal life must be extinguished for EACH power to burn the ability(s) permanently into the Dark Weapon. That life does not have to be the life of the being from which the ability was obtained, and it is the lives of mortal humans and D-Bees that are usually taken to bind the weapon with extra powers. This is what makes Soulcrafters so dangerous and loathsome. They have no regard for life, and no other practitioner of dark magic kills so many people in the pursuit of power or in the creation of his magic and minions.

In all cases, the special ability applies directly to the Dark Blade itself, NOT THE WIELDER. A blade can be imbued with a dragon or demon's power of Bio-Regeneration, but it means only the blade regenerates from any damage it may sustain, *not* the person using the weapon. In all cases, powers can only be taken from beings with *human equivalent intelligence* (or better)

and which are considered sentient beings, not animals or animalistic monsters.

Special Abilities Available for Dark Weapons

Remember, only natural abilities can be transferred, not learned abilities such as spells or skills; O.C.C. and R.C.C. “Skills” are learned skills, so they cannot be harvested. Here are some common examples of natural abilities and their uses when imbued inside a Dark Weapon.

Anti-Supernatural Exorcism: This power can be drawn from any Demon Slayer or creature/being that has the ability to inflict damage or extra damage to demons and other supernatural beings. In this case, stab the Dark Weapon into somebody who is *possessed* by an outside force, demonic or otherwise, and there is a 01-85% likelihood of the possessing force being expelled from him. However, the poor soul stabbed suffers full damage from the attack, plus 30% more because the weapon must impale him/stab into his body at least three inches! This blade also does damage to Possessing Entities released from the physical host body.

Bio-Regeneration: Soulcraft blades are not indestructible, which is why some Soulcrafters like to enchant their items with regenerative powers to ensure their longevity. The weapon, itself, is magically repaired of any damage it sustains at a rate equal to that of the sentient being it was taken from; typically 2D6 M.D.C. per melee round.

Breath Weapons: If the sentient being, such as a dragon or demon, had the power to breathe fire or emit some other breath attack (cold/frost, poison, etc.), the Dark Blade can unleash a blast that is the same type of energy (fire, cold, electricity, laser beam, mist, etc.), and the attack does the same damage and has the same effect as available to the source being. Range, however, is only 50 feet (15.2 m).

Dimensional Teleport: Demons, dragons and other beings have the natural and innate ability to traverse dimensions via Dimensional Teleport. If this ability is transferred into the Dark Weapon, the weapon itself can be made to teleport out of the wielder’s hand to another location in another dimension, but *not* into an opponent or target. Alternatively, the Dark Weapon can be left at a safe location or hiding place in another dimension and teleported into the hand of its owner/wielder when needed. Only the weapon is teleported, and the teleportation is one way. Once the Dark Weapon arrives at its destination, it must be physically retrieved or returned, it cannot be teleported back and forth without end.

The likelihood of a successful teleport is automatic when the dimension is well known to the weapon wielder or is his home world. Otherwise, it is at the same rate of success as the specific being from whom the power was taken, and in many cases, it is less than 50%; use with care.

Energy Expulsion: Any being who can shoot energy blasts from his eyes, hands or body can have that ability placed into the Dark Weapon. The Dark Blade can fire an energy blast that is the same type of energy (fire, electricity, laser beam, etc.), that does the same damage, and has the same range as available to the source being. Each blast counts as one melee attack.

Extra Attacks or Great Prowess: If the sentient being has an extra melee attack or a P.P. of 24 or greater, that ability translates into superior balance and light weight for the weapon. Which, in

turn, provides a bonus of +1 to strike, parry and disarm whenever the weapon is used.

Extra Damage: If the sentient being has a Supernatural P.S. of 28 or greater, or claws or bite attacks that inflict a lot of damage (4D6 M.D.C. or greater), then the Dark Blade can be imbued to inflict 1D6 additional damage regardless of its size or shape. As usual, that extra 1D6 damage is applied to Hit Points or M.D.C., P.P.E. and I.S.P. with every attack.

Extra M.D.C.: For every 100 M.D.C. taken from a sentient victim, the Dark Blade gets an extra 10 M.D.C. The most M.D.C. a Dark Weapon can possess is 1,000.

Fly: The Dark Weapon can be thrown straight and true, regardless of its shape and design, and at considerable speed and great distance; 1,200 feet (366 m). The attacker must have a clear line of sight to the target for the thrown weapon to strike. +1 to strike when thrown. Moreover, the Dark Blade returns, flies back, to its owner after it has struck (throwing it counts as one attack, flying back counts as another).

Healing Touch/Heal Others: Beings with the power to heal by touch can have that power placed into the Dark Weapon. Such a healing can be performed as often as once every 10 minutes, but uses up ALL of its wielder’s attacks for one full melee round (15 seconds), and the recipient of the healing feels chilled to bone, as if touched by the hand of Death. Roll to determine side effect: **01-50%** those healed by the Dark Blade have nightmares for the next 2D4 days per healing touch from the weapon, with accumulative effect. **51-80%** nightmares for 1D4 days per healing touch, and **81-00%** no nightmares. As a result, most injured characters only accept healing that is enough to take them out of life-threatening danger, not complete health. The type and amount of healing is as per the sentient being the power was drawn from; double when used on the Soulcrafters who created the weapon.

Hover/Levitation: The Dark Weapon can be made to levitate straight up as high as 100 feet (30.5 m) and hang in place, until the wielder calls for it. At that point the weapon drops back down and right into his hand, provided he is within a 10 foot (3 m) radius of where the weapon comes down. If the weapon is large enough, and its wielder strong enough, he can hold on to the Dark Blade and be levitated up into the air with it; 500 pound (225 kg) weight limit.

Imperviousness to certain things and hostile environments: This includes fire, energy, cold, and sometimes, even magic. Placing that ability into the weapon makes *it* impervious to such attacks/elements; no damage.

Invisibility: The Dark Weapon can be made invisible to hide and conceal it on the person of its owner/user, or when hidden someplace or within a container. However, as soon as it is drawn for use in combat, the weapon turns visible.

Metamorphosis: See Shape-Change.

Poison: If the sentient being possessed the ability to poison opponents in combat via bite, stinger, claws, secretion of fluids or other means, the Dark Blade can do likewise. Same damage, effect and duration of the poison as per the sentient being from which the power was drawn. However, the Dark Weapon must cut or stab and *draw blood* to inflict its poison. As a special ability, there is an endless supply of the poison. No, there is no liquified poison to be removed from the blade and placed in a container. The poison is part of the blade and cannot be harvested.

Resistance to certain things and hostile environments: This includes fire, energy, cold, and sometimes, magic. Placing that

ability into the weapon makes *it* resistant to such attacks/elements; takes half damage.

Shape-Change/Metamorphosis: The Dark Weapon can be made to transform into a different, one piece object of similar size and mass. This can be done to disguise the Dark Weapon as something innocent and benign for as long as the weapon wielder desires. However, as soon as it is used in combat, the weapon takes its true weapon form.

Swim: The Dark Weapon can be thrown underwater and travel like a torpedo, straight and true, regardless of its shape and design, at considerable speed and great distance; 1,200 feet (366 m). The attacker must have a clear line of sight to his intended target for the thrown weapon to strike. +2 to strike when thrown underwater or into water.

Teleport: Demons, dragons and other beings have the natural and innate ability to teleport. If this ability is transferred into the Dark Weapon, the weapon itself can be made to teleport out of the wielder's hand to another location, but *not* into an opponent or target. Alternatively, the Dark Weapon can be left at a safe location or hiding place and teleported into the hand of its owner/wielder. Range is limited to a 500 mile (800 km) radius from the weapon, double if the wielder is the Soul crafter who made the Dark Weapon. Only the weapon is teleported, and the teleportation is one way. Once the Dark Weapon arrives at its destination it must be physically retrieved or returned, it cannot be teleported back and forth without end.

The likelihood of a successful teleport is automatic if the range is within 100 miles (160 km; double for the weapon's maker), otherwise it is at the same rate as the specific being from whom the power was taken.

Special: Exploit Achilles Heel

Some creatures have vulnerabilities to odd items like silver or water. Somehow, these substances are able to disrupt the life energy of the creature and inflict extra damage. A Soulcraft Dark Blade can be made to mimic the effects of these items by exploiting the weakness of a sentient being trapped in the Soul Forge. To copy this anti-energy signature, the blade must be infused with the entire life essence of a creature that possesses this weakness himself. For example, to create a Dark Weapon that inflicts *extra damage* against creatures vulnerable to silver, the Soul crafter needs to place the entire life essence of a vampire, werewolf, or other being vulnerable to silver, into the weapon. Such beings are more valuable to the Soul crafter, plus this enhanced killing ability counts as *TWO special abilities*, so it is a costly choice. Though more expensive for the Soul crafter, the Dark Weapon inflicts *double damage* to opponents with that one specific vulnerability (silver, wood, bone, etc.).

Dark Armor

The Soul crafter can enhance armor made of ordinary iron and/or other metal (or armor that is predominantly [90%] metal of any kind) in a similar manner as Dark Weapons. He cannot use armor made of plastic, ceramic, stone, wood, leather or other materials; it must be metal and ideally, iron. Metal armor that is less than half iron can be imbued with only *half* the level of M.D.C. and powers possible with iron armor.

The process involves baking existing metal armor, or making new, iron armor, inside a Soul Forge. The process turns the armor black or dark cobalt blue, and it always feels cold to the touch. If a piece of the armor is destroyed (reduced to zero M.D.C.; see M.D.C. by Location) it turns to ash and blows away, leaving space for a new Soul Forge created replacement piece. That's why the armor is attached in pieces, so that damaged pieces can fall away and be replaced. While pieces of the armor are missing, the wearer is vulnerable to attack at those locations (requires a Called Shot to hit), though his own flesh is also transformed to become M.D.C., providing some measure of protection.

In fact, if there is a downside to Dark Armor (and really, there are several), it is that the armor must be custom made and must be attached and bonded directly to the flesh and muscle of the recipient. Dark Armor and its wearer become one. The armor can be removed, in pieces, but there are permanent mounts, hooks and implants in the person's body where the armor is physically attached. The minimum amount of Dark Armor that can be made and attached is a half suit (upper torso and arms), but full suits (including a helmet) are the most typical.

Creation Cost to Make Dark Armor: A full suit with the standard abilities of Dark Armor needs the life essences of eight mortals, and a half suit requires four.

The Power of Dark Armor

1. A Comfortable Second Skin: The armor is lightweight, as if it were made of aluminum, not iron; comfortable, like a second skin, and even a full suit of Dark Armor imposes a mere -5% movement penalty to skills such as Acrobatics, Climb, Gymnastics, Swim, etc.

2. Wearer Becomes a Mega-Damage Creature: To receive a suit of Dark Armor, the recipient must be "prepared," and mortal S.D.C. beings must be transformed into minor Mega-Damage creatures. This requires being remolded inside the Soul Forge and is a very painful experience. The remolding requires 30 minutes of burning, icy pain inside the Forge. That may sound like a short period of suffering, but those who have endured the process insist the experience lasts three days, not 30 minutes. To make the transformation complete, the recipient must be completely garbed in his armor before being removed from the Soul Forge. The experience usually results in one or more insanities. See insanities below.

A half suit sees the recipient's Hit Points and S.D.C. combined and turned into M.D.C.

A full suit sees the recipient's Hit Points and S.D.C. combined and turned into M.D.C., plus 50% additional M.D.C.

In all cases, the M.D.C. transformation is permanent, as long as the individual spends *half his time* wearing the armor. Most spend 70-80% of their time clad in the armor. If the Dark Armor is ever forsaken and discarded, or is not worn at least half the time for three weeks, the character's personal, physical M.D.C. drops by half. The M.D.C. is restored back to full after the armor is worn seventy percent of the time for one full month. **Note:** Personal M.D.C. heals at the same rate as Hit Points and S.D.C. damage used to heal; quadruple inside a Soul Forge.

3. M.D.C. of Dark Armor by Location:

Head/Helmet – 100 (+50 if it has a pair of large horns, wings or 2-8 spikes)

Shoulder Plates (2) – 125 each, increase to 175 if shoulder plates are oversized or covered in spikes or blades.

Upper Arm Plates/Bands (2 arms) – 75 each
Forearm Plates/Bands (2 arms) – 60 each
Hands (2) – 50 each if a gauntlet, more if fingers have Dark Knives at the ends of the fingers (+10 M.D.C. per each knife-finger).
Upper Legs (2) – 100 each
Lower Legs (2) – 70 each
Feet (2) – 50 each
Main Body: Chest and Belly Plates – 250

4. Dark Armor is Resistant to Energy: While Soulcrafting's anti-energy signature grants incredible destructive power when used as a weapon, these same energies provide impressive protection when forged into a suit of body armor. Soulcraft armor radiates a sort of negation field that greatly diminishes the effects of any energy it comes into contact with, whether it is technological, magic, or psychic based. Direct energy attacks, including heat, radiation, lasers, ion blasts, plasma bolts, particle beams, and magic energy blasts (fire, fireballs, electricity, lightning and other energy) and magic weapons, inflict *half damage*. This resistance applies to the armor, specifically. When the armor is removed, its owner is vulnerable to all these things as normal.

Bonuses: Dark Armor also provides the wearer the following bonuses: +1 to save vs spell magic and illusions, +2 to save vs other dark magicks (including Bio-Wizardry, Necromancy, Witchery and Demon Magic/Soulmancy), +3 to save vs possession, and impervious to the powers of vampires and other "undead."

Vulnerabilities: M.D. explosives, projectiles, physical blows, M.D. melee weapons, impact and psionic attacks all do full damage to Dark Armor. Soulcraft armor does *not* magically provide any environmental protection unless modified with special powers (see below).

5. Probable Insanities: Roll to determine any insanities.

01-10% No Insanity: Lucked out.

11-50% One Insanity: Dependence on Dark Armor. Feels nervous, weak and vulnerable when not wearing the armor, which manifests as a penalty of -1 on all combat bonuses/maneuvers and Perception Rolls, -5% to skill performance, and tends to be jumpy and insecure. Wears armor as much as possible, 60+4D6% of the time.

51-70% Two Insanities: Dependence on Dark Armor and Obsession. Same as above, plus pick one or roll on the Obsession table found on page 337 of *Rifts® Ultimate Edition*.

71-90% Three Insanities: Dependence on Dark Armor, Obsession, and is either Sadistic or Masochistic (pick one of the latter). Same as above, plus: If Sadistic, the character enjoys tormenting, torturing and hurting others. If a Masochist, this individual enjoys receiving pain. Any damage incurred in combat motivates him to fight harder and seemingly without any aversion to pain and injury. Torture is a strangely enjoyable experience and interrogators suffer a penalty of -30% to force information out of him.

91-00% Dark Champion with Five Insanities: Dependence on Dark Armor, Obsession, is either Sadistic or Masochistic, has Superman Syndrome and Obsession: Dark Weapons. Same as above, plus the individual thinks he's smarter, stronger and better than his enemies/opponents; takes needless risks and chances. See page 335 of *Rifts® Ultimate Edition* for the complete description of the Superman Syndrome. The character also covets Dark Weapons and tries to acquire as many as possible,

preferring to use them more than most other types of weapons in most situations.

Special Powers for Dark Armor

The range of special enhancement is much more limited than what can be done with weapons. Only the enhancements below are possible and no more than three per suit of armor. As it is with Dark Blades, the armor can only be imbued with attributes drawn from the life essence of victims placed in the Soul Forge. Likewise, only three attributes can be fused into the armor, and each enhancement requires the extinguishing of at least one mortal life to bond it to the armor.

Note: In all cases, Dark Armor can only be empowered with a special ability by sacrificing/killing a *sentient being* and sending that intelligent being's life essence into the armor. Unlike weapons, where a single power can be stripped away and placed in the item, the magic used to empower Dark Armor requires the entire life essence of an appropriate sentient being to be sacrificed to instill that one ability. A total of three abilities maximum can be placed in one specific Dark Armor suit.

Aquatic Capabilities: An aquatic being can be sacrificed to give the wearer of the armor underwater capabilities, i.e. breathe underwater, swimming speed and depth tolerance the same as the being from which the power was drawn.

Augmented Speed: The sacrifice of a sentient supernatural being or intelligent creature of magic with great running speed (Spd attribute of 24 or greater) can be instilled in a full *suit of armor* to function like the equivalent of power armor, giving the wearer of the armor a Speed equal to the being whose life was taken to empower the armor. If the wearer already had a Spd attribute equal to or greater than the being slain, increase it by 10%.

Bio-Regeneration: A sentient being with the power of Bio-Regeneration must be consumed to instill the armor with healing capabilities. The armor (not the wearer) regenerates at a rate of 2D6 M.D.C. per melee round and can be directed to the main body or any one specific area/piece of armor that needs healing the most (forearm, leg, helmet, and so on).

Dimensional Pocket: The life essence of a Temporal Raider, dragon, or other being capable of dimensional travel must be sacrificed to instill a suit of armor with the ability to conceal itself within a dimensional pocket. With a mental command, the armor can be sent into a Pocket Dimension where it is absolutely unreachable to all but its owner. It can remain there indefinitely until summoned with a whispered command that causes it to reappear. And it appears on the body of the wearer. With this power, the armor is never more than a thought away no matter where in the Megaverse its wearer may be.

Fly: A being with the power to fly can be sacrificed to instill the armor with the power to hover and fly, carrying the wearer with it. Maximum flying speed is 70 mph (112 km) and is mentally controlled by the wearer of the Dark Armor. Maximum altitude is 20,000 feet (6,096 m) and the wearer still requires oxygen to breathe. **Bonuses while in flight:** +1 on initiative, +1 to strike, +3 to dodge and +1 to damage.

Impervious: A being impervious or resistant to fire, energy, cold, etc., can have any *one* of its impervious or resistance capabilities applied to the armor; no damage from that one thing (fire, cold, etc.) via the extinguishing of that being's life.

Increase M.D.C. of Dark Armor: Supernatural beings and intelligent creatures of magic with M.D.C. hides/skin can be sacrificed to increase the M.D.C. of Dark Armor, up to a maximum of 1,500 M.D.C. to the Main Body and 300 to other armored pieces. One third of the slain victim's M.D.C. is applied to the main body of the Dark Armor and 10% is applied to each of the other "pieces"/locations of armor (see M.D.C. by Location).

Space Capabilities: A being capable of surviving and functioning in outer space can be sacrificed to give the wearer of the armor space capabilities, i.e. breathe and survive in a vacuum and possibly even move/fly in outer space at the same level as the being from which the power was drawn.

Supernatural P.S.: The sacrifice of a sentient being with Supernatural Strength can be instilled in a full *suit of armor* to function like the equivalent of power armor, giving the wearer of the armor a Supernatural P.S. equal to the being whose life was taken to empower the armor. If the wearer already had Supernatural Strength, increase it by 20%.



Iron Zombies

Dark Armor can be created and instilled as part of another creation: *A Soulcraft Iron Zombie*.

When a living being is placed inside a Soul Forge, his life essence is burned off in a matter of days or weeks, depending on the needs of the Soulcrafter. Before the final moment in which the individual is completely immolated, the Soulcrafter can preserve the body at the instant of death by casting a spell known only

to them, the *Zombie Unlife spell* (90 P.P.E.). This is a spell that can only be cast by Soulcrafters via the use of a Soul Forge. The spell supercharges the charred corpse into the dark brown and desiccated corpse of a mummy without its wrapping. Then the Dark Armor is attached, piece by piece, only this armor is always crowned with 9-13 blades or spikes on oversized shoulder pads, three blades along the side of the upper arm plates, 3-4 along the forearm, and finger blades for the fingers. The armor on the lower legs may also be covered in sharp spines, and sometimes a pair of metal horns or spikes/blades is attached to the skull. Once the body is recovered in a full suit of iron armor – minus only a helmet (Iron Zombies are *never* given a helmet) – the armored corpse is once again slid into the Soul Forge. There, the lifeless shell is empowered by extinguishing the life of one mortal victim contained within the Forge.

To bind the horror to the Soulcrafter, the mage calls the corpse out of the Forge, pricks his finger and touches a drop of his own blood to the zombie's lips. For an instant, the mage is wracked with pain and then overcome with weakness as 4D6 of his own Hit Points are ripped from his body and placed into the zombie. This damage is temporary and recovers the same as if the Soulcrafter were injured in battle. Magic healing potions, magic or psionics may be used to hasten the healing process. A split-second after being touched with its creator's blood, a violet light flickers in the creature's eyes and it becomes the mage's eternal loyal servant. A servant that knows no fear or desire, and obeys its master's every command. A servant that functions until its armor is reduced to zero and its withered corpse burned to ash.

Iron Zombies – NPC Monster

Also Known As: Dark Zombies and Soulcraft Zombies.

Note: Regardless of the original race, all Soulcraft Zombies have the exact same range of attributes, abilities, and M.D.C.

Alignment: Diabolic evil and the enemy of all living things.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+2, M.E. and M.A. are not applicable, but the zombies are fearless and resistant to psionic attacks, P.S. 1D6+24 (Supernatural P.S.), P.P. 1D6+13, P.E. 1D6+13, P.B. 1D4, and Spd 1D6+13.

M.D.C. of the Zombie: 4D6+13 for its body, but the body is protected by its Dark Armor and cannot be attacked until all of the Main Body M.D.C. of the armor is depleted to zero.

The head/skull has 75 M.D.C., +30 if it has a pair of large horns or blades attached, and unless the entire body is destroyed, ideally by fire (must suffer damage greater than 52 points below zero), the zombie body will Bio-Regenerate, a severed or destroyed head or limb grows back, and the Dark Zombie walks again.

M.D.C. of Dark Armor by Location: Iron Zombie armor is not quite as strong as Dark Armor made for the living and only has the abilities described in these stats, nothing more.

Shoulder Plates (2) – 150 each

Upper Arm Plates/Bands (2) – 55 each

Forearm Plates/Bands (2) – 40 each

Hands (2) – 30 each

Upper Legs (2) – 75 each

Lower Legs (2) – 55 each

Feet (2) – 35 each

Main Body: Chest and Belly Plates – 180

Horror Factor: 13, +2 when there are a dozen or more attacking the same target/position.

P.P.E.: Zero. They are not alive.

Size: Same as whatever the person was in life, but add 1D6x10+60 pounds (70 lbs/31.5 kg to 120 lbs/54 kg) for the armor bolted to the zombie's body.

Special Abilities & Weapons: Skills, per se, are not applicable.

Iron Zombies function like rabid animals with basic physical capabilities (walk, run, fight, kill, etc.) as per their attributes and an instinct to fight and kill the living. *Climbing* ability is the equivalent of 60%/50%. Of course, their strongest instinct is to follow and obey their maker, the Soulcrafter and the minions he commands them to follow. However, their first loyalty is to their maker and his commands supercede all others. **Note:** Cannot swim, sink like bricks, but don't need to breathe and can walk along the floor of lakes and seas at any depth.

Bio-Regeneration: Both zombie and the armor bolted to the zombie (as long as the armor has even one M.D.C. point) *heal* at a rate of 1D6 M.D.C. per melee round. And even when the zombie's M.D.C. is reduced to 52 M.D.C. below zero, a Dark Zombie regenerates to rise from its seeming destruction. However, when its armor is reduced to zero M.D.C., that section of armor is destroyed/gone. Of course, a Soulcrafter may always replace lost pieces of Dark Armor as he deems necessary. However, sometimes zombies with hunks of missing armor look even scarier. **Note:** When their Soulcrafter creator is slain, Iron Zombies cease to exist, their armor turning to ash, and their bodies nothing but dried bones.

Dark Weapons: Most Iron Zombies are given one or two Dark Weapons such as a large sword or battle axe, and a scythe or pole-arm. They also have 3-4 Dark Weapon blades or spikes built into the forearms of their Dear Armor (each does 2D6 M.D.). **Note:** These are always standard, no frills, Dark Weapons without any additional powers.

Engines of Destruction: Dark Zombies exist only to serve their master and destroy the living. As such, they are brutally effective combatants. They are dim-witted to be sure, so there is not much strategy to their attacks, but their Supernatural Strength, healing capabilities, Dark Weapons, armor and relentless nature more than make up for low intelligence. Besides, they are usually commanded, at a distance, by their creator or one of his intelligent minions, such as a Dark Guard.

Low Intelligence: Soulcraft Zombies can only obey simple commands like, "Let no others enter." "Attack." "Bring him to me, alive." "Kill." "Destroy them all." "Protect me." And so on. However, as witless zombies, they tend to respond to all situations with violence, and it must be specified if someone is to be captured alive or unharmed. Iron Zombies are fast, strong, and merciless in the execution of their duties. They are not lumbering automatons. They rush towards their prey and fight without concern for their own preservation.

Resistant to Energy: As per Dark Armor.

Understand All Languages: Dark Zombies magically understand all languages, so anyone can function as their squad leader, barking out commands and directions. Their maker, however, can deliver mental commands up to one mile (1.6 km) away, that only the Dark Zombie(s) can hear. The Soulcrafter can speak to one, several or as many as 100 Iron Zombies simultaneously per level of his experience.

Unshakeable Loyalty: Dark Zombies are one hundred percent loyal to the Soulcrafter who created them. He can order Iron Zombies to obey another person, but this is only a

temporary allegiance and it never supercedes the commands of their maker. Moreover, whenever they know their maker is in real danger, Dark Zombies stop what they are doing and rush to his defense. All fight to their own destruction to protect him.

Attacks per Melee: Five.

Damage: Imbued with anti-life energy from the Soul Forge, all attacks by Iron Zombies inflict the same damage as a Dark Weapon, even from their bites and claw strikes.

Restrained Punch: 5D6 Hit Points/S.D.C.

Full Strength Punch: 3D6 Hit Points or M.D.

Power Punch: 6D6 Hit Points or M.D. (counts as two attacks).

Claw Strike with Finger Blades: 5D6 Hit Points or M.D. (Power Claw Strike not possible).

Claw Strike with Bare Hands of Zombie: 3D6 Hit Points or M.D.

Full Strength Kick: 3D6 Hit Points or M.D.

Bite: 1D6 Hit Points or M.D. from human and human-like Dark Zombies, 2D6 Hit Points or M.D. from oversized D-Bees and those with fangs or sharp teeth.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +2 to strike and +1 to disarm, pin and entangle. Under normal circumstances, Iron Zombies do not bother to parry or dodge attacks directed at them. However, if ordered to avoid damage, they are +2 to parry and dodge. Soulcraft Zombies are impervious to Horror Factor, disease, poison, mind control and possession, and +2 to save vs most psionic attacks. Plus the armor and weapons have all the usual bonuses and capabilities.

Vulnerabilities: As per Dark Armor, plus demon slayers and demon slaying weapons and magic inflict full damage.

Magic: None, other than the Dark Armor or possible weapons they use.

Psionics: None.

Allies: Only their maker and those he tells them to obey.

Enemies: Those of their creator, champions of goodness and light, and the living in general.

Weapons: Iron Zombies can use any handheld melee weapon with bonuses noted above, but do not have any skills of any kind. They can also use guns but don't know how to reload the weapon when a clip is spent, are -4 to strike, and cannot make a "Called Shot" or perform the quick draw or any trick shots.

Note: The Craftsman has already raised an army of 600 Iron Zombies that he commands in the name of Camazotz, but they are truly his alone. He continues to bide his time in loyal service to the Lord of Bats as his forces grow.

Iron Guard

While Soulcraft Zombies make up the bulk of any Soulcrafter's forces, they are simple-minded automatons that cannot think for themselves. They need constant guidance and direction to remain an effective combat force. That duty often falls to the *Iron Guards* who command groups as small as a squad (8-12) or platoon (40-60), to an entire company (160-200 zombies).

The Iron Guards, also known as the *Dark Guards*, are the loyal henchmen of Soulcrafters. Each one is a formidable warrior in his or her own right and often leads bands of Iron Zombies. The



majority of Dark Guards are mortals who allowed themselves to be recreated and remolded in the icy fire of the Soul Forge.

Power Through Pain. An Iron Guard is typically chosen by two different means. One is a victim of the Soul Forge so desperate to make the agony stop that he pledges to dedicate his life in the service of the Soulcrafter. If the mage takes pity on the poor soul, or finds the individual to be a desirable candidate as an Iron Guard (often a decision made for its irony or cruelty), the person is granted his wish and remade to live a new kind of hell.

Others are wicked beings to begin with. In this instance, they are likely to be motivated by a desire to hurt and kill, or driven by feelings of hatred or revenge, or hunger for power, and see becoming the willing servant and protector of a Soulcrafter as a way to achieve their goal.

In both cases, the individual is fused with Dark Armor and turned into something powerful but inhuman. It is a gruesome and painful process that turns the living into a sort of macabre cyborg monster. The iron armor is permanently bonded to become one with the Dark Guard. The Dark Weapons and Armor of Iron Guards are not just bound to the flesh of the recipient, but also to the recipient's very soul. This means if the individual was not evil to begin with, he is when the transformation is complete. And it is a transformation. All Iron Guards become something ugly, monstrous and far more sinister than they began. Most are evil and filled with hate and cruel desire who enjoy inflicting torture and killing. What little of their humanity that may remain is buried within the embodiment of evil and cruelty they have become.

Dark Guards are created in a similar way to the zombies, their bodies first cooked for 2D4 days in the Soul Forge and Dark Armor attached to them. However, first the very body of the guardian must be forged into something more than human. Iron that is white hot is poured over their already tortured bodies, covering them in what is almost a cocoon of molten metal. Then the magic reshapes them, body and soul, turning even the purest heart into a wicked monster. Most Dark Guards become hulking

beasts 15-40% larger in size and girth than a human. The head and face is skeletal, the eyes, a pair of glowing, violet dots contained in sunken eye sockets. The teeth are usually inhumanly long and pointed like those of a carnivore, and many have saber-tooth tiger-like fangs that hang below their jaws. Then the armor is applied, each piece permanently attached to the body like a second skin. Fingers are often replaced with Dark Knives. An entire hand and forearm may be replaced with a large Dark Blade sword or battle axe. The armor along the side of the arms and legs is covered in blades or sharp spikes. The head, crowned with a large helmet with large, curved blades, wing-blades or horns. Man and armor become one and the same. Only the helmet can be removed. To destroy this inhuman abomination, one must destroy the man-machine utterly, reducing the Main Body M.D.C. to more than 52 points below zero.

Any mortal race can become a Dark Guard, but NOT creatures of magic, zombies (that's another story), already dead corpses, spirits or supernatural beings.

Each Iron Guard possesses Supernatural Strength and Endurance, an M.D.C. body built like a tank, great speed, and Dark Weapons. They can heal damage at an incredible rate and inflict damage upon others in kind. Like Soulcraft Zombies, the Dark Guard can inflict damage directly to a target's Hit Points (or M.D.C.), P.P.E., and I.S.P. with their bare hands, but they can also focus their internal anti-life energies into bolts of destruction. Exceptional servants may also be granted additional Dark Armor abilities during their creation or after they have proven themselves (three total as limited by Dark Armor), and are likely to have several Dark Weapons/Blades built into their armor as well as be given two Dark Weapons of choice. Only Guards who have proven themselves get Dark Weapons with extra abilities.

The Iron Guard NPC Villain

Also Known As: Dark Guard and Soulcraft Cyborg.

Creation Cost in Lives: The usual cost of creating the Dark Armor and Dark Weapons, plus two mortal life essences per each day it takes to create and mold an Iron Guard. A process that lasts 2D4 days. And one *supernatural being* of any variety (a Sub-Semon, a vampire, a Lesser Demon or Greater Demon can be used) at the very end of the creation ceremony.

Alignment Corruption: Regardless of original alignment, every Dark Guard becomes *Miscreant* (49%) or *Diabolic* (50%) (one percent other) after the conversion process. To accept such a full conversion to become a living Dark Weapon demands the recipient relinquishes all that is good and to embrace wickedness and depravity. It also kills feelings of love, compassion, guilt and morality. Newly molded Dark Guards often feel like the shackles that have kept them restrained have finally been burned away. This may be first viewed as liberating, but ultimately creates a monster.

Attributes of Dark Guards: I.Q. (as it was in life; 3D6 for humans and most D-Bees), M.E. 2D6+6, M.A. 1D6+6, P.S. 1D6+29 (Supernatural), P.P. 2D6+13, P.E. 2D6+17 (Supernatural), P.B. 2D4, Spd +4D4x10.

M.D.C. of Dark Armor by Location:

Head – 113

Helmet – 170

Shoulder Plates (2) – 125 each

Upper Arm Plates/Bands (2) – 150 each

Forearm Plates/Bands (2) – 225 each

Hands (2) – 150 each if a gauntlet, more if fingers have Dark Knives at the ends of the fingers (+20 M.D.C. per each knife-finger).

Upper Legs (2) – 200 each

Lower Legs (2) – 150 each

Feet (2) – 100 each

Main Body: Chest and Belly Plates – 420

Horror Factor: 14, +2 when there are a dozen or more attacking the same target/position or when one or two lead a platoon-sized or greater legion of Iron Zombies or other monsters.

P.P.E.: 4D6

Size: 1D4+6 feet (2.1 to 3 m).

Special Abilities & Weapons: Only the O.C.C. Skills known before the transformation remain intact, and Hand to Hand Combat is replaced by the raw abilities and power of their new body. (See Attributes, Attacks per Melee, Bonuses, and Weapons.) All other skills (O.C.C. Related and Secondary) are forgotten. Likewise, most of the monster's previous life is remembered only as bits and pieces, and almost always as painful and best to be forgotten. **Note:** Cannot swim, even if the character has the Swimming skill, unless the armor is imbued with Aquatic Capabilities. The heavy armor and mass of their new bodies makes swimming impossible. However, Dark Guards can survive underwater and in any environment without air, for one hour per P.E. attribute point. That means they can walk along the floor of lakes and seas and survive at depths as deep as six miles (9.6 km).

Bio-Regeneration: An Iron Guard and his armor *heals* at a rate of 2D6 M.D.C. per melee round. And even when the Dark Guard's M.D.C. is reduced to -52 M.D.C. below zero, he can regenerate to rise again as an armor-clad machine of destruction. To destroy this creature, the Main Body must be reduced to more than 52 points below zero. When slain, the face/head of the behemoth turns ashen and the light in its eye sockets disappears. The armor remains, but turns brittle and breaks off and crumbles when touched, pulled or lifted.

Dark Weapons & Energy Blasts: The Iron Guard can use any weapon without benefit of bonuses (unless he has a W.P.), but prefers to use Dark Weapons above all others. Moreover, the monster can channel the Anti-Life Energy within itself and into any Dark Weapon to fire energy bolts from it.

Fire Energy Blasts from Dark Weapons:

Range: 1,600 feet (488 m).

Damage: 3D6 S.D.C. or M.D. per blast, depending on the nature of their enemy; double damage to the undead/vampires.

Rate of Fire: One blast and each counts as one melee attack.

Payload: Effectively unlimited, but requires a Dark Weapon from which to fire such energy bolts. Points the weapon and fires.

Number of Dark Weapons: Iron Guards start with two standard, no frills, Dark Weapons without any additional special powers, but those who prove themselves are likely to be upgraded with larger, deadlier Dark Weapons and those with special abilities. Over time, a loyal Iron Guard will be given 2-4 additional Dark Weapons as rewards for a job well done.

Engines of Destruction: As the product of anti-life energy and magic, Dark Guards are engines of destruction. They live to serve their master and to torment, enslave and destroy the living. They are brutal and cruel, enjoy engaging in torture and love to fight. These warrior servants and protectors of the

Soulcrafter may be dispatched on special missions of any kind as a lone agent, in pairs, threes or small groups, but more often than not, one or two function as the leader of an Iron Zombie squad (8-12 zombies), platoon (40-60) or company (160-200). They also serve as the guardians of their master's domain/lair/possessions and as his protectors. As such, they are expected to sacrifice their own lives in the defense of their master. All are intelligent, duplicitous, and brutal and ruthless in combat. Most are without mercy or any sense of compassion or humanity.

Also see Attacks per Melee, Bonuses and Vulnerabilities.

Intelligence: As per I.Q. attribute of the person before being transformed into a Dark Guard.

Resistant to Energy: As per Dark Armor.

Understand All Languages: Iron Guards magically understand all languages and their maker can deliver mental commands up to one mile (1.6 km) away that only the Dark Guard(s) can hear. The Soulcrafter can speak to one, several or as many as 20 Iron Guards simultaneously per level of his experience.

Loyalty: Dark Guards can think for themselves, but are wicked and bound to the Soulcrafter who created them. They know that without their maker, their power level is greatly reduced, and they are left to wander the world like masterless ronin. Iron Guards often command groups of Dark Zombies, who obey them as if the guardians are extensions of the Soulcrafter, which, in a way, they are. If an Iron Guard turns against his master, he loses M.D.C., power and ability the same as *Loss of the Creator*. See Vulnerabilities, below.

Attacks per Melee: Eight regardless of the number they had before being reborn.

Damage: As per Supernatural P.S. Imbued with anti-life energy from the Soul Forge, all attacks by Iron Guards inflict the same damage as a Dark Weapon, even from their bites and claw strikes.

Claw Strike with Finger Blades: +2D6 Hit Points or M.D. (A Power Claw Strike is possible, but counts as two attacks.)

Head Butt With Helmet: 4D6 Hit Points or M.D.

Bite: 2D6 Hit Points or M.D.

Bite/Gore With Saber Tooth Fangs: 5D6 Hit Points or M.D.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +1 on Perception Rolls regarding sabotage, combat, torture and getting the advantage on an opponent, +3 on initiative, +2 to strike, parry and dodge, +2 to disarm, +5 to pull punch, +1 to roll with impact, +5 to save vs Horror Factor, +5 to save vs possession, and resistant to cold and heat/fire (half damage; may be impervious if the armor has the appropriate special ability). Impervious to disease and can hold breath or go without air for one hour per P.E. attribute point. Plus the Dark Armor and Weapons have all their usual bonuses and damage capabilities.

Vulnerabilities: As per Dark Armor, plus demon slayers and demon slaying weapons and magic inflict full damage, -2 on Perception Rolls involving the emotional and physical welfare of other people, and -2 to save vs insanity.

Loss of the Creator Means Reduced Power: When the Soulcrafter creator is slain, the Iron Guards created by him continue to exist, but their physical attributes are reduced by 30% (adjust Damage accordingly); reduce attacks per melee to six, and M.D.C., Bio-Regeneration, the range and damage of their energy blasts, and all bonuses are reduced by half. The

same applies on the rare occasion when an Iron Guard turns against his creator and leaves his service or attacks the Soul-crafter. Iron Guards who do not succeed in killing their creator or who abandon his service are hunted down by other, loyal Dark Guards and Iron Zombies and either slain, or captured so they can be returned to the Soul Forge, tortured and their life essence used to create a more loyal servant or Dark Weapons.

Life Span: As long as the Soulcrafter who made the Iron Guard lives, so does the monster until it is destroyed. However, when the Soulcrafter dies, the Dark Guard has the normal life span of whatever species he was before the transformation, except that the anti-life energy running through every cell of his body reduces that life span by half.

All of this works to keep Iron Guards loyal to their maker.

Insanity: It does not take long for Iron Guards to realize the awful consequences of their new position as monstrous henchmen of the Soulcrafter. There is a hole inside of them that can never be filled. A thirst that can never be quenched. Try as they might, they can never find joy in anything they do, except when they torture and kill. Of course, that does not stop them from trying. Addiction and thrill seeking are the most benign consequences of the conversion process. Most seek out more and more depraved acts and opportunities to torture and kill with the hopes that it will fill their internal void.

The Craftsman knows how to keep his enhanced minions in line at Chichen Itza, but he encourages them to act on their dark impulses whenever they are outside the city. As a god of chaos, Camazotz loves this little “charming character trait” and enjoys watching the devastation these blackguards inflict upon all they encounter.

Most develop all manner of psychological disorders as time goes on and few are anything more than sadistic, psychotic killers and sociopaths without empathy for others.

Roll once on the *Affective Disorder Table*, once on the *Neurosis Table* or *Phobia Table*, and 1D4 times on the *Obsession Table*.

Magic: None, other than the Dark Armor and Dark Weapons they use.

Psionics: None.

Allies: Only their fellow Iron Guards, their maker and his allies.

Enemies: Those of their creator, champions of goodness and light, and the living in general.

Weapons: See Dark Weapons above. They can also use guns and if they had an O.C.C. W.P. skill still, enjoy the bonuses they once had before becoming an Iron Guards. The W.P. skill level remains frozen at that point and never improves. Unfamiliar modern weapons are used with a penalty of -1 to strike and cannot be used to make a “Called Shot” or perform the quick draw or any trick shots.

Note: The Craftsman has created 32 Iron Guards on Rifts Earth that he commands in the name of Camazotz, but they are truly his servants, protectors and spies.

No Soulcrafter O.C.C.

Soulcrafters are villains who are so hated, hunted and destroyed across the Megaverse, they are super-rare and NOT available as an Occupational Character Class (O.C.C.). Many people have never heard of them or believe they and their magic are the stuff of myth and legend that never really ever existed.

Even an NPC should be handled by the Game Master with considerable care and caution. Be careful not to unbalance your game. A good way to avoid balance concerns is to give the Soulcrafter some number of Iron Zombies and Dark Guards, and a limited cache of Dark Weapons, and no access to a Soul Forge. The Soul Forge could have been destroyed or is hidden away on a world or dimension that is not easily accessible (or is unavailable to him) at this time.

Note that even Dark Weapons or a villain clad in Dark Armor can be a dangerous adversary. And Dark Weapons and Armor are likely to be sought after by demons and evildoers everywhere.



The Craftsman

The man who calls himself *the Craftsman* came to the Yucatan Peninsula in darkness and brought even greater darkness with him. In a land ruled by monsters, werebeasts and vampires, life is barbaric and violent. So it is saying something to acknowledge that the Craftsman stands out as one of the region’s greatest dangers. Under the whims of the cruel god, Camazotz, the two have set new standards for savagery. Few humans ever set foot in Chichen Itza before his arrival, but now at his urging, hundreds of humans are rounded up on a regular basis from the surrounding tribes, villages, and Vampire Kingdoms – and even from South America – to be placed into horrible camps where they are kept like cattle to be slaughtered in the creation of Soulcraft items.

It is ironic that the Craftsman began his life long ago in a similar camp. He was once a human slave in a dimension controlled by a powerful Demon Lord. The prison he was born into held tens of thousands of starving humans forced to live in deplorable conditions. Both of his parents died when he was around four years old and he was left to his own devices to survive in this harsh environment. The fact that he survived at all is a testimony to his intelligence and resourcefulness. Unfortunately, the extremes he had to resort to hardened his heart and taught him that life had little value. He learned at a young age that only the strong survive at the expense of the weak. Even then, he saw his fellow humans as nothing more than a resource to be exploited for his own ends. He used his age and seeming innocence to trick others into giving him what he needed, he sold out his fellow prisoners to curry favor with the guards, and he killed others in their sleep if they

had something he wanted. The horrors of the camp forged him into a monster long before he ever learned the secrets of Soulcraft Magic.

His dark heart and aptitude for magic made him an ideal candidate for indoctrination into his demonic master's growing staff of Soulcrafters. He took to his lessons with ease, no matter how vile, and quickly rose through the minion ranks to a place of high authority. The power he brought his masters was rewarded with more riches than he ever thought possible. Money, jewels, magical artifacts, and slaves of his own were heaped upon him as thanks for the thousands of Soulcraft weapons, suits of armor, and minions that poured out of his Soul Forge. Armor and weapons that he, himself, used. In fact, because as a Soulcrafter, the mage regularly channels anti-life energy, his own, personal armor has 50% more M.D.C. than standard Dark Armor, possesses five special abilities and Bio-Regenerates at twice the rate per melee round.

Like many before him, no amount of adulation, financial reward, or outright debauchery could ever satisfy him. He wanted more. He sought power, both magical and political, within his master's domain and dreamed of becoming the master. Through cunning and deception, he found a way to throw his own demonic lord and master into his Soul Forge. He was sure this act would secure his place as ruler of the entire dimension, but he was wrong.

The Craftsman was not strong enough to hold sway over the other demonic warlords. Seeing what he had done, and learning to fear the dark magic of Soulcrafting and the ambition of the Soulcrafter, they waged war to utterly destroy him and all of his creations. Millions perished and entire kingdoms burned, including the Craftsman's once mighty empire. As brilliant as his schemes were, they were not enough to survive the onslaught of his countless enemies. So he fled.

As fate would have it, the Rift he opened led to Rifts Earth, where he has made a new, unholy alliance and created a second Soul Forge. This time, he plans to be more clever and careful. This time, when he finally makes his grand push for conquest, no possible rivals can remain. Those he cannot control completely must be slaughtered. Until he can move in full, he will bide his time and build his power base as he has done before. He loves Rifts Earth with its rich streams of magic energy the likes of which he has never seen before. And he likes Chichen Itza, where he immediately sensed the immense potential of this world the moment he had arrived. For the moment, he enjoys his "partnership" with Camazotz. The dark god has become as close to being a friend and comrade as anyone has ever come. This is something new for the Craftsman, but it is not likely to stay his hand when the time comes for him to seize power for himself. Friends, like everyone else, are expendable to the Craftsman.

The Craftsman – NPC Villain

Real Name: Unknown.

Species: Formerly human, now an M.D.C. Soulcrafter with delusions of godhood.

Alignment: Diabolic.

Attributes: I.Q. 24, M.E. 6, M.A. 28, P.S. 21 (Supernatural), P.P. 13, P.E. 3 (Supernatural), P.B. 15, Spd 20.

Size: 6 feet, 1 inch (1.84 m). 260 lbs (117 kg; includes the permanently bonded armor)

Age: 359 years.

Lifespan: Soulcrafters live 100 years for every P.E. attribute point they have.

M.D.C. (Personal): 186 plus the M.D.C. of his armor.

M.D.C. of the Craftsman's Dark Armor by Location:

Head/Helmet – 150

Shoulder Plates (2) – 200 each

Upper Arm (2) – 113 each

Forearm Plates/Bands (2) – 90 each

Hands (2) – 125 each finger-blade tipped gauntlet.

Upper Legs (2) – 150 each

Lower Legs (2) – 95 each

Feet (2) – 75 each

Main Body: Chest and Belly Plates – 375

Personal Dark Armor. All the usual powers and abilities of Dark Armor, except as a Soulcrafter, his Dark Armor has 50% more M.D.C. (see M.D.C. by Location) and has the five Special Abilities:

Aquatic Capabilities

Bio-Regeneration (4D6 M.D.C. per melee round).

Dimensional Pocket

Fly (50 mph/80 km; altitude 20,000 feet/6,096 m).

Space Capabilities

P.P.E.: 350. **I.S.P.:** None.

Horror Factor: 15

Level of Experience: 14th level Soulcrafter.

Disposition: The Craftsman is cold, distant and demanding. He has no regard for life and sees most sentient beings as his inferiors. He can be quite charming when he wants to be, and is a master manipulator, expert at turning enemies into devoted followers. He has swayed many a rival to his side in the past, and he is skilled at breaking slaves and turning them into loyal minions. It is not just so he can build his forces, it is because he craves the worship of his followers (though he can never truly enjoy it). He needs worshipers, but even a planet of them will never fill the hole inside of him. When frustrated or defied, he is quick to anger and will lash out with lethal rage when provoked. Torture and killing are second nature to the Craftsman and the cries of the innocent have no effect on him. To him, the lives of people are little more than a commodity and resource for him to plunder. For him, power is all about being on the winning side of murder, war and killing.

Skills of Note: Art 98%, Barter 86%, Basic Mechanics 98%, Dance 98%, Hand to Hand: Basic, Horsemanship: 90%, Literacy: Demongogian 90%, Lore: Demons and Monsters 85%, Lore: Magic 85%, Lore: Faeries and Creatures of Magic 85%, Mining 98%, Palming 90%, Prowl 95%, Public Speaking 98%, Recognize Weapon Quality 98%, Salvage 98%, W.P. Knife and W.P. Sword.

Soulcrafter Abilities (in addition to Attributes, Skills, and the abilities of his Dark Creations): Extended lifespan, Nightvision (1,000 feet/305 m), Supernatural P.S. and P.E., magically understands and speaks all languages, can sense the presence of Soulcraft creations within a 200 foot (61 m) radius, instantly recognizes and knows the capabilities of Dark Weapons and Armor created by him (must see or touch the item), can de-construct, destroy and repair any Soulcraft item using his Soul Forge, can use another Soulcrafter's Soul Forge without penalty, can create Iron Zombies, can create Iron Guards, can mentally communicate with all his Zombies and Guards within a one mile (1.6 km) radius, and is a Mega-Damage being.

Also see Attacks per Melee, Mega-Damage, Bonuses and Magic.

All of the Craftsman's abilities were acquired via the little-known and mysterious practice of Soulcraft Magic. It is believed there are fewer than a dozen Soulcrafters across the Megaverse, and they all closely guard their secrets.

Attacks per Melee: Six (see Dark Weapon Bonuses).

Damage: S.D.C. or M.D. via Dark Weapons or his own hand to hand attacks. Close combat damage as per Supernatural P.S. or by weapon.

Double damage to supernatural beings (good or evil), and whether the damage is done in hand to hand combat, by melee weapon, long-range energy blast, or spell. A Soulcrafter special ability.

Energy Blasts channeled through a Dark Weapon (and this includes the finger blades of his Dark Armor) have 30% greater range (2,080 feet/634 m) and inflict 3D6 S.D.C. or M.D.; double damage to the supernatural (a Soulcrafter ability).

Bonuses (includes attribute considerations and Soulcraft O.C.C. bonuses): +6 on Perception Rolls involving Soulcraft Magic and creations, +3 on Perception Rolls involving all other types of magic and magic items, +4 to damage, +2 to strike, +3 to parry and dodge, +2 to disarm, +6 to roll with impact, +18% to save vs coma and death, +2 to save vs magic, +5 to save vs Dark Magicks, +3 to save vs psionics, +8 to save vs Horror Factor, 86% invoke trust/intimidate, and 20% charm/impress.

Dark Weapon Bonuses: Soulcrafters have increased confidence and skill when they wield Dark Blades. They can use ANY Dark Weapon created by any Soulcrafter with the following bonuses: +1 attack per melee, +2 on initiative, +3 to strike and parry, +1 to disarm, +2 to pull punch, and +2 to strike when thrown.

Insanities: Homicidal Rage, Obsession: Combat (loves to fight and kill), God Syndrome, Obsession: Wealth/Money, and Obsession: Power. Without enough P.E. and M.E. points to make a new Soul Forge, Rifts Earth is the Craftsman's last chance for a power grab, making him ruthless in the extreme. If Camazotz should fall, the Craftsman will try to prevent his Soul Forge from being destroyed. If it is, it will send him off the deep end and it's anyone's guess what might happen next.

Magic: Soulcrafters actually have pretty limited spell casting abilities. Most of their magic knowledge is focused on making Soulcraft creations (the Soul Forge, Dark Weapons, Dark Armor, Dark Zombies, Dark Guards) and the special power they derive from their creations and the anti-life energy of the Soul Forges. They do have a basic knowledge of spell invocations and do learn a handful of spells plus some special ones (described below).

Traditional Spell Invocations are limited to spell levels 1 and 2, plus spells that bind or control others and spells for Dimensional Travel. Spells known to the Craftsman: Banishment (65), Blinding Flash (1), Charm (12), Cleanse (6), Cloak of Darkness (6), Close Rift (200+), Compulsion (20), Constrain Being (20), Control/Enslave Entity (80), Death Trance (1), Dimensional Portal (1,000), Domination (10), Eyes of Thoth (8; taught to all Soulcrafters), Globe of Daylight (2), Lantern Light (1), Mystic Portal (60), Re-Open Gateway/Rift (180), See Aura (6), See the Invisible (4), Sense Magic (4), Trance (6) and Turn Dead (6).

Psionics: None.

Money and Valuables: The Craftsman had to leave his vast riches behind when he fled his home dimension. The Yucatan Peninsula does not offer much in the way of material riches, so he is spending his time building his army for conquest before he spreads his power across the globe. He has won the favor (if not the trust) of Camazotz, which translates into a considerable amount of power and growing influence in the Yucatan and, soon, Mexico.

Weapons and Equipment: The Craftsman can create any Soulcraft item he desires. His personal favorite Dark Weapon is a broadsword which he can use one-handed (does 3D6 M.D.), and has the special powers of *Fly* (+1 on initiative, +1 to strike, +3 to dodge and +1 to damage when thrown), *Shape-Change*, and *extra M.D.C.* (it has 1,000 M.D.C.).

One of his duties for Lord Camazotz is to arm his vampire minions with standard Dark Blades. Only favored Secondary and Master Vampires have Dark Weapons with 1-3 special abilities. The Craftsman has already built an arsenal of 740 Dark Weapons for the vampires, plus those for his 600 Iron Zombies and 32 Iron Guards.

A Few Notable Soulcrafter (& Earth Elemental) Magic Spells

In addition to Create Soul Forge, Create Iron Zombie, Create Iron Guard and some others, the following are all known to every Soulcrafter.

Locate Iron

Fourth Level Earth Elemental Spell (1st level for a Soulcrafter).

Range: 300 foot (91.5 m) radius per level of experience.

Duration: One minute per level of experience.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: Ten

The Soulcrafter can detect iron or crude iron ore within a 300 foot (91.5 m) radius per level of experience; this includes underground.

Refine Iron Ore

Fourth Level Earth Elemental Spell (2nd level for a Soulcrafter).

Range: Touch or line of sight up to 50 feet (15.2 m) away.

Duration: Instantaneous and permanent.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: Fifteen

This spell enables the Soulcrafter to magically separate crude iron ore and other metals from stone/ore, and then to refine the iron (or other metals). Fifty pounds (22.5 kg) of ore can be changed per level of experience.

Mentally & Magically Shape Iron

Eighth Level Earth Elemental Spell (3rd level for a Soulcrafter).

Range: Touch or line of sight up to 50 feet (15.2 m) away.

Duration: Instantaneous and permanent.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: Thirty

Instead of painstakingly banging out iron items like a blacksmith, which, by the way, all Soulcrafters can do, the mage uses this spell to shape and mold iron as well as etch intricate designs into his metal creations. When the incantation begins, the iron melts into a pool of molten iron suspended in midair above the grate of the Soul Forge or inside the Forge itself. The Soulcrafter can then shape it into one piece, be it a blade or piece of armor, or several small pieces such as links of chain, spikes, nails, screws, etc. If he chooses to work with it in his hands, the metal is actually cool to his touch and can be handled with bare hands by him or his assistants. After 2D4+4 minutes of concentration, the completed object solidifies and then gently floats into his hand or

lowers to the ground near the edge of the Soul Forge. Of course, to empower a weapon or piece of armor and turn it into a Dark Creation, the Soulcrafter must sacrifice the life essence of one or more victims trapped in the Forge. If the ritual is interrupted at any point, the metal solidifies into a useless lump of slag, and the mage must cast a new spell to continue.

Any metal can be molded in this manner, but non-iron materials take twice as long to shape. Likewise, this spell can be used in a conventional forge of heat and flame to make ordinary metal items, but costs twice the P.P.E. and takes three times as long to shape.

Note: Warlocks and mages casting this as an Earth Elemental spell cannot use a Soul Forge, nor can they create Dark Weapons and Armor.



Bone Werejaguars of Palenque

By Chris Kluge

Additional text and ideas by Kevin Siembieda

Palenque is the ruins of a rather expansive, ancient Maya city and the location of a ley line nexus. It is not far from the pre-Rifts city ruins of **Villahermosa**, about 70 miles (112 km) northwest of Palenque. The city has a long history of being a place for ghosts and monsters, but in the last hundred years, it has become the home of a tribe of Werejaguars. While these werebeasts are supernatural predators that enjoy the thrill of the hunt and the challenge of combat with intelligent prey, they tend to leave humans and D-Bees alone. In fact, their unique views about preserving

the balance of nature have turned them into the protectors of a dozen small tribes of humans and D-Bees throughout the region.

The Bone Werejaguars of Palenque originally came from an alien world covered in lush tropical forests. They were the apex predators, but they quickly learned to limit their bloodlust to keep prey plentiful. They saw the devastating effect that a single imbalance could have on the entire ecosystem, so in time, they became the defenders of what they call *the Balance*. The world they came from was also strong in magic, and their respect for nature drove them to create a unique form of magic they call **Hunting Magic**. While they respect the balance of nature, they are still supernatural predators driven by an innate desire to hunt, kill

and feed upon their prey. Their magic has allowed them to preserve the Balance by making them the ultimate hunters on their planet. Any creature that threatened the ecosystem was kept in check or hunted to extinction if it proved to be too great a threat. They brought this same attitude and magic with them to Rifts Earth when a freak ley line storm Rifted one of their clans from their home world and brought them to Palenque. Now they fight to restore the Balance that is sorely absent in Mexico, Central America and the Yucatan Peninsula.

While they hunt the demons and monsters roaming the region to keep their populations in check, the Bone Werejaguars have deemed that vampires – particularly those from Chichen Itza – are too detrimental to the Balance and must be eradicated. Vampires are regarded as a parasite that feeds on the living and threaten the Balance of man and nature. It is not enough to simply weed out a few stragglers, vampires must be wiped out from the region if the Balance is to be restored.

Although vampires typically have the edge over werebeasts in terms of raw power and range of abilities, the Bone Werejaguars' *Hunting Magic* shifts the advantage back to them, even against superior numbers. Hunting Magic enables the Bone Werejaguars to track their prey through any terrain, and to become one with their environment so they cannot be detected by their prey. Even the supernatural senses of vampires cannot detect Bone Werejaguars on the prowl. The most powerful and coveted aspect of Hunting Magic, however, is its ability to create magic weapons *made of bone* that are so small and easy to transport, that one warrior can wield a virtual arsenal.

Those familiar with werebeasts expect them to fight with tooth and claw. This is true of most Werecats and Earth-born Jaguar People, but the Bone Werejaguars are a different sort of animal. They carry an impressive arsenal of **Metamorphic Weapons** on their bodies at all times. These weapons made of magic and bone, which when not in use, appear as ornamental body piercings, earrings and jewelry. All manner of melee weapons can be retrieved from their flesh in this way to become weapons to deal with any enemy who dares threaten or challenge them. Every simple looking piercing or ornament made of bone that they adorn their bodies with can be removed and transformed into a lethal instrument within seconds (one melee action to transform). When the danger has passed, the weapon changes back into a body piercing and is put back into place where it belongs.

For this reason, the Palenque Jaguar clans are more commonly known as the **Bone Werejaguars** by vampires and most other people living in the area.

Due to the increasing threat from the vampires of Mexico, the Bone Werejaguars of Palenque have offered their Metamorphic Weapons to the indigenous Jaguar People of the Yucatan, and even some of the human and D-Bee tribesmen in the region, but only a handful have accepted their unusual (and frightening) gifts. You see, these magic bone weapons can be used by anyone, but the Bone Werejaguar tribe are the only beings on Rifts Earth who know how to create them. One reason many people turn down the gift of Metamorphic Weapons is that the items are alive and need to feed upon their owners in between kills. A trait that has led some to regard Metamorphic Weapons to be cursed or demonic and dangerous to their owners. Moreover, to feed, the weapons must be worn as body piercings.

This discipline of magic comes from an alien world and is like a bizarre mixture of Biomancy and Necromancy. Like Necromancy,

it relies on the sacrifice of a living creature and the doubled P.P.E. released at the moment of death, which is captured to fuel the magic that creates a Metamorphic Weapon from the victim's still warm corpse. However, the magic does not create enchanted chunks of dead flesh like Necromancy, but rather living weapons and items that must also feed on the living in order to survive. This is why Bone Werejaguars carry Metamorphic Weapons as body piercings in their own flesh. While stored this way, the dormant weapons are able to consume from their living host the few drops of blood and a few points of P.P.E. they need each day to survive. When the weapon is activated, it is removed from the host's body. As the Metamorphic Weapon's hunger swells, it transforms from ornamental body jewelry to an implement of combat, and is ready to be plunged into an enemy or prey to feast upon the blood and P.P.E. it ultimately needs to sustain it. Once the kill is made, a Bone Werejaguar is likely to roll in the blood and gore of its kill so that the other bone Metamorphic Weapons still in place as ornamentation can also share in the kill; all of which also draw upon the P.P.E. released when the prey/enemy was slain.

An estimated 334 Bone Werejaguars inhabit the ruins of Palenque. Another 70-100 wander the jungles of the Yucatan, scouting and observing the demonic forces at work there, as well as other werebeast tribes. All are from the same tribe that originate from an alien world someplace in the Megaverse. With no way to return to their own planet, this is their new home. They have little need for a formal society or fancy dwellings, as they prefer to live off the land and among nature. Instead, they gather and hunt in small family groups scattered throughout the vegetation covered ruins and jungles all around them. When finished hunting, they come back to the ruins, where they live in various parts of the buildings as they would a cave or animal den. Bone Werejaguars are surprisingly gentle, tolerant and compassionate with each other. The tribe works well together and are very protective of each other as well as the humans who have come to worship them. They feed primarily on animals and the occasional humanoids killed in battle – they always devour those they kill. They also hunt and slay vampires on a regular basis, but vampires provide no nourishment for the Werejaguars – only their Metamorphic Weapons can feed on the P.P.E. of slain undead.

The False Ones. Though the Bone Werejaguars have reached out to the Werejaguars native to Rifts Earth, they and most werebeasts have chosen to keep their distance. The indigenous Jaguar People of Earth call the Palenque Bone Werejaguars the "False Ones," and consider them to be a rival tribe of invaders from another place (an alien world) and therefore, a potential threat. The indigenous Jaguar People have yet to decide on how to handle this *new tribe*. As a rule, they are watched from a distance and generally avoided. From time to time, Bone Werejaguars and Earth Jaguar People have come to each other's aid against a common enemy such as vampires, have exchanged information, and warned each other of danger, but they are far from friendly. When there have been clashes between the *False Ones* and Jaguar People (and with other Werebeasts and monsters of the Yucatan), such battles usually (60% of the time) go in the favor of the Bone Werejaguars. This wariness and distrust of the False Ones, has uprooted the Jaguar People who once inhabited Palenque. Earth Werejaguars have lived in and around Palenque, southern Mexico and the Yucatan for thousands of years, long before the Coming of the Rifts. Back then, Jaguar People were the stuff of legend and superstition. Few realized they walked among humanity in

human guise. When the world changed and magic returned, the Jaguar People lived out in the open and considered Palenque to be an ancient homeland. However, when the False Ones appeared, and seemed to gravitate to the mystic energy of the ancient ruins, the indigenous people simply picked up their belongings and left. There was no outrage or battle. They simply left, much to the disappointment of the Bone Werejaguars.

Today, a tribe of 650 humans who claim to be of Maya ancestry live among the Palenque ruins and worship all *Werejaguars* as holy forest spirits (and friends), but have come to revere the Bone Werejaguars as blessed demigods come to live among them. The tribe calls itself the **Children of the Jaguar**, and they paint their faces with white fangs, whiskers, and cat eyes. They think nothing of co-mingling with the Bone Werejaguars and the two tribes help each other in their work, hunting, defending the ruins, and tending to the sick and injured. The human tribespeople will fight to the death to protect their village and the Bone Werejaguars. The Bone Werejaguars share a similar bond and have come to regard these humans as adopted members of their tribe and will also fight to defend them, though not to their death. This friendship is so strong that all human warriors, the Chief and Shamans of the Children of the Jaguar wear 1D6+4 Metamorphic Weapons – gifts from the gods who live among them. Both have fought many battles together against their share of invaders: human, vampire, and demonic. There seems to always be someone who wants to capture the Palenque ruins for its ley lines and nexus point, but so far, the Bone Werejaguars and the Children of the Jaguar have won every battle. However, such conflicts have taken their toll, and are the reason there are not more Bone Werejaguars in the region.

The Vampire Kingdoms and their minions are the main source of their troubles. And while the Bone Werejaguars trust no vampire or dark god, they have come to consider Camazotz and his vampire legion as the lesser of two evils. This is only because the two share a common enemy, the Vampire Kingdoms of Mexico, and they know that it is only a matter of time before they will have to deal with the Bat-God and his monstrous minions. In fact, the Bone Werejaguars are among the few who realize the true magnitude of danger represented by the *Craftsman* and *Soulcraft Magic*. Their own closeness to life, to nature and their own living magic weapons, makes Bone Werejaguars keenly aware of the anti-life energy of Soulcrafters. Even though they have never encountered such vile magic in the past, they instinctively know it must be stopped before it spreads and becomes much stronger. So while they tend not to target Camazotz's forces, they watch, plot and wonder how they can destroy the Craftsman. It is not a war they want, but every Bone Werejaguar can sense the cancer that is Soulcraft Magic and know it must be stopped in order to preserve *the Balance*.

Bone Werejaguar R.C.C.

Like all werebeasts, Bone Werejaguars are shape-changing predators of supernatural origin. Their true form is that of half-man and half-jaguar, but they can magically metamorph completely into a human or animal shape at will. As an animal, the only things that distinguish the creature from the normal animal kingdom are its size (nearly twice as large as a typical jaguar), the bone piercings in its flesh, and its seemingly human intelligence. Most werebeasts are fairly intelligent, and the Bone Werejaguar is one of the most intelligent. Perhaps it is their intelligence that

allowed them to create Hunting Magic, but some theorize that only an outside force could have blessed these combative beasts with such powerful magic.

They may be able to appear human, but they are creatures born to hunt and kill. They feel most natural in their animal form or in a half-man, half-animal form. They live off the land and hunt to survive. Natural feline predators, they have all the traits of large predatory cats and cannot disguise their animal tendencies for long. Hunting Magic may complement their natures, but it seems odd that such creatures ever found the time to develop any type of magic discipline at all.

Contrary to what most humanoids believe, most werebeasts prey primarily on animals and other supernatural creatures. In fact, all feline werebeasts are the instinctive enemy of vampires. Werejaguars enjoy many deadly games of sport and delight in the challenging combat offered by vampires, humans, D-Bees and other intelligent life forms. Like most cats, the fun of *recreational hunting* is the stalking, chase, and capture of the prey. Unless you are a vampire, there is a good chance of being let free after the “cat and mouse” game is over.

Werejaguars roam the forests of Southern Mexico and parts of the Yucatan and South America, but Bone Werejaguars stay mostly within a 200 mile (320 km) radius of Palenque, making some forays into the Yucatan and Southern Mexico to battle vampires and other supernatural monsters. The old Maya ruin of Palenque is the lair and new tribal home of Bone Werejaguars. This is common knowledge to everyone living in Mexico and the surrounding region. Most local people leave the Bone Werejaguars alone, because they are well known to protect the area from vampires and to rescue people of all races from the clutches of vampires and demons. They are said to be no threat to those not looking for trouble, and rarely attack unless threatened or antagonized first. Bone Werejaguars have little use for the weapons, armor, tools, vehicles or trappings of modern human civilization, though they do, sometimes, collect objects that strike their fancy, including works of art, sculptures, jewelry, bits of armor, articles of clothing, capes, cloaks, and of course, silver and magic items, though NEVER Soulcraft items, Bio-Wizard weapons, or Rune Weapons.

Bone Werejaguar – Optional Player Character

Also Known As: Bone Jaguar, the Bone Tribe and the False Ones.

Alignment: Any, but Bone Werebeasts tend to be Scrupulous (30%), Unprincipled (30%), Anarchist (25%), Aberrant (10%) and other (5%).

Attributes: I.Q. 2D6+2, M.E. 3D6, M.A. 4D6, P.S. 4D6 (never less than 16), P.P. 4D6 (never less than 16), P.E. 4D6, P.B. 2D6+13, Spd 6D6.

Hit Points (Special): 6D6+18 plus 2D6 per level of experience.

Size: 6-7 feet (1.8 to 2.1 m) tall in human and humanoid monster form, 5-6 feet (1.5 to 1.8 m) long in animal form; males are larger than females.

Weight: 200-300 lbs (90 to 135 kg).

P.P.E.: 2D4x10+50

Average Life Span: 1D4x100 years.

Experience Level: 1D6+1 or as set by the Game Master for NPCs. Player Characters should start at first level. Use the same experience table as the *Ley Line Walker*.

R.C.C. Skills: Acrobatics (+20%), Climb (+20%), Land Navigation (+30%), Language: American (50%), Language: Spanish

(98%), Prowl (+20%) in animal and Jaguar-Man form (only +10% in human guise), Math: Basic (+20%), Wilderness Survival (+30%), and W.P. Blunt and W.P. Knife, plus three skills of choice from the Domestic and Wilderness categories. Can learn two Secondary Skills at levels 1, 3, 6, 9 and 12.

Available O.C.C.s: None.

Natural Abilities: Nightvision 300 feet (91.5 m), keen color vision and hearing, speak while in animal form, Swim 90%, leap 30 feet (9.1 m) high or across in any form from a standing position (increase by 30% with a running start), track by smell 70% (+10% to follow blood scents), and Bio-Regenerate 2D6 Hit Points per hour.

Limited Invulnerability (Special): Like vampires, werebeasts are invulnerable to most ordinary weapons, including Mega-Damage energy weapons, explosives, bullets, fire, wood, steel, poisons and toxins. However, also like vampires, Bone Werejaguars are vulnerable to ordinary silver, silver-plated weapons, magic weapons, Soulcraft weapons, and psionics. Weapons that have at least a 50% silver content inflict *double damage*. Thus a silver-plated dagger, which normally inflicts 1D6 S.D.C. damage, inflicts 2D6 points of damage direct to the monster's Hit Points. Although werebeasts possess Bio-Regenerative powers, they are nothing like the vampires', so being bludgeoned or stabbed by silver can kill the creature without requiring decapitation and staking.

Wolfbay/wolfbane and garlic will hold all werebeasts at bay, but crosses, sunlight and running water have no adverse effect on them. Powerful M.D. attacks and explosions that inflict great amounts of damage may knock the creature down or stun it. Same Knockdown/Impact table as for vampires, but will not hurt it.

Shape-Change: Animal Metamorphosis (special): Same as for all werebeasts, Bone Werejaguars can shape-change at will, day or night, but tend to take human form during the day and when around people, animal form to hide, prowl and spy, and Jaguar-Man or jaguar animal form when hunting, engaging in combat or needing to move fast. The metamorphosis takes about 15 seconds (one melee); there is no limit to the number of times a metamorphosis can be performed or how long it can be maintained.

Nocturnal hunters, they tend to sleep most of the day and are active during the night. The three shapes are human, jaguar, and its natural shape of jaguar humanoid (half man, half jaguar).

Attacks per Melee: Six in natural monster form, four in animal form, but only three in human shape.

Damage: Varies depending on physical form.

Human Form: Punch does 2D4 Hit Point/S.D.C. damage + P.S. bonus, a kick 2D6 S.D.C. + P.S. bonus, and a bite does 1D6 S.D.C. damage (P.S. bonus does not apply).

Jaguar-Man or Jaguar Animal Form: As per Supernatural P.S., a claw strike does an extra 1D6 M.D., a bite does 2D4 M.D., and a power bite does 4D4 M.D. (counts as two attacks), or by weapon.

Note: All M.D. or S.D.C. attacks with claws or bites inflict full damage to Hit Points against vampires or other werebeasts.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): Bone Werejaguars are +2 on Perception Rolls involving danger, hunting and being hunted themselves, +1 on initiative, +2 to

strike, +2 to parry and dodge, +4 to pull punch, +4 to roll with impact, +1 to save vs psionics, +2 to save vs magic and +5 to save vs Horror Factor.

Magic: A typical Bone Werejaguar knows Chameleon (6), Cleanse (6), Life Source (2+), Repel Animals (7), and Tongues (12), but the Bone Werejaguars of Palenque also possess a previously unknown discipline of magic called *Hunting Magic*. They never teach others this magic, not even other werebeasts, for they believe only their race is blessed with this sacred knowledge, but they will share their Bone Weapons. Every Bone Werejaguar knows *all* Hunting Magic spells. See descriptions below. **Hunting Magic (special):** See below. **P.P.E.:** 2D4x10+50 +1D6 additional P.P.E. per level of experience.

Psionic Abilities: Bone Werejaguars possess Psionic Invisibility (10), Death Trance (1), See the Invisible (4), and Mind Block (4). **I.S.P.:** 5D6.

Vulnerabilities: See Limited Invulnerability under Natural Abilities.

Standard Equipment: Bone Werejaguars wear minimal, if any clothes even in human form, though they do like to wear belts and straps, and enjoy feathers – feather jewelry, feather head-dresses, feather accents – and they also adorn themselves with bones and skulls, as do most feline werebeasts. And, of course, most carry a small arsenal of Bone Metamorphic Weapons as body piercings.

Alliances and Allies: The Children of the Jaguar Tribe (humans who live among the werebeasts and revere them as demigods), several small groups and tribes in the area around Palenque who have come to recognize them as peaceful protectors of the region, and a handful of travelers who have had encounters with them. A few individual werebeasts have befriended the Bone Tribe, but most of the indigenous Werejaguars and other werebeasts living in Mexico, the Yucatan and South America regard the “False Ones” with suspicion. At best, they see them as friendly rivals, not brothers, and have decided it best to avoid them and watch for now.

Rivals and Enemies: The Vampire Kingdoms, vampires and demons in general, and any man or monster that threatens their people and the ecology of Southern Mexico and the Yucatan. This includes the minions of Camazotz and the Craftsman, though they are on the bottom of the Bone Jaguars' list of enemies at the moment. The werebeasts hope that the upcoming war between the forces of Camazotz and the Vampire Kingdoms will destroy one vampire threat and weaken the other.

Hunting Magic of the Bone Werejaguars

Like the name suggests, Hunting Magic is specifically designed to enhance the hunting skills of its user. Some spells focus on helping the practitioner track down prey, others are meant to conceal the practitioner from his target, and of course, there are spells designed to increase the hunter's killing power. Hunting Magic is meant for precision tracking, hunting and killing of prey. Its one drawback is it can sometimes focus the practitioner so intently on one target that he becomes oblivious to other possible dangers. It is an alien magic brought to Rifts Earth from an unknown world, and is known only to the Bone Werejaguars of Palenque.

Hunting Magic is also the secret to creating Metamorphic Weapons made of bone. When the weapon is not needed, it is stored on the body as piercings held in the skin. This can be earrings or slivers of bone stuck through the skin of the arms, legs, the chest, face and ears.

Clean Strike

Level Six Spell

Range: Self.

Duration: Instant.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: Twenty

The Bone Werejaguar casts this spell on himself to guide his hand for ONE killing strike. On a successful roll to strike, the hunter inflicts double damage. The strike can be delivered by hand or with a melee weapon held in hand or thrown.

Conceal Trap

Level Four Spell

Range: Touch.

Duration: Five minutes per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: Ten

Most animal traps are difficult to spot anyway, but this spell makes them and other snare and animal-style traps almost impossible to detect without close and careful inspection. On a failed save, the target cannot detect the trap in any way. Sight, sound, and scent are fooled, as are all mystical, psionic, and supernatural senses; -5 on Perception Rolls to detect traps or danger. **Note:** Works only outdoors.

Detect a Trail

Level One Spell

Range: Immediate area and up ahead; line of sight required.

Duration: Five minutes per level of experience.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: Four

This is not the ability to track a person or animal, but rather the ability to find a game trail – an animal or humanoid trail/footpath – meaning an often used path or trail that usually leads to a meadow, field, water, or food source. A trail is a path of least resistance, i.e. fewest obstacles, least tangle of vegetation, etc., and the easiest, quietest path to travel. Once the spell is cast and a trail is found (provided there is one present within 500 feet/152 m; 50% chance), the hunter knows exactly where to look to continue to follow it for at least the duration of the spell. From there, it is up to the hunter to follow the rest of the clues using his own skills, senses, or other spells to identify tracks, spoor, and other signs of animal or humanoid passage or presence. **Note:** Works only outdoors.

Enhanced Nightvision

Level Three Spell

Range: Self or other by touch.

Duration: Five minutes per level of experience.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: Seven

This spell enhances the Bone Werejaguar's Nightvision, improving it to 1,000 feet (305 m). Vision becomes so keen that the spell caster can read a small sign or recognize a face up to the full range.

Healing Gift

Level Six Spell

Range: Self.

Duration: Instant.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: Fifteen

As true hunters, Bone Werejaguars do not kill just for fun. They respect their prey and only take what they need to survive. All kills are consumed; slain so that others may live or to preserve the Balance. Sometimes a hunter needs to take more than just meat. When a Bone Werejaguar has been injured greatly during a hunt or battle, and does not have time to wait for his natural healing powers to repair the damage, he can steal vitality and health for himself by killing an animal or humanoid. However, this must be a large or challenging animal (deer, dog, wolf, bear, lion, python, monster, etc.) or humanoid, not a small, helpless animal like a bird or rabbit. At the moment of death, the spell caster sees Hit Points (or M.D.C., which is converted to Hit Points) equal to half of the prey's Hit Points or M.D.C. be channeled into his body to restore his own lost Hit Points. Any extra above the Werejaguar's normal Hit Points are unused; cannot get more Hit Points than what is usual.

Mark Prey

Level Two Spell

Range: The spell must be delivered by touch or by enchanting a thrown weapon and then successfully striking the target (if the throw misses, then the spell fails and the P.P.E. is wasted). Once the target is marked, the spell caster has a general sense of where it, is up to 300 feet (91.5 m) away per level of experience.

Duration: Five minutes per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: Ten

This spell serves two purposes. For one, it connects the hunter to the prey. No matter where the prey goes, the hunter knows where it is, provided he can keep pace with it and stay within sensing range. The spell intentionally keeps this sense vague to make sure the hunt is still sporting. It would not be fun at all for the Bone Werejaguar to know exactly where the prey has gone. Instead, the spell caster has a general sense of which direction the prey went and whether it is near or far away. The second purpose of marking prey is to announce to his fellow tribesmen that this prey is spoken for and should be left to him. All Bone Werejaguars instantly sense the mark from another tribesman and will respectfully avoid the target.

Mark a Trail

Level Five Spell

Range: Self for as long as the character desires to leave a trail.

Duration: 20 minutes per level of experience to mark a trail. The trail remains visible for one hour per level of experience for others to follow it.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: Fifteen

This spell leaves a magical trail visible only to other Bone Werejaguars. In short, the hunter leaves a trail that other members of his tribe can follow, but no one else can see. This can be used to mark an animal trail, to lead to a kill/food or supply cache, to lead to an enemy or clue, to allow others to follow and find him easily, to mark a trail the spell caster or others can follow to find their way back out of uncharted territory or a maze of tunnels or caves, and so on.

One with the Forest

Level Three Spell

Range: Self.

Duration: Five minutes per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Standard. Typically no saving throw is required, but if someone thinks he sees the spell caster, concentrates, and makes a saving throw, then he sees through the illusion.

P.P.E.: Fifteen

Bone Werejaguars feel at home in forests and jungles. They rarely make any noise or disturb the surrounding flora and fauna, even when moving through the thickest underbrush. Their skills make them hard to detect in general, but this spell makes it nearly impossible. When cast, the Bone Werejaguar becomes virtually indistinguishable from the surrounding area. He gives off no scent, birds and other small creatures do not seem to notice his presence (so their sudden silence or exit does not reveal him), his body temperature matches the surrounding area, and he even appears to blend in with the trees and bushes. It is not quite like a Chameleon. If someone knows where to look or stumbles upon him, he will be seen, but as long as the spell caster remains still and hidden, he remains unnoticed and virtually invisible until he moves or pounces to strike. Even supernatural, magic and psionic senses do not detect any disturbances in the surrounding environment. **Note:** When cast upon oneself while prowling at a slow, careful pace and using the surroundings to remain unnoticed, this spell provides a +10% Prowl bonus, but none of the other magical concealment applies. Works only outdoors and in woodland/forest/jungle terrains.

Sense Worthy Opponent

Level One Spell

Range: Self for a 300 foot (91.5 m) radius, line of sight required.

Duration: Instant.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: Five

Bone Werejaguars love a challenge, and this spell helps them find worthy prey to hunt and opponents to fight. Their definition of worthy targets is opponents of comparable or superior power and ability, including other werebeasts, vampires, demons, zombies, monsters, supernatural predators, and experienced warriors, practitioners of magic, psychics, and similar.

A hunter generally saves this spell for when he really wants to test his mettle. Why hunt some rookie when you can hunt a seasoned veteran? Why hunt just any supernatural predator when you can hunt the alpha? This spell is used to quickly tell who is the strongest in a group or pack. He may also use this spell to see if a potential target may be too much for him to handle. This

spell does not reveal the target's exact stats, but rather a rough comparison to his own strengths and capabilities.

When the spell is cast while observing one or more potential opponents/challengers/prey, the hunter gets a sense of which ones are weaker than he, roughly comparable (even though their abilities may be different) and those more powerful than he.

Reveal Hidden Danger

Level Three Spell

Range: Self, to survey a 10 foot (3 m) radius.

Duration: One melee round per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Not applicable.

P.P.E.: Eight.

When this spell is cast, the Hunter's perception is enhanced to become hyper-aware of concealed danger and potential danger. This includes man-made concealed traps (pits, snares, bear traps, punji sticks, trip wires, etc.), the presence of a dangerous animal's lair/burrow, the presence of poisonous snakes, plants and insects, or a predator lurking in the underbrush, so they can be avoided. **Note:** Works only outdoors.

Trap Scenting

Level Two Spell

Range: 50 foot (15.2 m) radius around the trap per level of experience.

Duration: Five minutes per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: Six

This spell creates a tempting scent used as *bait* to lure a particular type of animal out in the open or into a trap. The spell caster tailors the scent to one particular type of prey so that it does not draw every single animal in the jungle. It is typically used on a trap, or a specific food, item or location, but it can be cast upon any object to entice prey to a specific spot. Animals smell their favorite meal, vampires smell fresh human blood drenched in fear, and so on. The fragrant smells are never out of place and are appropriate to the environment. Does not work on humans, only game animals and predators.

Track

Level Five Spell

Range: Immediate area and up ahead; line of sight required.

Duration: Three minutes per level of experience.

Saving Throw: None, unless trying to follow a path/trail concealed by magic. In that case, the saving throw is 15.

P.P.E.: Fifteen

Once a skilled tracker finds even the slightest clue, he can follow a seemingly invisible trail to his prey, but finding that first sign can be difficult. This simple spell lets the hunter know where to start. Once cast, the hunter knows exactly where to look for the first clue to find the trail. He is also certain of exactly what he is tracking, or that it is the prey he desires, be it a person or animal, and where the trail leads off toward. From there, it is up to the hunter to use his own skills, senses and perhaps other spells to follow the trail the rest of the way. This spell adds a bonus of +15% to any Tracking skills or abilities for the duration of its magic. **Note:** Works only outdoors.

Metamorphic Weapons

The greatest magic of the Bone Werejaguars is their ability to create Metamorphic Weapons – weapons that are magically created from the bones of a kill, and are disguised as ordinary bone shards, slivers, lengths and pieces used as body piercings. When the magic bone weapon is removed from the owner's body, it turns into a weapon. When the hunter has no more use for the weapon, it turns back into the small body piercing.

Create Metamorphic Weapons

Level Eight Hunting Magic Spell

Range: By touch/kill.

Duration: Ritual. Requires 2D4 minutes of concentration and prayer to forge the Metamorphic Weapon after a kill.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: Fifty from the hunter to create the weapon, plus all the P.P.E. of the prey at the moment of its death.

Metamorphic Weapons are concealed and carried as the simple looking piercings and ornaments made of bone that adorn the bodies of this particular tribe of Werejaguars. The magic, like the Bone Werejaguars, heralds from another world and is of unknown origins. According to Bone Jaguar myth, the All Mother of Nature and Balance bestowed upon their ancient forefathers the gift of Hunting Magic. The slivers of bone can be removed and transformed into lethal instruments within seconds (one melee action to transform into a weapon or back into an ornament).

All Metamorphic Weapons are forged from the bone of slain prey. The Werejaguar performs a simple ritual over his fresh kill, causing the bone weapon to form from the bones and rise up, out of the body and into the air before dropping to the ground. The Hunter collects the item and eats the heart of the prey/opponent as part of the ritual. The ritual to forge Metamorphic Weapons is surprisingly quick and inexpensive, but there are some caveats that increase the challenge. For one, the spell caster must be the one solely responsible for the kill. If anyone helps at any point, the ritual to create the weapon will not work. No one is sure why this is, but it probably has to do with focus and life forces.

The other caveat is that the final killing strike must be delivered by hand, teeth, another Bone Metamorphic Weapon or a small melee weapon such as a knife or short sword. Long-range weapons and traps can be used to inflict damage, but the killing blow must be delivered up close and personal or the ritual will not work.

The small sum of 50 P.P.E. is spent by the Bone Werejaguar to begin the ritual, the rest of the P.P.E. is "given" by the prey. Only the P.P.E. from the single sacrifice can be used. P.P.E. cannot be added from any other source such as ley lines, the spell caster, allies, or additional sacrifices. This P.P.E. (which is doubled at the moment of death) is what determines how powerful the newly forged Metamorphic Weapon will be.

Creatures with high P.P.E. give "birth" to powerful weapons. The more P.P.E. the prey possesses, the more damage it inflicts as a weapon. This, in turn, enables the hunter to go after even more powerful prey in the future. The temptation to go after prey that is too strong, too soon, in order to gain their strength in a weapon is something that has undone many a young Bone Werejaguar hunter. Even veteran hunters fall into the endless cycle of seeking greater and greater challenges until they come up against one too

great to overcome. The ease with which the Bone Werejaguars can create these powerful weapons is both a blessing and a curse.

Note: All Metamorphic Weapons are magic in nature and inflict full Hit Point damage to vampires and other werebeasts. As living weapons, they regenerate any M.D.C. damage the item may have suffered at a rate of 1D6 M.D.C. per hour (double when on a ley line).

In the stats listed below, the stat blocks are presented as the P.P.E. of the prey, followed by the damage the weapon made from it does, followed by the amount of M.D.C. the weapon itself possesses. The greater the P.P.E. of the prey slain, the more M.D. the weapon inflicts, and the more M.D.C. it has. This damage applies regardless of the size and type of weapon it is, be it a dagger, spear, war club or anything in between.

Damage per Metamorphic Bone Weapon by P.P.E. used to create it

5-50 P.P.E.: 1D6 M.D., 20 M.D.C.

51-100 P.P.E.: 2D6 M.D., 40 M.D.C.

101-200 P.P.E.: 3D6 M.D., 60 M.D.C.

201 to 350 P.P.E.: 5D6 M.D., 80 M.D.C.

351 to 500 P.P.E.: 6D6 M.D., 120 M.D.C.

501 to 700 P.P.E.: 1D4x10 M.D., 240 M.D.C.

700 to 1,499 P.P.E.: 2D4x10 M.D., 500 M.D.C., and +1 to strike and parry.

1,500 or higher P.P.E.: 2D6x10 M.D., 1,000 M.D.C., and +2 to strike and parry.

Damage Note: Like Soulcraft weapons and many other types of weapons, the damage inflicted varies with the prey/opponent. When facing an S.D.C. opponent, damage is Hit Points/S.D.C. When facing a Mega-Damage opponent, damage is M.D.

Number of Weapons Possible: Four dozen, but each Bone Metamorphic Weapon a Werejaguar possesses must be kept on the character's body as a body piercing. Bones, teeth and claws worn as necklaces and bracelets are just jewelry and decorative.

Throwing Range: Unless specified otherwise, the effective throwing range is 30 feet (9.1 m).

Types of Metamorphic Melee Weapons

Bone Metamorphic Claw: This or a knife is often the first weapon forged by young hunters when they make their first solo kill. Its ornamental form is that of a small fork with three curved spikes coming out of the top and one spike pointing down. This bottom spike is driven under the skin on the back of the hand (below the middle knuckle). When transformed, the three spikes grow into three, 12 inch long (30.5 cm), curved, claw-like blades (smooth or serrated). A cage of finger-like bones wrap around the hand for support, leading to a solid handle in the palm that the hunter can grip.

Bone Metamorphic Knife: Its ornamental form is a small, one inch (2.5 cm) long, sliver of bone that can pierce the nose, ear, lip, or most parts of the body. Their tiny size makes them ideal for concealment. Some store them completely under their skin to hide them from enemies who are aware of Metamorphic Weapons, and retrieve them by cutting the skin open or pressing the skin in such a way as to make the sharp point pop out of the skin where it can be grasped by two fingers and pulled out the rest of the way. When transformed, the tiny bone sliver turns into a 6-12 inch (15.2 to 30.5 cm) long blade.

Werebeasts of Mexico

Bone Metamorphic Throwing Knife/Throwing Stick: Its ornamental form is a needle-like sliver of bone, two inches (5 cm) long, and about the width of a pencil lead. They are typically kept as body piercings in rows along the forearm, so they can be quickly pulled, transformed and thrown, but can also be kept as piercings on the face, eyebrows, ears and almost anywhere on the body. When transformed, the small shards turn into 6 inch (15.2 cm) long blades, spikes or throwing sticks designed for accuracy when thrown. Throwing Range: 100 feet (30.5 m).

Bone Metamorphic Throwing Disc: Its ornamental form is a flat, donut-shaped disc with a hole in the center, 2-4 inches (5-10 cm) in diameter. They can be worn as earrings, nose rings or as discs attached to the upper arm or chest. When transformed into a weapon, it grows to an 18 inch (45.7 cm) diameter and the entire outer edge becomes razor sharp. Throwing Range: 500 feet (152 m).

Bone Metamorphic Stake/Spike: Its ornamental form is a small, two inch (5 cm), long sliver of bone sharp at one end and blunt at the other. It can be attached to the body by piercing the flesh of the arm, nose, ear, lip, or most parts of the body. When transformed, the small bone sliver turns into a 12 to 24 inch long (30.5 to 61 cm) stake with one end sharpened to a point and the other blunt.

Bone Metamorphic Sickle: Its ornamental form is a “C” or crescent moon-shaped bone earring, nose ring, nipple ring or body piercing 2-3 inches (5-7 cm) long. When transformed, the crescent bone turns into a two foot (0.6 m) long sickle or sickle sword with a smooth blade and rough handle.

Bone Metamorphic Sword: Its ornamental form is a flat bone spike or sliver 4 inches (10 cm) long. These piercings are usually kept on the arms, legs or sides. When transformed, the small bone sliver turns into a 3-4 foot (0.9 to 1.2 m) long sword; smooth or serrated.

Bone Metamorphic Spear: Its ornamental form is a long and thin sliver of bone 5 inches (12.7 cm) long and pointed on both ends (may be straight or slightly curved at one or both ends). They can be worn as earrings, nose rings and nipple rings, but are usually kept as body piercings in rows on the chest. When transformed, the sliver of bone turns into a straight seven foot (2.1 m) long spear, sharp at both ends. It is an excellent close-range weapon and is balanced well for throwing. Throwing Range: 800 feet (244 m) for beings with Supernatural P.S., half that for mortals.

Bone Metamorphic Two-Handed Battle Ax (The Decapitator): Its ornamental form looks like a small, double-bladed ax head with two sharp spikes at the bottom of each ax blade. These two spikes are stabbed into the skin to hold the ornament in place. It is typically placed on the chest, above the heart, or the thigh or shoulder blade. When transformed, it becomes a large, double-bladed battle ax with a 4-6 foot (1.2 to 1.8 m) long handle.

Bone Metamorphic War Hammer: Its ornamental form looks like a small bone with rounded ends like those seen on the skull and crossbones; 2-3 inches (5-7.6 cm) long. It can be worn as an earring, nose piercing, nipple piercing, or anywhere on the body. When transformed, it becomes a Tomahawk-sized and shaped war hammer with a bulb the size of an orange on one end and the handle at the other; 18 inches (45.7 cm) long.

Bone Metamorphic War Club: Its ornamental form looks like a small bone with rounded ends like those seen on the skull and crossbones; 2-5 inches (5-15 cm) long. It can be worn as an earring, nose piercing, nipple piercing, or anywhere on the body. When transformed, it becomes a mace-like war club with a bulb or skull the size of a grapefruit on one end and a handle at the other; 2-3 feet (0.6 to 0.9 m) long.

While there are legends of a disease known as lycanthropy that turns an ordinary human into an animal against his will during a full moon, werebeasts are something entirely different.

Werebeasts are shape-changing, supernatural predators that have coexisted with humankind long before the Coming of the Rifts. Their true form is that of half-man and half-animal, e.g. the *Wolf-Man*. Werewolves are the most famous of werebeasts, but there are many other species, including a wide range of Werecats. True werebeasts, whether they are Werewolves or Werecats, are able to take three different forms: completely animal, half-man/half-animal and completely human. Each can be chosen at will and maintained for as long as the were-creature desires. In a world dominated by humans (at least until the Great Cataclysm), werebeasts hid in plain sight in *human guise*. Since they are literally animal people, most chose to live in remote, forested parts of the world where they could take animal form without causing terror, panic or persecution. *The half animal/half-human* form being most natural, the creatures take this form when they think they are alone and unseen to be themselves. This form is also ideal for fighting. Many sightings of the legendary “Bigfoot” may very well have been a werebeast. *The animal form* is most often taken to hunt, run and play, and to make a fast escape. As an animal, the only things to distinguish the werebeast from the normal animal version of its species is its size. Werebeasts in animal form are nearly twice as large as is typical for that animal species. Most werebeasts are fairly intelligent in all of their three forms, including animal, though the animal instinct is strongest in animal form.

Natural & Supernatural Abilities of all Werebeasts:

Hit Points of Werebeasts (Special): The exact number of Hit Points varies with the species. Like the vampire, the werebeast is invulnerable to most weapons, including Mega-Damage energy weapons, explosives, bullets, fire, wood, steel, poisons and toxins. However, also like vampires, werebeasts are vulnerable to ordinary silver. Weapons that have at least a 50% silver content inflict double damage to the supernatural things. Thus a silver-plated dagger, which normally inflicts 1D6 S.D.C. damage, inflicts 2D6 points of damage direct to the creature’s Hit Points. Although werebeasts possess Bio-Regenerative powers, they are nothing like the vampires’ so being bludgeoned or stabbed by silver can kill the creatures without requiring decapitation and staking.

Limited Invulnerability: See Hit Point description, above. The creature is vulnerable to magic, psionic attacks and weapons made of *silver* (double damage). Wolfsbane and garlic will hold werebeasts at bay like a vampire, but the cross, sunlight and running water have no adverse effect. Powerful Mega-Damage attacks and explosions that inflict great amounts of damage may knock the creatures down or stun it. Same Knockdown/Impact table as for vampires.

Magic: All werebeasts possess a few, natural magic/spell casting abilities; varies with species.

Psionics: All werebeasts possess a few, natural psionic abilities; varies with species.

Predators: All werebeasts are creatures born to hunt and kill. That is their life, purpose, and pleasure, and they cannot disguise this aggressive, animal tendency for too long. Nor can the werebeast tolerate being cooped up in a confined environment; it needs to run free. They hate captivity and cities larger than a village.

Prey: Despite widespread belief, most werebeasts, particularly Werecats, prey mostly on animals and, on Rifts Earth, other supernatural creatures. In fact, many Werejaguars are known to hunt vampires and protect mortals. Only the Werewolf and Wereserpent prefer the taste of humanoid prey.

Shape-Changing: The myth is that a werebeast is human by day and beast by night, but this is not true. The creature can shape-change at will, day or night. The metamorphosis takes about 15 seconds (one melee round), and there is no limit to the number of times the creature can perform a metamorphosis or how long he can maintain that particular shape. Werebeasts are quite intelligent, thus they generally assume the less frightening form of human during the bright sunlight hours when humans are most active, and change into monster humanoid form or animal shape during the night, as well as when scouting or hunting. Also, since they are nocturnal hunters, they tend to sleep most of the day and are alert and active at night. The three shapes are human, animal and half-man/half-animal. Any of the forms taken can be maintained as long as desired. Remains in that form when knocked unconscious, but turns to monster form when slain.

Supernatural Strength and Endurance: P.S. and P.E. are Supernatural only in animal and half-animal forms; normal in human form.

Tribal: Werebeasts tend to be tribal people; though some are loners, most hunt in pairs and small groups of 3-8, and may be part of a larger "clan" or "tribe" as large as 1D6x100.

Werewolves of Mexico

The Werewolf is the most vicious of all the werebeasts and is more animal predator than human in any of its forms. Though Werewolves hunt and eat animals, their favorite prey is *humans* and other humanoids. They delight in challenging humans and D-Bees to combat to prove they are superior in cunning, skills and raw power as a primal hunter. Succumbing to the values of humankind, Werewolves have been known to steal and hoard valuables, such as gems, weapons, magic items, books, artifacts, and technological devices.

Many people mistakenly imagine werewolves and vampires to be enemies and rivals competing for similar prey and habitat. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The vampires' own predatory and wolfish nature (turn into wolves, control wolves and canines, etc.) make the two comrades in arms and practically cousins. In fact, when in wolf form it is impossible for most to tell one supernatural predator from the other. As a result, Werewolves often join forces with vampires. They often run with packs of Wild Vampires, live among the Vampire Kingdoms as near equals to the undead, and fight at the vampires' sides.

There are no known cities or towns inhabited entirely by Werewolves, but several thousand of the creatures live scattered among the vampire cities, and thousands more are on the prowl across Northern Mexico. Those living in the heart of the kingdoms generally live up to their reputation for cruelty and violence. Most treat humans and D-Bees as vampires do, like slaves,

livestock and food. A few even hold positions of power and influence in the Kingdoms. As natural hunters, Werewolves love to track, hunt and kill. They are happy to fight Vampire Hunters and other enemies of the undead, and their reduced vulnerability to anti-vampire weapons makes them formidable champions among the vampire forces.

Werewolf R.C.C. Stats

Optional: G.M.s may allow as a Player Character.

Alignment: Any, but most are Miscreant (30%), Diabolic (30%) or Anarchist (30%).

Attributes: I.Q. 1D6+5, M.E. 3D6, M.A. 3D6, P.S. 2D6+16, P.P. 2D6+14, P.E. 2D6+16, P.B. 2D6+7, Spd 2D6+14 in human form, 50 (35 mph/56 km) as a wolf.

Hit Points (same as vampires): 2D4x10 +10 per additional level of experience. S.D.C. not applicable.

Size: 6 and 7 feet (1.8 to 2.1 m) tall in human and humanoid monster form respectively, 4-5 feet (1.2 to 1.5 m) tall at the shoulders in animal form; 5-6 feet (1.5 to 1.8 m) long, not including the tail.

Weight: 200 to 300 lbs (90 to 135 kg).

Horror Factor: 12 as a half-man/half-beast monster or giant wolf; +3 for a pack of seven or more. No H.F. in human form.

I.S.P.: 5D6 +1D4 per level of experience. **P.P.E.:** 2D4x10 +10 per additional level of experience.

Average Life Span: 300 years.



Average Experience Level: 1D4+1 or as set by the Game Master for NPCs. Player characters should start at first level.

R.C.C. Skills: Supernatural predator. Werewolves can speak Gobblely, American, Old French, Euro and the local language at 98%, Basic Math (+15%), Land Navigation (+15%), Prowl (+25%), Swim (+5%), Track Humanoids (+20%) and Track Animals (+10%), plus two Espionage (+5%), two Wilderness (+10%), two W.P., two Pilot, and two Technical or Domestic skills of choice.

Natural Abilities of the Werewolf: Shape-change, limited invulnerability, speak while in animal form, track by smell 70% (+10% to follow blood scent), Nightvision 300 feet (91.5 m), and Bio-Regenerates 4D6 Hit Points an hour. Also see Magic and Psionics.

Attacks per Melee: Monster or Wolf Form: 5. Human: 3.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +2 on Perception Rolls pertaining to hunting/tracking, +1 on initiative, +2 to strike and parry, +3 to dodge, +1 to pull punch, +2 to roll with impact, +6 to save vs Horror Factor, +2 to save vs psionics and magic.

Damage: Varies depending on physical form. Human: Punch does 2D6 H.P./S.D.C. damage, a kick 3D6, and bite does only 1D4 damage. Wolf-Man or Wolf: As per Supernatural P.S., claw strike does an extra 1D6 M.D., bite does 2D6 M.D., and a power bite does 4D6 M.D. (counts as two attacks). **Note:** All S.D.C. damage from claws or bite inflicts full damage to the Hit Points of vampires and other werebeasts.

Magic: Summon and Control Canines (50), Repel Animals (7), See the Invisible (4) and Tongues (12).

Psionic Abilities: Mind Block (4), Sixth Sense (2) and See the Invisible (4).

Habitat: Found throughout Mexico but especially in the south, the Yucatan and Central America. Less numerous in South America.

Allies: Fellow Werewolves, vampires, and may join forces with any supernatural beings of like alignment. Thousands of Werewolves fight alongside and serve the vampires. Otherwise, tend to keep to their own kind and like to run in "packs" of 2D6 to 5D6 in number.

Enemies: Werecats are at the top of the list and are the most hated of rivals, followed by supernatural predators, humans, D-Bees and most humanoid. Sees other species of werebeasts as rivals and may fight even other Werewolves for territory or dominance.

Note: Love the taste of human and humanoid flesh and blood. Vicious and cruel, they will slaughter livestock for fun and kill humanoids for both food and pleasure. Werewolves prefer the wolf or monster form above human. Shifters and evil practitioners of magic sometimes summon Werewolves as assassins.

Werecats of Mexico

The Jungle War. Werejaguars, Werepanthers and Wereoclots are the most common werebeasts in Southern Mexico, the Yucatan and South America. More than Werewolves, they are creatures of the jungles and often act as solitary hunters or hunt in small bands. However, they may live in tribes that number into the hundreds. While Werewolves are natural allies of vampires, Werewolves and Werecats are natural enemies. Only a handful

of Werecats (fewer than one hundred) have joined the Vampire Kingdoms. The majority of Werecats fight the undead at every turn, hunting them down like the monsters they are. Many nights in the rainforest, vampires and their Werewolf allies collide with the Jaguar People and other Werecats and resistance fighters. As hated rivals, Werewolves use every excuse to convince vampires to join them in hunting and wiping out Werecats. The feeling is mutual, though the cats are more interested in wiping out the undead and worrying about Werewolves later.

To the north, west and east of Palenque are potential hot zones that often erupt into open conflict, a series of raids and counter-raids that last for weeks or months before quieting down again for a time. The Werecat resistance survives only through its guerilla tactics, knowledge of the terrain and ability to disappear into the jungle in animal form.



Werejaguars

Werejaguars enjoy deadly games of sport and delight in the challenging combat offered by vampires, humans, D-Bees and other intelligent life forms. Like most cats, the fun of recreational hunting is in the stalking, chase, and capture of the prey. Unless the prey is intended as food, there is a good chance its prey is let free when the game is over. The two exceptions are beings who hunt them (including Slavers and Werewolves) and the undead. All undead, not just vampires. These enemies are almost always slain.

Though Werejaguars do not hunt humanoids, they are not particularly tolerant of humans or D-Bees looking for trouble or who destroy the rainforest. Thus, invaders, raiders, and others

who enter their domain with malicious or destructive intent are dealt with swiftly and without mercy. If the invaders come in large numbers, then the many Werejaguars, perhaps even several tribes, join forces to repel or destroy them using guerilla tactics. When the fight is worth it, the felines may enlist or join forces with other people, including humans, D-Bees, supernatural beings and creatures of magic who share a mutual interest in the cause. Otherwise, Werejaguars live off the land in harmony with nature and want for little else.

There are two types of Werejaguars: the traditional Werejaguars indigenous to Earth, known as **Jaguar People**; and **Bone Werejaguars**, known to Jaguar People as the *False Ones*. Bone Werejaguars look like slightly larger Werejaguars, but came through a Rift from another planet via a dimensional storm. They too loathe vampires and demons, and hunt them as well as protect innocent people. See their complete description and Bone Magic later in this section.

The Jaguar People are Werecoats who follow the traditional ways and embody their identity as a symbol and totem for the people of Mexico, Central and South America. They are the enemies of vampires, and give no quarter to fellow Werecoats who serve or fight alongside the undead or dark forces. While Werejaguars are often aloof and independent, the Jaguar People are the closest thing to a political body among werebeasts. Thousands of Werejaguars from near and far claim some kind of kinship or association with the Jaguar People, creating a loose and informal alliance that opposes the southern and eastern expansion of the Vampire Kingdoms and fights against all demonic forces. In addition, they feel obligated to hunt down any werebeast who has sided with the Vampire Kingdoms, Werewolves in particular. This is why the Jaguar People don't know what to make of the Bone Werejaguars. Their keen senses tell them these people are not of Earth, nor are they Werejaguars. Yet, these "False Ones" seem to share the same values and wield an unknown magic and bone weapons that are deadly to vampires and demons. They'd like to trust and embrace these outsiders, but even after decades, they cannot bring themselves to do so. That being said, Jaguar People grudgingly accept the Bone Werejaguars as a force for good. As such, the two different Werejaguar forces will come to each other's aid in combat, warn each other of danger, and sometimes trade weapons, food and information. Despite all this, they operate as two separate armies who fight the same enemies but in different wars.

The Jaguar People and Bone Werejaguars are the only symbols of resistance against the many evil supernatural invaders from the Rifts, especially in the Yucatan and Mexico, encroaching upon the jungles of Central America. Tribes of indigenous people worship Werejaguars and assist them in their guerilla war, and sometimes pay the price when vampires, Werewolves and other monsters come calling.

Jaguar People once inhabited the Palenque ruins of a rather expansive, ancient Maya city and location of ley lines and a nexus point. But they abandoned the location when the Bone Werejaguars arrived, letting the newcomers use it as their base of operations. The human tribe who paint their faces with white fangs, whiskers and cat eyes and call themselves the "Children of the Jaguar" have embraced the Bone Werejaguars, but still revere and worship ALL Werejaguars, including those they call the Jaguar People. These humans will fight to the death to protect their village and the Jaguar People. The Werejaguars feel the same

toward this tribe and both have fought at each other's side against their share of invaders, human, demonic and vampires.

Meanwhile, many of the *Jaguar People* have moved from Palenque to live in the Yucatan in scattered clans. They have grave concerns about what's happening at *Chichen Itza* and the abominable creations of Soulcraft Magic. As animalistic predators, they have little need for a formal society or fancy dwellings. Consequently, family clans are scattered throughout the Yucatan jungle and its vine-covered ruins. Their exact numbers are impossible to pin down, as the Jaguar People inhabit a vast range of territories and have always been careful to disguise their numbers. It is rumored that there are at least 1D4x1,000, and the Children of the Jaguar believe there are twice as many in the Yucatan alone. Like the animals that they transform into, they tend to have "ranges," huge stretches of jungle that they roam and are familiar with. Within these ranges are numerous dens, lairs and hideouts, changing continually depending on the presence of enemies, other beings, the seasons and the growth of new jungle. Scouts and sentries, many of them Werecoats, patrol the Yucatan, the lands around Palenque and the edges of the Vampire Kingdoms, where they attack Werewolves, vampires or other hostile forces whenever they think they can pick them off. They also continue to secretly watch and protect the Children of the Jaguar and other humans and D-Bee allies living in the area.

Werejaguar/Jaguar People R.C.C. Stats

Optional: G.M.s may allow as a Player Character.

Alignment: Any, but Werejaguars are usually Scrupulous (15%), Unprincipled (25%), Anarchist (45%) and Aberrant (10%).

Attributes: I.Q. 2D6+2, M.E. 3D6, M.A. 3D6+6, P.S. 2D6+12, P.P. 2D6 +12, P.E. 2D6+12, P.B. 2D6+12, Spd 3D6+12 (35, 25 mph/40 km in animal form).

Hit Points (Special): 6D6+10 to start, +2D6 per level of experience.

Size: 6 and 7 feet (1.8 to 2.1 m) tall in human and humanoid monster form; 5-6 feet (1.5 to 1.8 m) long and 3-4 feet (0.9 to 1.2 m) tall at the shoulders in animal form.

Weight: 200-300 lbs (90 to 135 kg).

Horror Factor: 12 as a half man/half beast monster or giant animal; respectively; +2 when fighting in a group of 8 or more Werecoats. The Horror Factor does not apply to human form.

I.S.P.: 5D6 +1D4 per level of experience. **P.P.E.:** 2D4x10 +10 per additional level of experience.

Life Span: 300 years.

Experience Level: 1D6+1 or as set by the Game Master for NPCs. Player characters should start at first level.

R.C.C. Skills: Natural jungle hunter. Speaks Spanish and American at 98% and select two other Languages of choice (+20%), plus Acrobatics (+10%), Basic Math (+15%), Camouflage (+15%), Climbing (+20%), Land Navigation (+20%), Prowl (+20%), Swim (+10%), Wilderness Survival (+20%), plus three Wilderness (+10%), three Espionage (+5%), two W.P., one Pilot, two Technical, and three Domestic or Rogue skills of choice.

Natural Abilities of the Werejaguar: Shape-change, limited invulnerability, speak while in animal form, track by smell 60% (+10% to follow blood scent), Nightvision 300 feet (91.5 m), keen color vision and hearing, leap 30 feet (9.1 m) high or lengthwise from a standing position (50% farther with a running start), and Bio-Regenerates 2D6 Hit Points an hour. Also see Magic and Psionics.

Attacks per Melee: Monster or Jaguar Form: 5. Human: 2.

Damage by Werejaguars: Varies depending on physical form. Human: Punch does 2D4 H.P./S.D.C. damage, a kick 2D6+3, and a bite does 1D6 damage. Jaguar-Man or Jaguar: As per Supernatural P.S., a claw strike does an additional 2D4 M.D., a normal bite does 1D6 M.D., and a power bite does 2D6 M.D. (counts as two attacks). **Note:** All S.D.C. damage from claws or bite inflicts full damage to the Hit Points of vampires and other werebeasts.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +2 on Perception Rolls pertaining to hunting/tracking and wildlife and nature, +1 on initiative, +2 to strike, +2 to parry and dodge, +4 to pull punch, +4 to roll with impact, +6 to save vs Horror factor, +2 to save vs psionics, and +2 to save vs magic.

Magic: Chameleon (6), Heal Wounds (10), Repel Animals (7) and Tongues (12).

Psionic Abilities: Astral Projection (8), Mind Block (4), See the Invisible (4) and Sixth Sense (2).

Habitat: The Werejaguar is exclusive to Mexico, Central America, the Yucatan, northern South America and, over the years, some have traveled up into the American Southwest. While they can survive in the desert, they prefer warm jungles and forests.

Enemies: Vampires and all undead, Ghouls (all), Death Weaver Spider Demons and most evil supernatural predators. Leery of humans, D-Bees and dragons.

Allies: May join forces with other supernatural creatures or individuals who have proven themselves to be friends. Very loyal to friends. The city of Omagua in central South America is a haven for tens of thousands of Werejaguars, Werepanthers and Wereocelots, and many Werecoats travel to and from the city through the thick jungles of the Amazon basin.

Wereocelot

By Matthew Clements

Wereocelots are the rarest of the Werecoats of Central and South America. They are mysterious supernatural predators who associate most closely with the Jaguar People, other Werejaguars, and Werepanthers. Even amongst their jungle-stalking brethren they are regarded as beings of the forest, arboreal hunters who can appear and disappear like a puff of smoke up into the trees. Their smaller size, lighter weight and climbing abilities make them particularly adept up in the canopies of the rainforests of Central America and Southern Mexico.

With their ability to vanish and move like ghosts, they maintain a loose network of scouts and sentries throughout the jungles they occupy. Werejaguars and Werepanthers often rely on them as sources of information and early warning when vampires, werewolves, demons and humanoids are on the move. Almost all Wereocelots are allies of the Jaguar People and Bone Werejaguars, and enemies of the Vampire Kingdoms. They receive respect and a certain amount of fear and mystique for their secretive and feral ways.

Wereocelot R.C.C. Stats

Optional: G.M.s may allow as a Player Character.

Alignment: Any, but typically Unprincipled (15%), Anarchist (40%), Aberrant (30%), and Miscreant (10%).

Attributes: I.Q. 2D6+2, M.E. 2D6+8, M.A. 2D6+8, P.S. 2D6+10, P.P. 3D6+10, P.E. 2D6+12, P.B. 2D6+14, Spd 3D6+12 or 35 (25 mph/40 km) in animal form.

Hit Points (Special): 6D6+10 to start, +2D4 per level of experience.

Size: 5-6 feet (1.5 to 1.8 m) tall in human and man-monster form respectively, about four feet (1.2 m) tall at the shoulders in animal form, and about eight feet (2.4 m) long from the tip of the nose to buttocks.

Weight: 170 to 260 lbs (77 to 117 kg).

Horror Factor: 12 as a half man/half beast monster or giant animal; +2 when fighting in a group of 8 or more Werecoats. The Horror Factor does not apply to human form.

I.S.P.: 6D6 + 1D6 per level of experience. **P.P.E.:** 2D4x10 +6 per additional level of experience.

Life Span: 300 years.

Experience Level: 1D4+2 or as set by the Game Master for NPCs. Player characters should start at first level.

R.C.C. Skills: Natural jungle hunter. Speaks Spanish and American at 98% and select two other Languages of choice (+20%), plus Acrobatics (+15%), Basic Math (+15%), Camouflage (+15%), Climbing (+35%), Gymnastics (+15%), Land Navigation (+20%), Prowl (+20%), Swim (+10%), Tailing (+20%), Trap and Mine Detection (+10%), Wilderness Survival (+20%), plus three Wilderness (+10%), two Espionage (+5%), two W.P., two Physical and three Domestic skills of choice.

Natural Abilities of Wereocelots: Shape-change, limited invulnerability, speak while in animal form, leap 30 feet (9 m) high or lengthwise from a standing position (increase length by 50% with a running start), track by smell 60% (+10% to follow blood scent), Nightvision 500 feet (152 m), keen color vision and hearing, and Bio-Regenerates 2D6 Hit Points an hour.

Attacks per Melee: Monster or Ocelot Form: 5. Human: 2.

Damage by Wereocelots: Varies depending on physical form. Human: Punch does 2D4 H.P./S.D.C. damage, a kick 2D6+2, and a bite does 1D6 damage. Ocelot-Man or Ocelot: As per Supernatural P.S., a claw strike does an additional 2D4 M.D., a normal bite does 1D6 M.D., and a power bite does 2D6 M.D. (counts as two attacks). **Note:** All S.D.C. damage from claws or bite inflicts full damage to the Hit Points of vampires and other werebeasts.



Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +2 on Perception Rolls pertaining to hunting/tracking, +2 on initiative, +2 to strike and parry, +4 to dodge, +2 to pull punch, +4 to roll with impact/fall, +2 to save vs psionics and possession, +2 to save vs magic, and +5 to save vs Horror Factor.

Magic: Chameleon (6), Cleanse (6), Cloak of Darkness (6), Heal Wounds (10), Levitation (5) and Tongues (12).

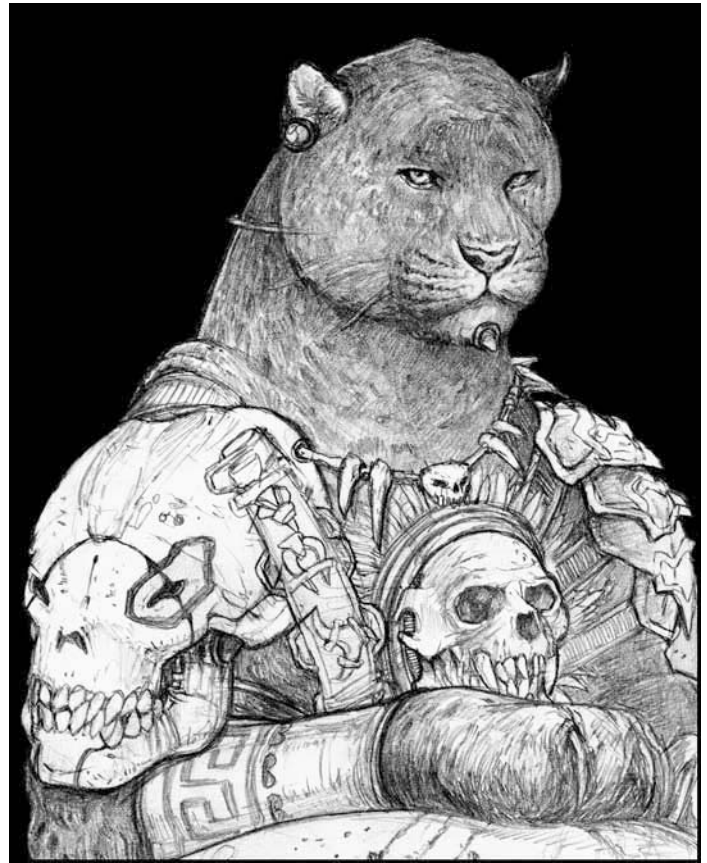
Psionic Abilities: Mind Block (4), Psionic Invisibility (10), See the Invisible (4), Sixth Sense (2) and Telepathy (4).

Habitat: The Wereocelot is found in Southern Mexico, Central America, and South America. Only the occasional adventurer or rogue is found in other parts of the world. Prefer jungles or tropical forests.

Enemies: Vampires and all undead, Death Weaver Spider Demons and most evil supernatural predators. Leery of humans, D-Bees and dragons.

Allies: May join forces with other supernatural creatures or individuals who have proven themselves to be capable and trustworthy. The city of Omagua in central South America is a haven for tens of thousands of Wereocelots, Werejaguars and Werepanthers, and many Werecoats travel to and from the city through the thick jungles of the Amazon basin.

Notes: Community oriented and gather in small clans of 2D6x10 members, and tribes of 1D6x100, although typically hunt alone or in a small group of 2-8.



Werepanther

Werepanthers are very similar to Werejaguars, except that they are a bit larger and those found in Mexico and South America are jet black in color. Northern Werepanthers, often called Werecoagars, usually take on the sandy color of their namesake. Werepanthers are not man-eaters, preferring to prey on animals and supernatural creatures. They too recognize vampires and other undead as their natural enemies, as well as Ghouls and Spider Demons, probably because the Werepanthers (and jaguars) are so attuned to life that they sense these other beings as the antithesis to life and everything they hold dear. Werepanthers enjoy deadly combat and delight in fighting vampires and demons, as well as humans, D-Bees and other intelligent life forms. In the case of mortal opponents, however, they are likely to leave the defeated alive and free to go. Werepanthers love mock fights (non-lethal combat), and like to chase, scare and tease humanoids just for the fun of it, but this kind of mischief can get them into plenty of trouble. Most of the time, they'd rather hunt, explore and watch people from a distance.

Werepanthers are fun-loving, gentle and caring toward their own, as well as other Werecoats, including Bone Wearjaguars, but tentative and distrustful of humans and other beings. They are very curious about magic and other beings and like to tail and watch others. When they gather, it is in small family clans of 4D6 members, but they hunt and go adventuring alone or in pairs.

Werepanther R.C.C. Stats

Optional: G.M.s may allow as a Player Character.

Alignment: Any, but typically Unprincipled (5%), Anarchist (65%), Aberrant (15%), and Miscreant (10%).

Attributes: I.Q. 2D6+2, M.E. 3D6, M.A. 2D6+14, P.S. 2D6+16, P.P. 2D6+14, P.E. 3D6+6, P.B. 2D6+12, Spd 3D6+14 in human form or 44 (30 mph/48 km) as a panther.

Hit Points (Special): 6D6+10 to start, +2D6 per level of experience.

Size: 6 feet (1.8 m) tall in human and man-monster form, about five feet (1.5 m) tall at the shoulders in animal form, and about ten feet (3 m) long from the tip of the nose to buttocks.

Weight: 300 to 500 pounds (135 to 225 kg).

I.S.P.: 4D6 +1D4 per level of experience. **P.P.E.:** 2D4x10 +6 per additional level of experience.

Horror Factor: 12 as a half man/half beast monster or giant animal; +2 when fighting in a group of 8 or more Werecoats. The Horror Factor does not apply to human form.

Life Span: 400 years.

Experience Level: 1D6+1 or as set by the Game Master for NPCs. Player characters should start at first level.

R.C.C. Skills: Supernatural predator. Speaks Gobblely, Spanish and American 98%, Acrobatics (+20%), Basic Math (+15%), Climb (+25%), Detect Ambush (+5%), Detect Concealment (+10%), Land Navigation (+20%), Prowl (+20%), Swim (+10%), Tailing (+15%) and Track Animals (+10%), plus three Wilderness (+10%), three Espionage (+10%), two W.P., one Pilot, two Technical and two Rogue skills of choice.

Natural Abilities of Werepanthers: Shape-change, limited invulnerability, speak while in animal form, leap 30 feet (9 m) high or lengthwise from a standing position (increase length by 50% with a running start), track by smell 60% (+10% to follow blood scent), Nightvision 300 feet (91.5 m), keen color vision and hearing, and Bio-Regenerates 2D6+2 Hit Points an hour.

Attacks per Melee: Monster or Panther Form: 5. Human: 3.

Damage: Varies depending on physical form. Human: Punch does 2D6 H.P./S.D.C. damage, a kick 3D6, and bite does 1D6+1 S.D.C. damage. Panther-Man or Panther: As per Supernatural P.S., a claw strike does an extra 3D6 M.D., a normal bite does 2D6 M.D., and a power bite does 4D6 M.D. (counts as two attacks).

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +2 on Perception Rolls pertaining to hunting/tracking and watching people, +3 on initiative, +2 to strike, +2 to parry and dodge, +4 to pull punch, +4 to roll with impact, +6 to save vs Horror factor, +2 to save vs psionics, and +2 to save vs magic.

Magic: Chameleon (6), Charismatic Aura (10), Repel Animals (7), Sense Evil (2), Sense Magic (4) and Tongues (12).

Psionic Abilities: Mind Block (4), Presence Sense (4), See the Invisible (4) and Sixth Sense (2).

Habitat: The Werepanther is found in Central America, northern South America and the North American New West. Individuals or adventurous small groups may travel beyond their traditional jungle homeland, while those captured and enslaved might end up anywhere in the world. Prefer warm climates, jungle and forests.

Enemies: Supernatural predators, vampires, undead, demons and Ghouls. Leery of humans, D-Bees and dragons.

Allies: May join forces with other supernatural creatures or individuals who have proven themselves to be friends. Very loyal to friends.

Wereserpent

Legends told in the jungles of Central America, Brazil, India and Asia speak of men and women who can turn into giant snakes. The stories are true. Wereserpents are the rarest and most elusive of the werebeasts. Their *reptile brain* is more primitive than other werebeasts, leading them to prefer their reptilian form and to prey upon humans, D-Bees and mammals. For them, the human form is meant for seduction and getting close to their prey.

In human form, Wereserpents are handsome but distant and cold individuals with no body hair and green or dark golden eyes. When they move, they almost seem to glide and their reflexes are lightning quick. There is also something seductive and disturbing about these hairless humanoids, leaving many a human to be seduced and devoured by the Wereserpent. It is said that the Wereserpent enjoys the game of seduction almost as much as hunting to kill. Only the most tender and sensitive lovers are spared becoming dinner. The creature tends to be an indiscriminate hunter, preying upon humanoids and animals whenever the opportunity presents itself.

Wereserpent

Optional: G.M.s may allow as a Player Character.

Alignment: Any, but usually Anarchist (30%), Miscreant (35%), and Diabolic (20%).

Attributes: I.Q. 2D4+3, M.E. 2D6+8, M.A. 2D6+8, P.S. 3D6+24, P.P. 2D6+18, P.E. 2D6+12, P.B. 2D6+12, Spd 2D6+8 in human form or 32 (22 mph/35 km) as a giant snake.

Hit Points (Special): 6D6+24 to start, +3D6 per level of experience.

Size: 6-7 feet (1.8 to 2.1 m) tall in human form, 15-30 feet (4.6 to 9.1 m) long as a serpent.

Weight: 1,000 to 3,000 lbs (450 to 1,350 kg).

I.S.P.: 5D6 +12 per level of experience. **P.P.E.:** 2D4x10 +5 per additional level of experience.

Horror Factor: 15 as a giant, intelligent serpent. The Wereserpent does NOT have a half-man, half-animal form, and spends most (90%) of its time as a giant python-like snake. The Horror Factor does not apply to human form.

Life Span: 600 years.

Experience Level: 1D6+2 or as set by the Game Master for NPCs. Player characters should start at first level.

R.C.C. Skills: Natural jungle hunter. Speaks Gobblely, Spanish and either Chinese or Portugese (depending on origin) at 98%, Basic Math (+20%), Camouflage (+20%), Climb (+20), Escape Artist (+20%), Land Navigation (+20%), Prowl (+20%), Seduction (+20%), Swim (+30%), Track Animals (+10%), Track Humanoids (+10%) and Wrestling, plus two Wilderness (+10%), two W.P., two Technical or Domestic skills, and three Espionage or Rogue skills of choice.

Natural Abilities: Shape-change, limited invulnerability, speak while in animal form, track by smell 60% (+10% to follow a blood scent), nightvision 600 feet (183 m), hold breath for 2D6+10 minutes, and Bio-Regenerates 3D6 Hit Points per hour, and can regrow a lost tail or eye within 1D4+2 weeks.

Attacks per Melee: Snake Form: 5. Human: 2.

Damage: Varies depending on physical form. Human: Punch does 2D6 H.P./S.D.C. damage, a kick or crush/squeeze hold does 3D6, and a bite does 1D6 damage. Serpent: As per Supernatural P.S. for head butts and tail slashes, a normal bite does 3D6 M.D., and a power bite does 6D6 M.D. (counts as two attacks), a crush/squeeze attack (encoiled and crushed) does Supernatural P.S. damage plus pins the opponent so he cannot fight back (uses wrestling moves in human form).

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +2 on Perception Rolls pertaining to hunting/tracking, +3 on initiative, +3 to strike and entangle, +1 to parry and disarm, +3 to automatic dodge (act of dodging does not use up an attack), +3 to pull punch, +2 to roll with impact, +6 to save vs Horror Factor, +3 to save vs psionics, and +1 to save vs magic and possession.

Magic: Befuddle (6), Chameleon (6), Charismatic Aura (10), Distant Voice (10), Repel Animals (7), Tongues (12) and Trance (10).

Psionic Abilities: Ectoplasm (6 or 12), Empathy (4), Death Trance (1), Hypnotic Suggestion (6), Mind Block (4), Remote Viewing (10) and See the Invisible (4).

Habitat: Jungles of South America, India and sometimes Southeast Asia. Prefer hot, damp environments. Where one might find a python, one might also encounter a Wereserpent.

Enemies: Supernatural predators, humans and D-Bees.

Allies: May join forces with other supernatural creatures or forces of evil, but usually keep to themselves except to cause trouble.

Notes: Tends to be a solitary hunter and seldom gather in numbers of more than two or three; no tribes. Ruthless, cold and calculating in combat and prefer the taste of humanoid prey.

Others

Descriptions for the *Weretiger* and *Werbear* as well as different undead and monsters can be found in **Rifts® Dark Conversions**.

The Mysterious Yucatan

The Unseen Land, Doorway to other Dimensions

Some say Rifts Earth no longer belongs to humankind. That our planet has been transformed into an alien landscape that now belongs to inhuman and monstrous beings. That the dominance of humankind is shrinking with every passing day, because the Rifts are, in effect, doorways to other dimensions. Doors through which monsters and aliens invade our world. It is an argument that's difficult to refute, and few places on Earth exemplify this more than the Yucatan Peninsula.

The land that isn't there

The Yucatan Peninsula, once home to the ancient Maya, is no longer a part of the planet Earth, at least not as we once understood it.

Flying above, from the air, there is no Yucatan Peninsula. The warm waters of the Mexican Gulf seem to have swallowed the tropical lowlands a hundred feet (30.5 m) beneath the water just as they have done to the coasts of Texas and Louisiana. All that appears to remain is the southern portion of Mexico and Guatemala. The peninsula is gone.

Even flying just above the waves reveals no sign of land until the new coastline, which starts north at Ciudad del Carmen and runs southeast, touching the ruins of old pre-Rifts cities of *Villahermosa*, *Flores*, *Poptun*, and *Puerto Barrios*. The peninsula is just not there.

At least, not by air. Nor by water. Earning it the name **the Unseen Land** by local people who know it does exist.

Most scholars outside of Mexico believe the Yucatan Peninsula perished in the Great Cataclysm. They dismiss the folklore and myths that claim the Yucatan is right where it has always been, or that it actually exists in another dimension that straddles our own. Consequently, most northern mapmakers, including the Coalition States and Lazlo, do not show the Yucatan. Remember, even today, very few explorers from other parts of the world have ever traveled to the Yucatan, and even fewer have lived to tell the tale.

Some scholars and Ley Line Walkers have noted that a 250 mile (400 km) ley line runs parallel to the "new coast" at what was (is) the base of the Yucatan Peninsula. The ancient Maya ruins of **Palenque**, **Yaxchilan** (also near *Bonlampak*), **Seibal**, **Machaquila**, and **Pusilha** mark the straight line of the mystic energy stream. Twenty miles (32 km) north of the ley line is the new Yucatan coast. **Pusilha** is a ley line nexus that is linked with another major ley line that stretches 100 miles (160 km) to **Copan** in the south. A ley line from Copan runs west to **Kaminaljuyu**, from which five other lines radiate, and one of them leads back to **Pusilha**, creating a large triangle. One of many ley line triangles and intersecting ley lines within the same geographic area (see map on page 175).

The Yucatan Peninsula still exists, only at a different and fluctuating dimensional frequency. The dimensional anomaly is even stranger because, while the peninsula is not visible nor accessible from the air, it can be both seen and walked upon from land. Landing on the apparent coast (the coast from the air is jungle with no beaches or flat land for airplanes), the ocean vanishes

and is replaced by rainforest stretching 300 miles (480 km) to the north.

Travel by Air

Air travel is very dangerous. Taking to the air from inside the Yucatan Peninsula may send the flyer out of the Yucatan dimension and into a limbo void of endless white clouds. The experience can be extremely disorienting if one does not understand dimensional travel. Flying at speeds faster than 300 miles (480 km) per hour and/or at an altitude of higher than 600 feet (183 m) above the floor of the Yucatan will throw the traveler into the limbo dimension. There is a shimmering in the sky and a moment later, the flyer is suddenly engulfed in clouds. Instrument panels go crazy and all sense of direction, even up and down, is lost.

A *lucky flyer* will suddenly find himself out of the white clouds and over the Gulf of Mexico, the Yucatan Peninsula once again invisible and seemingly underwater. An *unlucky flyer* may find himself trapped in the cloud-covered limbo of a trans-dimensional vortex for what seems like 2D4 minutes, only to reappear in the real world 1D4x100 miles (160 to 640 km) away and 2D4 hours (sometimes days!) later.

Getting lost in the Yucatan dimensional vortex can mean oblivion. The trans-dimensional vortex is the same type of phenomena reported countless times by aircraft and boaters in the *pre-Rifts Bermuda Triangle*. Time and space are crushed and compressed, then released like a spring. What may seem like 15 minutes could be the passage of 15 years or even 15 centuries! Every time a character exits the Yucatan Peninsula *by air*, at any point north, beyond the Palenque-Pusilha ley line, he will be temporarily caught in the trans-dimensional vortex.

Roll percentile dice four times. One must roll **01-55%** two out of the four times to escape the vortex in a matter of minutes. Two successful rolls means the character finds himself suddenly back in the world and at the correct moment in time.

A failed series of rolls means one of the following. Roll percentile to determine one's fate.

01-25% Lost in limbo dimension of endless clouds. After a while, the character lapses into a peaceful, trance-like sleep and flies through the limbo for all eternity. Or until some outside force yanks him into a different dimension, place or time in the Yucatan or Southern Mexico. Rolling up new characters may be applicable for NPCs, but player characters should be yanked back to their world and companions one way or another. **Note:** G.M.s, do not leave a character trapped for hours of game time, it's not fun. What is fun is to give the player character dreams and visions of dangers, visits from dead comrades or family, and portents of things to come before reappearing in the here and now. This is an excellent means of sending them on missions to rescue others, find an enemy, find something (or someone) to help save the day, and so on.

26-50% Lost in cloud limbo for what seems like days, but does not fall into the limbo state. After what might be three or four days (vehicle never loses power nor consumes fuel), the character(s) begins to see blurred shapes and shadows among the clouds (Astral Travelers). He also hears voices occasionally call-



TIMOTHY TRUMAN. 4. '91

ing to him, but can never seem to find the source. Finally, one clear voice is heard and leads to a bright light. Passing through the light, the character finds himself out of limbo and back in the real world. Moreover, only 3-4 minutes, or even seconds, have passed.

In the alternative, the hero(s) could find himself in another dimension, or at some other location anywhere on Rifts Earth (G.M. discretion). A Shifter or Ley Line Rifter should be able to open a dimensional Rift and return home (in fact, a Shifter or Rifter can return to his home dimension and correct time from the limbo or anywhere else, and in this circumstance, if done immediately, bring companions back with him). Game Masters, this is a way you can introduce a brief side adventure in a different world or locale (any of the **Rifts® Dimension Books** or Palladium RPG settings are appropriate). This may be simply a change of pace or to help the heroes secure helpful magic, weapons or information.

51-75% Time trance. While in limbo, the character(s) fall into a trance state. When they awaken, they are 1D6x100 years in the past or future! This is another opportunity for a side-adventure, only in this case, it is all a dream; if a group of characters, they all share the same dream. When the adventure plays out or any of the characters in the group dies, they all wake up and are back in their own place and time. In fact, only 1D6 minutes will have passed. We'd suggest that the time travel dream have something to do with the group's present situation (or an upcoming one) and provide them with some insight on how to fight their opponent, save lives, help others, or win the day.

In the alternative, the characters in limbo appear 1D6 hours in the future, though for them it feels like only 1D6 minutes have passed.

76-95% Out of body ghost state. After what seems like several minutes of traveling through white clouds, the characters suddenly find themselves back where they were, except as ghost-like beings invisible to the world around them. They can talk to each other, but nobody else can see or hear them. To the uninitiated, they feel like ghosts and may even believe they have died. In reality, their Astral Bodies have been released and these unwitting Astral Travelers are back on Earth, at or near where they had just left. They will remain for 2D4 minutes and are able to see and hear everything going on around them. They can walk or float after a specific person or group or wander around a particular area. After 2D4 minutes, they are pulled back into their physical bodies as if on a bungee cord, and awake in a panic state that puts them back on Rifts Earth 4D6 miles (6.4 to 38.4 km) off course (any direction the G.M. chooses).

96-00% The character(s) finds himself suddenly back to exactly where he was 1D4 minutes in the past, before he took flight. Events repeat themselves as if they are happening for the first time, but he (they) knows what is about to occur and can respond to it more quickly or take a different course of action to change what happens next!

Escape from Limbo: Characters lost in the limbo dimension can be rescued or intercepted by a Shifter, Rifter, Temporal Raider, Astral Traveler or supernatural being. While in the vortex they are at the mercy of outside forces that can manipulate dimensions or travel the Astral Plane. The trick to being rescued by someone looking for them is that person being able to find them in limbo. A Ley Line Rifter, Shifter or other experienced Astral Travel or dimensional traveler does so by opening a dimensional portal and

peering into it. Such characters can sense familiar auras, physical manifestations (an anomaly in this dimension), magic, and other aberrations not the norm in the Astral Plane; only Astral and psionic emanations are natural. He can then draw the physical manifestation to himself, like a magnet attracts iron, until he can see them/it clearly and summon it into his own dimension. Searching for specific people in the limbo is incredibly difficult: 3% chance of success per level of experience per every four hours of concentration. There is also the possibility of accidentally latching onto someone or something undesirable/monstrous.

Another way to get out of the limbo is to leave one's physical body and enter the Astral Plane. The limbo dimension functions on the Astral Plane, thus characters in their Astral Bodies suddenly have a better sense of direction and should be able to find their way back to the right dimension the same way they would return from the Astral Plane (see psionic power of *Astral Projection* in **Rifts® Ultimate Edition**, pages 171-172). Likewise, an Astral Traveler can enter the limbo plane and search for specific people in the dimension/vortex by concentrating on them. The odds of locating people by means of Astral Pojection is the same as someone trying to return to one's physical body from the Astral Plane. A series of lucky rolls could mean instant success. To bring the people back to their dimension is the same as rolling to return from the Astral Plane, only with the Astral Traveler guiding the others (conscious or unconscious) home.

The Ultimate Ley Line Triangle

What few people on Earth realize is that most of the *Yucatan Peninsula* is engulfed by a massive ley line triangle with many smaller ley line triangles within it and intersecting through it. These many long ley lines, nexus points and smaller triangles within each other have created a unique network of magic energy streams that has caused the entire peninsula to be phased out of sync with Earth and co-exist in several unearthly dimensions at the same time. Indeed, the entire Yucatan Peninsula may very well have been completely torn from the Earth and carried into an alien dimension if it were not anchored to our world by the ley line network at *Palenque* and *Copan*.

The base of the super-triangle actually starts at **Copan**. One line runs northwest to **Palenque** and from there, stretches north into the tip of the Yucatan to **Chichen Itza**. The other line from Copan reaches up past **Pusilha** until it also stops at **Chichen Itza**. Meanwhile, the many ley lines radiating from **Uxmal** – one of which connects to *Palenque*, another to *Kaminaljuyu*, another to *Tikal*, plus several other ley lines to other locations – create a mosaic of crossing lines, nexus points and many smaller ley line triangles within the large, **Chichen Itza super-triangle** to establish a confluence of magic and dimensional energy unlike anywhere else on Earth.

This explains many things about the region's history. **1.** The presence of so many ancient stone pyramids and stone cities built around them by the Olmec, Maya, Toltec and Aztec civilizations. **2.** Why the Maya mythology is so rich with demons, monsters and gods divided into deities of the moon, darkness and death, and gods of the sun, life/harvest and goodness/knowledge. **3.** Why it was said that many of these gods and demons would appear to the people at the pyramid locations and even live among them for generations. **4.** Why the gods and demons would demand blood sacrifices (at ley line nexus points and along ley line

triangles to work magic and open Rifts). **5.** Why there are legends of lost cities and cities “hidden by the gods.” **6.** Why magic has always been strong in the Yucatan and the fabric between dimensions was very, very thin and weak long before the Coming of the Rifts. **7.** And why it has always been a region steeped in superstition, violence and conquest for thousands of years.

In short, the *entire Yucatan Peninsula* is, and always has been, a dimensional nexus and a place of magic. A gateway to countless other dimensions, including realms of the supernatural and magic; more so than England or Atlantis, or any other known location on Earth.

The Coming of the Rifts. It seems likely that the *Great Cataclysm* and the *Coming of the Rifts* happened because “the event” that triggered it was within a thousand miles (1,600 km) of the Yucatan. All that P.P.E. flooding into a massive, planetary nexus of magic and dimensional energy would have unlocked forces that, once unleashed, could not be stopped. And though the trigger event was a thousand miles away, the Yucatan became the true epicenter of the Great Cataclysm. It was the opening of Pandora’s box that allowed countless beings into our world via the Rifts. Beings that don’t belong. Some good. Some evil. And they keep coming, displacing the old inhabitants, destroying old kingdoms, creating new ones or breeding new trouble. The Craftsman and his diabolical Soul Forge creations, the Bone Werejaguars, and the Spider People are all examples of recent, deadly arrivals to the peninsula. Theoretically, any of the old *Olmec*, *Maya*, *Toltec* and *Aztec* gods, spirits, monsters and people, and who knows what else, could appear, alone or in force, at any given time. Even beings such as the Splugorth have steered clear of the Yucatan due to its dimensional instability and impossible to determine dangers.

Being the epicenter of the Coming of the Rifts, the Yucatan Peninsula is the most profoundly affected place on Earth, and has been blasted from the very face of the planet. Thus, *it is invisible* unless you actually step across the dividing line of mixed realities to enter the multi-dimensional realm that is the Yucatan Peninsula of Rifts Earth.

In the Yucatan, the forces of magic and the influence of multiple dimensions are so unpredictable that most creatures of magic and supernatural beings avoid it like the plague. It is not that the mighty Splugorth, dragons and ancient gods don’t know of the Yucatan’s existence. It’s that they fear it. Fear it, and dare not enter lest they be swept away to some unknown, dark corner of the Megaverse, or be destroyed at the hands of god only knows what. Only the most feral of creatures such as vampires, werebeasts and demons can function there with minimal consequences. They, and beings who have a past history or a connection to the land, including ancestors of the Maya people – including *Olmec*, *Maya*, *Toltec* and *Aztec* gods, demons and monsters – can come and go as they please. All others take their chances.

Practitioners of Magic can feel magic energy as they approach the base of the Yucatan. Even the least experienced mage can feel magic flowing into the Yucatan like a warm summer breeze. At ley lines that intersect with lines in the Yucatan, the energy is almost beckoning, calling them. Mages who do not know the dangers of this place are drawn to it like moths to a flame. Except along the coastline of the Yucatan Peninsula, stepping anywhere into the interior is the same as being at a nexus point. Yes, except for the outermost edges, the peninsula is the equivalent of an expansive Ley Line Nexus. Mages and psychics

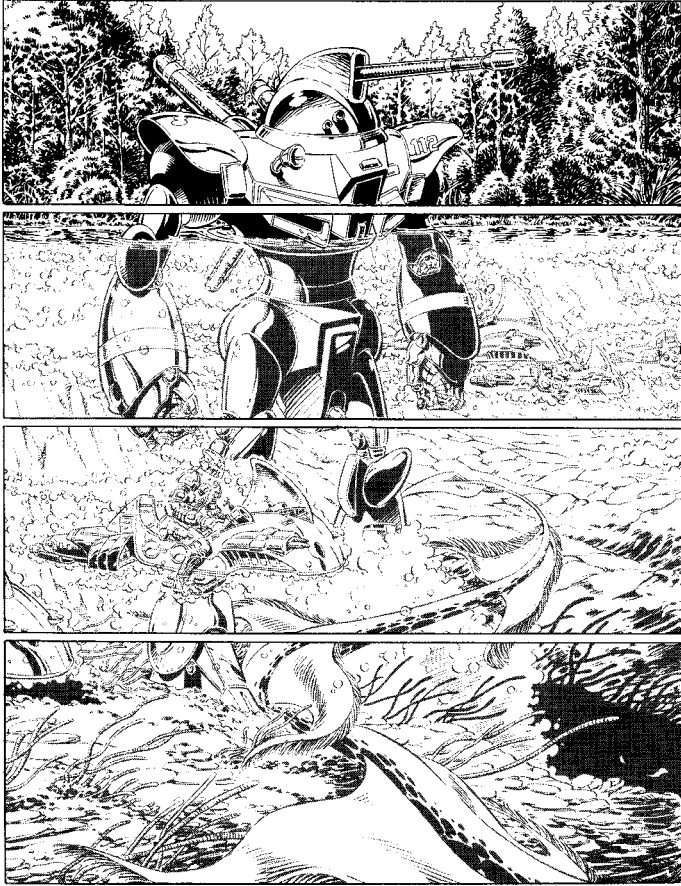
instantly know they walk through a realm that is set apart from the normal. A realm that is not the ordinary and natural world. Their connection to magic makes the jungle seem more vibrant and alive than any place they’ve ever visited. They themselves feel energized, alive and powerful, yet apprehensive and anxious as if they were suffering from sensory overload.

Temporal Raiders, *True Atlanteans*, *Ley Line Rifters*, *dragons*, and other beings well versed in the mystic arts and/or dimensional travel, feel on edge the instant they step across the divide into the peninsula. The more powerful the being, the more disoriented and uncomfortable they feel. Such beings cannot find their bearings and feel the presence and pull of many dimensions and alternate realities at once. They know without a doubt that they tread in a domain where no one reality exists and where they may be touched by the forces of other dimensions. All this makes mages hesitant to use ley line and dimensional magic of any kind for fear of what it might attract, unleash, or where it may carry them. Even when all is calm, they can feel the dimensional fabric of the Yucatan constantly shift and wobble. It is similar to the motion of the waves when we enjoy the waters of a lake or the ocean even when standing still, knee deep in water. **(Penalties while in the Yucatan:** Mages, creatures of magic and dimensional travelers lose their entire Perception Roll bonus, initiative is reduced by half and Spd by 10%. The feeling of both exhilaration and dread never stops, and nightmares and visions are common. They are also the first to be noticed and targeted by the dark forces that inhabit and visit the Unseen Land. The penalties are in force the entire time the characters remain in the Yucatan. On the plus side, ley line healing and abilities are constantly available and the ambient magic energy is identical to being at a ley line nexus.)

Psychics feel as if they are out of step with the world around them. They know without a doubt that they no longer exist in their own natural world. They too can feel subtle shifts in reality and sense the constant presence of supernatural evil – everywhere and omnipresent. This makes it impossible to pinpoint an exact menace, though they’ll know it when something bad is coming for them. Senses that warn of danger go off like a three-alarm fire, and while the urgency and intensity of the lurking danger may diminish in certain areas, it never goes away completely. The presence of magic is not everywhere like the presence of the supernatural, but it crops up a lot and all over the place.

When trekking through the Yucatan Peninsula for those who are Psychic Sensitives and Healers, the entire place *feels wrong*. They never feel safe or comfortable. The hairs on the back of their neck and arms rise with every passing shadow or unusual sound. Psychics are likely to feel as if they are being watched and tell when reality shifts, causing their skin to crawl. The ranges for the psionic abilities of *Sense Evil*, *Sense Magic* and *Sense Dimensional Anomalies*, along with *Detect Psionics*, *Empathy*, *Psychic Diagnosis*, and *Telepathy* are all *doubled* in the Yucatan. However, psychics feel like something bad is going to happen at any moment, all the time, and cannot let their guard down. This is doubly true of Dog Boys and Psi-Stalkers, who may find it impossible to sleep or find rest and have difficulty meditating. Paranoia of the unknown and the unseen creeps in and won’t let go. Their every instinct tells them to beware and get out. Run. Run from the unknown evil and supernatural forces alive all around them. Run or suffer the consequences. **(Penalties:** Same as the mage.) Ironically, the more powerful the psychic, the more intense the sensations, and spirits of the dead may appear to issue warnings,

point out danger or point to a way out or to people in need. While this can be helpful, it is unnerving and disorienting. For some, over time, the constant dread, ghostly visitations and sense of not belonging can lead to insanity. Some psychics and animals may refuse to enter the Yucatan no matter the potential reward or even for a short time. Those who do descend into madness, for the Yucatan Peninsula is truly a place where angels fear to tread.



Travel by Water

One of the preferred methods of travel within the Yucatan itself, Central America and Mexico, is on, in, or along the water, following the rivers, lakes and waterways, and portaging from one body of water to another. Water travel also makes one far less vulnerable to vampire attack. However, there are two disadvantages. First, the path of a river is seldom the most direct route from one place to another, even though many tiny humanoid communities and fishing villages can be found near the waterways. Second, other predatory monsters and demons that are not vulnerable to water have learned to stalk these areas, for prey is plentiful along the water's edge.

Leaving the Yucatan Peninsula by boat is the same as flying out. About two miles (3.2 km) from the coast, the watercraft is engulfed in a strange fog that turns into the cloud limbo. Getting out of the limbo is the same as with aircraft and flying. However, sailing along the coast is similar to walking through the forest, except once the dimensional border is penetrated (near Ciudad del Carmen), the Yucatan Peninsula is suddenly gone. Sailing back the way you came offers only miles of water (a one-way dimensional door by sea leading back to Earth or to limbo). Plunging into the limbo dimension only happens when sailing away

from the peninsula out toward sea, not sailing from the Earth dimension of Mexico or southern Guatemala toward where the Yucatan should be. One can take a boat from out at sea and sail right through where the Yucatan Peninsula *should be*, in from the Gulf of Mexico, without finding land. Since flying and sailing from the peninsula and moving away from it sends people into limbo, experts suspect that the peninsula may itself straddle or co-exist in the limbo dimension, or, more likely, exists in a pocket dimension – the pocket dimension contains only the Yucatan Peninsula – accessible from Earth and through the limbo dimension.

Traveling the Yucatan Peninsula by Land

Traveling the Yucatan Peninsula by land is strange only in that there is no apparent entry zone into the dimension that contains the missing peninsula. One simply walks across an invisible dimensional border. There is no sign, no shimmering wall of light or strange cloud, only rainforest, and lots of it. Exactly when and how one enters the dimension is unknown. Apparently, the entire length of the Palenque-Pusilha ley line is a giant dimensional doorway. Those who know of such things speculate that the physical and ley line connection to the land holds the peninsula to the dimension of Earth from which it originated. Had it been an island, the Yucatan Peninsula of Southern Mexico might have been swallowed by one or more alien dimensions. Travelers can cross back and forth from Mexico and Guatemala to the Yucatan without the slightest sensation. Except for the prevalence of supernatural creatures and occasional alien foliage, one would never know that they are not still on Earth.

Speed and Visibility. Staying on the ground or traveling at treetop level is the safest way to avoid dimensional sling-shooting into the void of white clouds. However, travel is not easy or safe. The rainforest is incredibly hot (90 to 120 degrees Fahrenheit/32 to 49 C), humid (80%+), and the jungle is so thick that travel by foot reduces foot speed by half; and even that is a quick and potentially reckless pace. Cyborgs, robots, Juicers and others with unnatural or enhanced speed will find that even traveling at half speed is hazardous. The danger is not hurting oneself by running into a tree (which could happen), but by traveling so fast and so noisily that one blunders into unseen danger. **Any speed above 12** (8 miles/13 km per hour) means that the character is traveling too fast to notice everything around or even in front of him. This means he could run into an ambush, fall into a pit, step into a swamp or quicksand, startle a dangerous creature (in the trees or hidden in the thick underbrush), or step into a hostile village or band of vampires, monsters, demons or other hostile force just beyond some trees.

Visibility is limited to about 200 feet (61 m) and even within that limited line of sight there are a score of places where human-sized and smaller creatures can hide. That is how dense and lush the Yucatan rainforest is with leaves, vines, trees and underbrush. A hasty pace opens a traveler to potential danger because he can not examine his surroundings sufficiently enough to take it all in and is making so much noise rushing thorough the underbrush that it will alert predators and enemies to his presence. Those looking for prey or trouble know exactly where to find it. Such are the perils of the rainforest. When fog sets in along the coast, rivers, lakes and lowlands, visibility drops to 12 feet (3.6 m).

Eighty percent of the Yucatan Peninsula is rainforest. The northern tip of the peninsula is tropical savanna and light forest. The tropical savanna of the Yucatan is composed of tall grass, shrubs, thorny plants and vines broken by occasional trees or patches of light forest. The humidity is considerably less there, especially during the winter dry season. The old city of **Merida** was located in this area and the famous Maya ruins of **Uxmal** lay just south of the grassland, nestled in the northern edge of the forest. Along the northwest coast, between the ruined pre-Rifts cities of *Campeche* and *Progreso*, is a strip of marshlands surrounded by the tall grass and vines of the savannah. A similar swampland is found on the northeast side of the peninsula between *Felipe Carrillo Puerto* and *Chetumal*, but is surrounded by rainforest.

Yucatan Notes & Features

1. Land area: 202,000 square miles (approx. 523,177 sq. km), including most of Guatemala, Belize, and portions of Honduras and El Salvador.

2. The rainy season starts in May and lasts through September. Rains are generally quite heavy, occurring 1D4 times per week, almost always in the afternoons, seldom at night, and last 2D6x10 minutes. Sometimes a light drizzle lasting 1D4+1 hours occurs rather than a heavy rain. It is also extremely hot during this period.

3. From September through November, Caribbean storms are common and bring intermittent rain and drizzle during the day and part of the night, once a week.

4. Dry winter from December through March, cool weather, low 70s and 80s Fahrenheit (22 to 28 C); cooler in the mornings, no rain.

5. The pre-Rifts city of **Merida**, once the capital of the State of Yucatan, is a monster haunted ruin. Highway 180 is cracked and much of it is rubble, but it still leads from Merida to the Maya and Toltec ruins of **Chichen Itza**, one of the most powerful ley lines in the Yucatan.

6. Highway 180. Chichen Itza is approximately 75 miles (120 km) east-southeast of Merida. Highway 180 also continues to the Caribbean side of the peninsula and to the pre-Rifts locations of such cities as Cancun and Puerto Juarez, Puerto Morelos and Playa del Carmen, as well as the Maya ruins of *Tulum* and not far from *Coba*.

7. Animals suitable for hunting and human consumption include deer, wild boar, coatimundi, paca, rabbit, opossum, armadillo, monkey, alligator, lizards, snakes, turtles, ducks, pheasant, wild turkey, wild chickens (descended from the once domesticated bird), quail, partridge and varieties of pigeons and parrots.

8. The ratio of humanoid habitation is one per every 50 miles (80 km). Of course, a person may travel hundreds of square miles without encountering a soul, and humans and D-Bees are generally found in clusters of nomadic tribes and little villages. Most humanoid communities are found in or around water; rivers, lakes, streams and the Gulf coast. There are no humanoid cities or large towns in the trans-dimensional Yucatan. A typical community will have 4D6x10 members.

9. Vampires are found in the Yucatan Peninsula dimension, especially during the winter dry season (December through March) and, to a lesser degree, the mostly rain-free summer nights (April through August). Only ten years ago, at least four *Vampire Intel-*

ligences lived in the Yucatan, but since Camazotz's campaign to rule the region, there are only two, and one is under his command.

10. Supernatural beings and monsters abound in the Yucatan. Any type of demon may be encountered, but among the most notable are vampires, Werewolves, Werecoats, Death Weaver Spider Demons, Worms of Taut, ancient gods and others. Virtually any demon or dimensional traveler can be encountered in the Yucatan. Some are there to invade and conquer, but most are passing through or looking for adventure and mayhem. **Note:** Monsters, creatures of magic, demons and other types of undead can be found in **Rifts® Conversion Book One** and **Rifts® Dark Conversions**.

11. Creatures of magic, such as dragons, with the exception of the Kukulcan, avoid the Yucatan.

12. The ancient Toltec ruins of **Tikal** and much of the old province of **Peten** (what was once northern Guatemala) had been transformed into the nightmare realm known as *Xibalba, Region of Phantoms*, but these demons have been driven away by Camazotz and his forces.

13. More than 3,000 Maya, Toltec or other ancient ruins exist within the Yucatan Peninsula including Guatemala and Belize. 90% mark a ley line or nexus point.

A brief pronunciation key to Maya words

“a” sounds like the a in far.

“e” sounds like the e in prey.

“i” sounds like the double (long) ee sound, like see or eel.

“o” sounds like the o in obey.

“u” sounds like the double o in zoo or toon.

“Ua” has a “wah” sound, like the wa in water.

“c” has a hard “k” sound, like cat.

“x” has a “sh” sound, like shoe or shout.

Example: Tikal (Tee-kal), Uaxactun (Wa-shak-toon) and Xultun (Shul-toon; the “X” is always pronounced with an “sh” sound).

Yucatan Overview

Places of Magic and Danger

The magical and dimensional confluences of the Yucatan Peninsula, and to a lesser degree, the entire Yucatan Basin, create strange, wonderful and deadly places and magical effects. All are few and difficult to find unless you know where to look. The location of others are unknown even to the beings who live there, and may be found entirely by accident or the intervention of fate.

Caves and cenotes (the latter are tunnels created by underground rivers, streams and rain runoffs, past and present), are found throughout Southern Mexico, the Yucatan Peninsula and Central America. Many are ordinary caves, others are places of magic.

Cave or House of the Bat: This is a place of darkness and negative energy. Here vampires, demons, practitioners of dark magicks and characters of evil alignments heal twice as quickly and without fear of infection or complications. P.P.E. and I.S.P. recover as if these evil individuals were meditating on a ley line, and they feel safe and at peace while in the cave's embrace. Characters of selfish alignments heal and recover P.P.E. and I.S.P.



50% faster than normal. Characters of good alignment feel uneasy and unwanted in this cave. They heal and recover P.P.E. and I.S.P. at *half* the normal rate. Any water in such a cave is murky and foul tasting, but suitable for drinking. There is no vegetation. **Note:** A Dimensional Rift that takes people to Camazotz, Lord of Bats and Darkness, can be opened in the cave at one third the usual P.P.E. cost! Mosquitos and bats who act as spies for Camazotz and some other Maya gods are always present in the House of the Bat.

Cave of the Dead: Within this dark cave are several shimmering walls of energy that resemble the sparkling water of a lake during a full moon. Each is a portal to one of the Vampire Kingdoms. The largest shimmering wall, rimmed by bats, is to Chichen Itza. Step through the portal and it is a one-way trip to one particular Vampire Kingdom. The arrival point is always outside, in front of one of the stone pyramids for that Kingdom; the pyramid that contains the Vampire Intelligence or his Master Vampire servant. In additions, vampires not native to Mexico/North America can sleep inside the cave without soil of their homeland. Bats and mosquitoes are always present in these caves.

Cave of the Eagle: Also known as the warrior's cave, it always has at least a small opening that lets light in from above, and a pool of fresh water filled with fish that can be caught and eaten. Warriors in need are said to always be able to find 1D4 of the following items: A silver-plated dagger, 1D6 wooden stakes, arrows tipped in silver, a wooden cross, a wooden spear, a water skin or canteen as if left behind among the moss-covered rocks. If the warrior (or anyone engaged in war or combat situation) uses high-tech gear, one of the items found will be one fully charged Energy Clip or 2D6+6 silver bullets. **Note:** Game Masters, you can let other small, reasonable items be found such as a first-aid kit, cigarette lighter, flashlight, food rations, other simple weapons, etc.

Legend has it that if a warrior who is not in need himself, deliberately leaves some gear behind for the next warrior who finds the cave, he will be blessed with good fortune in the future. **G.M. Note:** That should probably be a lucky bonus to survive an attack, a fall, illness, coma/death, save vs insanity, disease or Horror Factor at an opportune moment, and similar. ("That fall should have killed you. You must be blessed by the gods.")

Mosquitos and bats who act as spies for Camazotz and some other Maya gods cannot enter the cave.

Cave of the Divine Feathered Serpent: This is said to be a place touched and blessed by the Quetzalcoatl or Kukulcan. No vampire, mosquitoes, bats nor evil supernatural beings can enter this place, but the innocent and good are welcomed. This makes such caves a place where heroes and innocent people can hide and rest. Characters of good alignments heal twice as quickly and without fear of infection or complications. P.P.E. and I.S.P. recover as if these good individuals were meditating on a ley line, and almost all feel safe and at peace while in this cave's embrace. Characters of Selfish alignments heal 50% faster than normal. Characters of evil alignment feel uneasy and paranoid in this cave, and heal and recover P.P.E. and I.S.P. at *half* the normal rate. Any water in the cave will be suitable for drinking and any plants, roots or berries, safe to eat.

Cave of the Jaguar: Such caves are sacred places of positive energy and magic. All who enter are safe from nightmares, mosquitoes, spirits/ghost/Entities, demons (including vampires) and creatures of darkness, including zombies, mummies and animat-

ed dead, none of which can enter the cave. If a character is possessed, the individual cannot enter nor be dragged inside without causing the possessed to fight with all his might against it. If a possessed individual is physically dragged inside, whatever is possessing him is forced out, but it will hang around at the mouth of the cave for 24 hours, waiting to regain control when its vessel exits the cave. Water found inside the cave is always pure, fresh and drinkable, and any plants are edible. Anyone suffering from a sickness and who drinks of the water has the severity of his symptoms/penalties and the duration of the illness reduced by half.

Also known as the *Cave of the Nahual*. The word *nahual* refers to the secret ability to *shape-shift*, something ancient shamans, some Maya/Aztec priests and sorcerers, and, of course, the *Nahual people* – werebeasts – could all perform. This is a place of magic for werebeasts who heal three times faster inside these caves, and enemies, including vampires and mosquitoes, cannot enter. Though members of rival werebeast tribes can enter at the same time, they never attack each other, and tolerate each other's presence without discord. Werewolves often come to this cave to give birth. **Note:** Three such caves are known to exist among the ruins of *Palenque*, one at *Tikal* and *Tulum* and one at *Chichen Itza*, though the latter has been sealed shut by Camazotz.

Cave of the Owl or Moon: The cave is lit as if by the light of the full moon. Thus, it is dark, with long shadows, but it is also filled with silvery moonlight. To the Maya, the moon represented life and the metaphysical. People with psionic abilities recover I.S.P. at three times the rate per hour they would via mediation or on a ley line. *Bio-Regeneration* and all *psionic healing abilities* restore at double the usual amount. Abilities that have a percentage of success enjoy a +10% bonus in the cave. Psychics with *Clairvoyance* or the ability of *Commune with Spirits* may experience prophetic dreams, see omens and be visited by helpful ancestors and other friendly spirits. Werewolves and local people sometimes come to the Cave of the Owl for insight on important decisions and to heal. Mosquitos and bats who act as spies for Camazotz and some other Maya gods cannot enter the cave.

Cave of the Serpent and Sun: This cave is uncharacteristically warm, dry and illuminated in morning twilight as if by the sun as it begins to rise through the trees at dawn. There are always 3D6 rattlesnakes, 1D6 pythons, and 5D6 other snakes present in the cave, but they will not bite anyone who does not mean them harm. No vampires, undead, ghouls, animated dead, or bats can enter this cave, including those created by the Soul Forge. If a Wereserpent should enter or be present, it will do no harm unless attacked first, and may offer helpful advice and information. The cave is always filled with vines and flowers. Mosquitos and bats who act as spies for Camazotz and some other Maya gods can enter the cave, but are eaten by the snakes.

Cave of Visions: Inside the cave are hallucinogenic mushrooms or toads that contain a toxin in the bumps on their head. Eating a single mushroom or popping a single bump and drinking the toxin causes a vision in which the person is visited by his *tonal* (animal totem). His animal tonal may also visit in dreams when just sleeping in a Cave of Visions. Such visitation always brings insight, clarity or a clue or warning about the future or a past event. Caves of Vision also contain a variety of healing plants and herbs that can be used in holistic medicine, cooking and brewing. **Note:** Heroes and adventurers may be visited by the *Vision Serpent* and be given a Vision Quest. This is a great honor by the gods, and those blessed by such a quest are expected to

follow it. To do otherwise is to bring about lasting misfortune and bad luck. A Cave of Visions is known to exist at *Seibal*.

Magic Fountains. There are a number of ancient wells and fountains among the ancient ruins, and sometimes natural springs where the water flows in such a way that it rises into the air as a pillar of flowing water like a fountain. Such fountains always possess magical properties. The problem is, there is no way to tell what it is or does unless one or more local inhabitants know, or until you try the water.

Fountain of Clarity: Those who drink from this fount shall find the answer to something that has been troubling them or find the resolve to take action. This answer or resolve usually comes from within, but sometimes results from a sign/symbol/omen that is seen near the fountain or in a dream after drinking from it. The motivated character is +1 on Perception Rolls and +5% on skill performance for the next 72 hours.

Fountain of Life: Drinking from the water will restore 2D4x10 Hit Points and/or S.D.C. or 1D6x10 M.D.C. for Mega-Damage creatures. In addition, a cup of water from such a fountain will cure blindness or lameness caused by an injury, restore a broken bone, and cure a person of one illness or infection, immediately eliminating symptoms and penalties and restoring the person to full health. It will also make an infertile being or animal fertile for 24 hours after drinking the healing water. All this healing occurs when immersed in the magical water. In fact, immersion in the spring or fountain water, breaks the mind control of vampires, freeing unwilling slaves from their thrall. However, the magic only works when drunken directly from the fountain or from a cup taken from the fountain less than ten minutes earlier. Trying to preserve the water in a canteen or container for a longer period doesn't work, and the healing property vanishes after nine minutes.

Fountain of Youth: The legendary Fountain of Youth is located in the Yucatan. According to more recent myths and legends, there is only one such fountain, and its location changes every few days as dimensions shift within the peninsula. It may even vanish completely for periods of 4D6 days at a time. Those who drink from the fountain stop aging from that moment on. *But there is a catch.* Those who drink and do not ever leave the Yucatan Basin, will not die of old age and are +10% to save vs disease and Coma/Death. Actually, they can travel as far northwest as *Tula* and throughout Central America. Leave the Yucatan, Southern Mexico or Central America and the enchantment is broken; though the person will forever look 15 years younger and live 2D6+6 years longer than is normal for that species.

Magic Wells. There are a number of ancient magic wells among the ancient ruins that always possess magical properties, as well as ordinary wells. The problem is, there is no way to tell what the well is for or what its water does unless one or more local inhabitants know, or until you try the water. **Note:** Unless stated otherwise or involves instant healing, the magic imbued by the enchanted blood lasts for 12 hours.

Well of Blood: This well actually contains blood spilled in sacrifice. The blood can come from animals, but is usually from humans and D-Bees. Any method of sacrifice will do, be it beheading, stabbing, throat cutting, or throwing the victim into the well. The bodies of the sacrifice may or may not be tossed into the well after being slain. The stone well magically keeps the blood from spoiling, and the P.P.E. released at the moment of death imbues the liquid with magical properties as follows. (*Chichen Itza,*

Coba, Copan, Uxmal and the capital city of each of the Vampire Kingdoms are all known to have a Well of Blood, but there are others.)

Smearing the blood drawn from the well upon the **eyelids** enables the recipient to recognize vampires, ghouls, demons and gods who can shape-shift or appear as a human or animal for what they really are.

Pouring the blood **into the eyes** enables the recipient to see the invisible and recognize all drinkers of blood.

Smearing blood down the center of the **nose**, from between the eyes to its tip, makes the stench of the dead (rotting meat, bodies, blood) smell like flowers, and reduces the effect of all other noxious fumes by half.

Smearing blood over the **forehead** makes one impervious to the mind control of vampires, lesser demons and psychics.

Smearing blood over the **mouth/lips** enables a person to understand and speak any language similar to the spell Tongues.

Smearing blood on the **throat** makes the person impervious to the vampire's bites and +2 to save vs poison, toxins and the eating of spoiled food or water. Even on a failed roll to save the poison/toxin does half damage.

Smearing blood on the **chest over one's heart** when desiring to be believed, requires him to speak only the truth regarding the matter of concern. This requires a willing participant, it cannot be used to force someone to tell the truth.

Smearing blood over an **open wound**, heals it and restores the Hit Points/S.D.C. that were lost from the wound.

Covering your **entire body** in the blood enables you to walk among zombies, mummies, animated dead and ghouls unnoticed; they see you as one of their own and ignore you.

Drinking a cup of the blood (8 ounces/0.23 liters) makes a person more aggressive, violent and bloodthirsty. **Bonuses:** +1 on initiative, +2 to strike, +2 to damage and +3 to save vs Horror Factor. **Penalties:** -3 on Perception Rolls, -2 to parry and dodge, -3 to pull punch, and -10% on skill proficiencies.

Well of Life or the Harvest: The well itself contains ordinary, fresh drinking water, but within one mile (1.6 km) of it is a vast crop of maize (corn) and other crops common to Mexico. If untended, the fields of crops are mixed and broken by random patches of 3D4 different types of food-bearing plants (corn, grains, vegetables, fruit). If attended by a local tribe or village, there is plenty of water for irrigation and crops are double the size, but probably limited to only 1-4 different types of crops, with corn being one of them.

Well of Sacrifice: A well of sacrifice, also known as the Terrible Well, is a place where victims are thrown to their deaths. The doubled amount of P.P.E. released at the moment of death is captured inside the well and increased by 30%. Multiple sacrifices add to the available P.P.E. pool contained in the well. The P.P.E. can be preserved inside the well for eighty days before it begins to fade at a rate of 15% a day. Practitioners of magic and other beings who can summon and use P.P.E. can draw upon all or some of the P.P.E. contained within the Well of Sacrifice to work magic, cast spells, create magic items, open Rifts or to feed upon the magic energy. The maximum amount of P.P.E. a Well of Sacrifice can contain is 8,000. *Chichen Itza, Coba, Copan, Palenque, Siebal, Takal, Tulum* and *Uxmal* are all known to have a Well of Sacrifice, but there are others. Water drawn from a Well of Sacrifice is always polluted and undrinkable.

Palenque

Home of the Bone Werejaguars

Palenque is the ruins of an expansive, ancient Maya city and a ley line nexus. It is located not far from the pre-Rifts city ruins of Villahermosa, about 70 miles (112 km) northwest of Palenque. The city has a long history of being a place for ghosts and monsters, and had been home to Werecats even before the Maya walked the Earth. It has been in the last hundred years, however, that it has become the home for the *Bone Werejaguars*. The Bone Werejaguars have displaced the Jaguar People who had inhabited the Palenque ruins for thousands years. The Jaguar People have, in recent years, moved to *Tikal* and have amassed the largest, mixed force of Werecats ever known to inhabit one place. (See **Tikal** for details.)

Bone Werejaguars are the most noble and heroic of all the werebeasts, and have made it their mission to protect mortals from vampires and other evil supernatural forces. To this end, they use Bone Magic and the unique Metamorphic Bone Weapons it can create. Weapons they are happy to share with their friends, allies and like-minded heroes. Outsiders, be they fellow Werecats, humans, D-Bees and others, are welcome to live, hunt and fight at their side, as long as they treat the Bone Werejaguars with respect, follow their orders and acknowledge that Palenque is their's and their's alone. (See the section on **Bone Werejaguars of Palenque** on page 139 for more details.)

The ruins of Palenque include a stone pyramid, temples, ball court and many other buildings. There are also two *Caves of the Jaguar*, one *Cave of Visions*, and a *Well of Sacrifice* located in the sprawling ruins of the ancient city.

Yaxchilan

Nestled on the tall hills along the western shores of a horse-shoe bend in the great *Usumacinta River* are the ruins of the Maya city of *Yaxchilan*. The ruins are 100 miles (160 km) southeast of Palenque on the border of what was once southern Guatemala. It is also located near the giant ley line that runs across the base of the Yucatan Peninsula, which places it just outside the border of *Xibalba*. Though the Kingdom of the Xibalban demons has been crushed by the deity Camazotz, and most of the Xibalbans gone from the Yucatan, locals still call that region of the jungle, **Xibalba**, because it remains "Hell on Earth" and the domain of demons, werebeasts and monsters.

Four generations ago, the ruins were populated by a prosperous rural community of humans and D-Bees, but they perished around the time the demons of Xibalba conquered the neighboring region. Since then, no other people has officially claimed the ruins for themselves, but that does not mean there aren't people living among them. The occasional traveler, Vampire Hunter, sorcerer and Werecat also visit from time to time to tap the ley line energy, use the stone pyramid or to find shelter for a few days among the ruins.

The only regular inhabitants is a family clan of 11 Jaguar People (all of Unprincipled and Anarchist alignments), a family of four Wereocelots (Scrupulous alignments), and a mated pair of Werepanthers (Anarchist alignment). They all usually avoid contact with outsiders who visit the ruins, unless they are heroes

or Vampire Hunters, or fellow Werecats. However, they'll consider slaying any lone or small groups of vampires, Werewolves, and other evildoers, including Deathspike agents, Xibalbans and the minions of Camazotz, provided they think they can take them without serious casualties. It is important to note that the Werecats of Yaxchilan are friends with the *Bone Werejaguars of Palenque* and the *Jaguar People of Tikal*, as well as the various tribes known as the *Children of the Jaguar*, who worship all Werecats. All parties share information with each other and come to each other's aid in time of trouble. That means if the forces of evil that may visit Yaxchilan are more than the inhabitants can handle or represent a serious threat to the region, they have allies they can call upon. Otherwise, they keep to themselves and live off the land.



Bonampak

About 18 miles (29 km) south of Yaxchilan are the uninhabited ruins of Bonampak, which means "Painted Walls." Bonampak was made famous by a three room temple with walls and ceiling covered in brightly colored wall paintings depicting Maya life: celebration, kings, royalty, battle and human sacrifice; and among the depictions of what may be shapechangers and demons or gods. There is also a large plaza, an acropolis and a number of other buildings, but no stone pyramid. Many of the ancient buildings were never excavated before the Coming of the Rifts, or since, and remain buried underground. There are rumors of a network of underground caves and tunnels even deeper below the earth, as well as secrets of the ancient Maya sorcerers hidden within them, but none are known to have ever been discovered.

Rumor also has it that vampires never come to Bonampak and werebeasts feel uneasy here. Moreover, Bonampak is well known to be haunted by the spirits of the past which keeps most people away.

The ruins seem to have only one living inhabitant, a hermit who is quite insane. He is said to have been a *Mind Melter* (7th level, Anarchist) in the service of the Coalition States sent to investigate the Vampire Kingdoms some years ago. What became of his teammates and how he got to Bonampak are unknown, perhaps even to the madman himself. He calls himself “the Captain,” and talks to people nobody else can see, and only some of whom he is willing to identify. He believes he is accompanied everywhere by five ancient spirits who are his guides and companions on Earth, but he claims to have spoken to hundreds of other ghosts. Sometimes the ghosts tell him things that can help other people he encounters. Though their words are often cryptic and meaningless to him, he hopes they have meaning and provide insight to the people they are meant for. Such communication may offer clues, omens, warnings, wisdom and words of encouragement.

The Captain is quite happy at Bonampak and will not leave for more than a day or two, if at all. If someone tries to forcibly remove him, he fights with everything he has, and will be assisted and protected by his spirit guardians. The Captain will not discuss his past with the CS or what happened to him and his fellow soldiers. Some believe the Captain is, himself, a ghost, as he is said to be able to completely vanish among the ruins. He is no specter, but rather knows all the secret places, tunnels, caves and hiding places, including secret chambers, within the ruins.

Seibal

Across the Usumacinta River is **Xibalba** which remains a place of horror and demons. The river itself continues to snake southeast into the dense and mostly unpopulated rainforest of northern Guatemala. A tributary branches northeast and carries travelers to the Maya ruins of **Seibal**.

The ancient city of Seibal had once boasted a great temple dedicated to a Maya king. On top of that temple was a *gateway to the underworld*. It was rebuilt by the *Xibalbans* when they claimed the region, and it remains a portal to hell. Mages with the right knowledge can use the temple to open a Rift to the various dimensions of hell (*Xibalba*, *Hades*, *Dyval* and *China*, among others) at half the usual P.P.E. spell cost. Demons can use the gateway to make a flawless Dimensional Teleport to whichever hell is their home. As a result, there are always 4D6 different types of demons, from various domains of hell, present in the Seibal ruins and surrounding jungle. Increase that number x10 when the **Minion War** spills onto Rifts Earth. These two warring factions will engage in several pitched battles as both will try to seize control of Seibal only to lose it to the other, time and time again. The *Xibalbans* would also like to regain this city, which they consider to be theirs, and will work to undermine and destroy the other minions of hell who try to inhabit it.

In addition, Seibal (and Yaxchilan) rests on the same ley line network and triangle that connects with *Chichen Itza* and many other ruins in the Yucatan. Any mage with the right knowledge can Rift or teleport via magic to any of the places on the interconnected ley line network, which means the ruins on the ley lines

are often used as way stations and junction points for supernatural beings and practitioners of magic, hopping from one location to another in an instant. **Demons and gods** do so via teleportation. **Mages** can use the Teleport spell or by opening a Rift. Any of the ruins, nexus points and locations along ley lines can be visited, without warning, by all manner of supernatural beings and practitioners of magic, both good and evil.

Xibalba, Region of Phantoms

Xibalba (pronounced Shee-bal-bah) is the Quiche Maya term for the underworld or hell. In ancient, pre-Rifts times, the derivative word was *Chi-Xibalba* which meant the devil/demon, or the dead, or vision/phantom. The word *xibil* means “to disappear like a phantom.” The Maya performed a dance called *Xibalba ocot*, meaning “Dance of the Demon.” The Quiche Maya believed that *Xibalba* was an underground region “inhabited by the enemies of man.” The religious myth was based on fact. Xibalba is a hell-like dimension, inhabited by demons of Maya myth. With the many large and powerful ley lines and nexus points throughout Southern Mexico, the Yucatan Peninsula and Central America, there have been a number of places where the “xibil” (Maya demons) could gain access to Earth. Since the Coming of the Rifts, access became easier. To this day, xibil can be summoned by many magical means, including the old Maya Dance of the Demon. Moreover, there are known portals to Xibalba (and other planes of hell) at the ruins of **Copan** and **Seibal**. It has also long been Maya legend that a portal to the underworld/hell exists in the mountains.

For a time, the Coming of the Rifts and the enhanced multi-dimensional aspect of the transformed Yucatan enabled this fabled realm of demons and evil to manifest in the real world, melding part of the Xibalba dimension to the jungles of the Yucatan Peninsula. This allowed thousands of Xibalba demons, known as *Xibalbans*, to enter our world. **Note:** This also makes teleportation into the full dimension of Xibalba very easy from any nexus point within the Yucatan jungles that is known as Xibalba or Xibalba Territory.

For generations, the *Xibalbans* (Shee-bal-bans) had claimed and inhabited the rebuilt Maya ruins of **Tikal** (Tee-kal), **Uaxactun** (Wa-shak-toon) and **Xultun** (Shul-toon). Each one turned into a hellish city ruled by a demonic lord. For generations the *Xibalbans* had brought hell on Earth, with Tikal their capital. That was until the Maya god, Camazotz, decided the Yucatan was his and his alone. After years of fierce fighting, treachery and bloodshed, the God of Bats and Darkness was able to push the *Xibalbans* out and prevent any part of their dimension from co-existing with the Yucatan. No longer can the *Xibalbans* step into Earth, en masse, with ease. They must open a Rift or dimensional portal like anyone else. The mortals they had once enslaved were set free and expected to worship their liberator, Lord Camazotz, at Chichen Itza, causing the *Xibalban* cities to be abandoned.

The region is still known as **the Land of Xibalba** or just **Xibalba** – a place where hell touches the Earth and is inhabited by demons and monsters. In fact, this is one of the areas the *Jaguar People* have moved into, using the rebuilt ruins of Tikal (once known as an ancient city of magic, knowledge and law) as their



new base of operation. While Camazotz has claimed most of the old Xibalba stone pyramids and ruins for himself, most are occupied by a skeleton crew of minions, and for the moment, he has let the Jaguar People reclaim Tikal. He allows this in part, because the Jaguar People battle the undead of the Vampire Kingdoms who are also his rivals. The rest of Xibalba territory has returned to dense rainforest inhabited by demons and monsters who randomly arrive via the Rifts. With the entirety of the Yucatan being, in effect, a dimensional nexus, supernatural beings arrive via Rifts all the time. Some moving in, while many move off into other parts of the world. Thus, Xibalba remains what many people still consider to be Hell on Earth, and why the name has stuck.

Xibalban Survivors

Demonic Villains and NPCs

At least several hundred (and more likely, a few thousand) Xibalbans still prowl the jungles of the Yucatan seeking vengeance upon the vampires and minions of Camazotz and the Craftsman. When the rest of their kind on Earth were slain or forced back home to their dimension of hell, hundreds of xibal slipped into the rainforest. Now they seek retribution upon the Lord of Bats and Darkness. If they cannot destroy him directly, themselves, they will be happy to undermine him and his henchmen and work to let someone else topple the dark god's empire – even if it's humans.

Xibalbans are Maya demons who can make themselves look completely human. In their natural form, Xibalbans look rather like deformed or monstrous humans to begin with. Most are either thin and scrawny or muscular and beefy, and tend to have one or more odd features, such as an abnormally large or small nose, large or tiny ears, a misshapened head, sharp, pointed teeth that are spread apart, and most, even the women, are bald or balding. In addition, their natural skin color is a reddish bronze, the eyes dark, and they have a long, bony, hairless tail that ends in a point. Like many supernatural beings, Xibalbans possess limited shapeshifting abilities, but their favorite form is that of humans. When in the presence of humans, Xibalbans instinctively adjust their odd and inhuman features to look completely human. Not only that, all Xibalbans in human guise are very attractive (a P.B. of no less than 17). The demons' handsome or beautiful appearance works to their advantage, winning strangers over, seducing mortals, tricking people to do their dirty work for them, and to lure them to their doom. You see, Xibalbans prey upon mortals, eating their flesh and bones and drinking their blood. D-Bees and other sentient beings may be slain and eaten, but humans are their favorite.

Xibalbans enjoy chaos and bloodshed, like to stir up conflict and cause misery for others. In the old days, it was they who often inspired the Maya, Toltec and Aztec to launch bloody wars of conquest and engage in human sacrifice. They enjoy instigating mayhem and cruelty almost as much as participating in it directly. Xibalbans also love to inflict pain and torment, and often torture their victims long before they finally devour them. And it is common for the demons to eat their prey while still alive. Consequently, it is not unusual for small groups of 2D6 Xibalbans with murderous intent or gluttony in mind, to attack mortals without provocation. They especially loathe heroes and like to target them, but have been leaving most *Vampire Hunters* alone,

for now, as they share a pair of common enemies: The Vampire Kingdoms and Camazotz.

In combat, Xibalbans prefer to either provoke others to do their fighting and killing for them, or to get close and strike without warning. They employ hit and run tactics, lure people into danger, and may fight to the death or flee, crying like babies. It all depends on the individuals involved and their current emotional state. Xibalbans are rather bipolar, exhibiting sharp and sudden mood swinging, from malevolence and violence when they have the upper hand or are filled with rage or lust for revenge, to self-pity and cowardice when feeling cheated, tricked or left with a losing hand. That said, Xibalbans are not shy about fighting or killing, nor do they have many reservations about using high-tech guns and body armor. These demons also like to enslave lesser beings such as humans and D-Bees, and use threats and blackmail to make others do what they want. Xibalbans like nothing more than to get humans to do their dirty work for them via extortion or threats.

Xibalban Maya Demons and NPC Villains

Alignment: Miscreant or Diabolic.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D6+13, M.A. 2D6+11, M.E. 2D6+3, P.S. 1D6+15 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+13, P.E. 1D6+13 (Supernatural), P.B. 1D6+16 (+4 to leaders and Greater Xibalban; half in demon form), Spd 2D6+15 (x3 in flight as an owl).

Size: 5-7 feet (1.5 to 2.1 m) tall.

Weight: 130-250 lbs (58.5 to 112.5); the larger the demon the more it weighs.

M.D.C.: 1D6x10+70

Horror Factor: 10, but only when they exhibit their supernatural nature or when a character knows he is confronting a Xibalban.

P.P.E.: 2D6x10. **I.S.P.:** 4D6x10.

Disposition: Sadistic, cruel, mean-spirited, deceitful, and enjoy causing pain and sorrow, but also clever and tricky; prone to extreme mood swings, fits of anger and violence, and petty vengeance.

Life Span: Effectively immortal; same as demons of Hades.

Natural Abilities: Supernatural P.S. and P.E., turn invisible at will, Nightvision 600 feet (183 m), climb 88%/80%, swim 88%, impervious to natural fire and disease, resistant to M.D. fire and heat (half damage), magically understand and speak all languages at 90%, Bio-Regenerates 1D4 M.D.C. per melee round and Dimensional Teleport 20% +2% per level of experience. Impervious to normal S.D.C. weapons, M.D.C. weapons do half damage, HOWEVER, silver-plated S.D.C. weapons do their full S.D.C. damage as M.D. to these demons. Magic weapons and weapons made of bone do full damage.

Metamorphosis: Human (special): Can change physical features and skin color to that of any of the human races (Native American, Indian, Asian, African, Caucasian, etc.); cannot change gender.

Metamorphosis: Animal (special and limited): Can turn into a dark colored owl with glowing yellow eyes. In this form, the demon's Nightvision is three times greater and can fly at speeds three times greater than running speed (typically 40 mph/64 km); +1 to strike and +2 to dodge when flying.

R.C.C. Skills: Xibalbans relate to humans and enjoy fighting, games of chance, physical contest and acts of pleasure. That means they learn the following skills at the percentage indicat-

ed. These human skills advance at a rate of +2% for every 100 years on Earth. Dance 80%, Fish 50%, Horsemanship: General 75/50%, Lore: Demons & Monsters 80%, Lore: Vampires 80%, Math: Basic 85%, Play Musical Instrument: Flute 75%, Radio: Basic 70%, Seduction 70%, Sing 70%, Undercover Ops 80%, plus 1D4 Piloting skills (any except Military, Power Armor and Robots; 70%), two Wilderness skills at 70%, two W.P. Ancient (they love blades) at 6th level proficiency and two W.P. Modern of choice at 4th level.

Level of Experience: 1D6+1 on average or as set by the Game Master for NPCs. Not available as a player character.

Attacks per Melee: Four; +2 to Greater Xibalbans and those who have risen to a position of leader.

Mega-Damage: As per Supernatural P.S., weapon, magic or psionics.

Bonuses (not including likely attribute bonuses): +2 on Perception Rolls involving blackmail, extortion, trickery and backstabbing, +1 on initiative, +3 to strike, parry and dodge, +5 to pull punch, +5 to roll with impact, +10 to save vs Horror Factor, +10 to save vs poison and drugs, and +4 to save psionics and magic.

Mega-Damage: As per Supernatural P.S., bite (1D6 M.D.), or by weapon, magic or psionics.

Magic: P.P.E. 2D6x10 +1D6 per level of experience. Limited magic powers. Armor Bizarre (15), Calling (8), Concealment (6), Death Trance (1), Fly as the Eagle (25), Fool's Gold (10), Invisibility: Superior (20), and Mask of Deceit (15).

Psionic Powers (limited): Master psychic. I.S.P.: 4D6x10 +10 per level of experience. Bio-regeneration of 1D6x10 M.D.C. three times per day (10), Astral Projection (8), Empathic Transmission (6), Empathy (4), Mentally Possess Others (30),

Mind Bond (10), Psi-Shield (30), Psi-Sword (30), See Aura (6), See the Invisible (4), Sense Magic (3), and Telepathy (4).

Weapons: Whatever is handy, but prefer magic and M.D. energy weapons.

Body Armor: Only wears partial armor, never full environmental armor.

Bionics & Cybernetics: Not possible.

Allies: Fellow Xibalbans and other Maya demons. May also enlist or force partnerships with mortals.

Enemies: Vampires are hated rivals, along with Werecats and Camazotz and his henchmen and minions. Mortals are seen as pawns and prey, but Xibalbans also recognize they can be dangerous and useful.

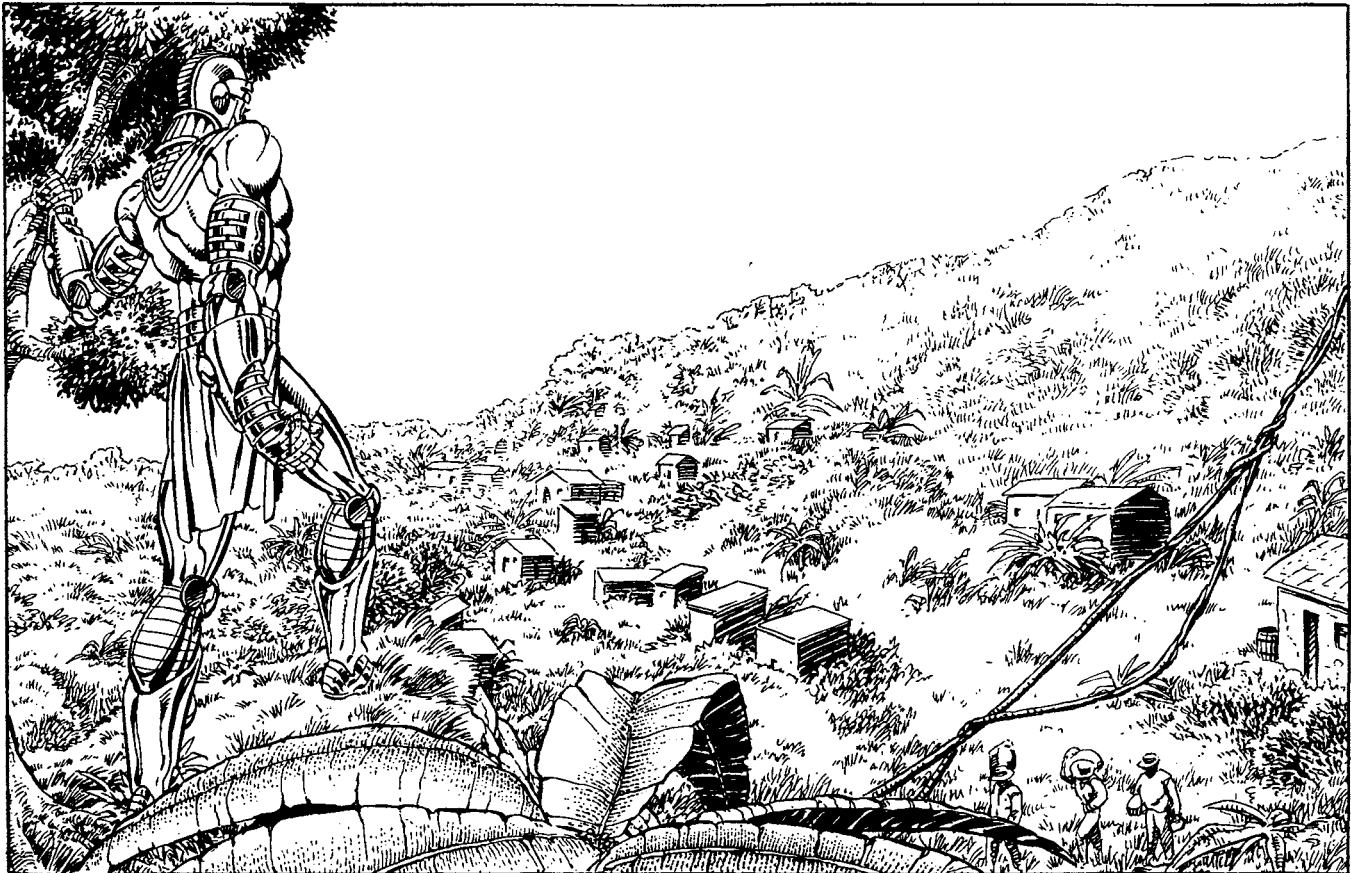
Money: None to start, but wealth and power are always attractive.

Note: There are no **Ti-Xibalbans, the People of Wood**, known to be left on Rifts Earth. **Cuchumaquiq, Lord of Darkness and Lord of all of Xibalba, Vukub-Came "The Phantom"** and other Demon Lords of Xibalba have all been forced back to their own hellish dimension.

Tikal

New Home of the Jaguar People

The ruins of Tikal had been masterfully rebuilt by the demons of Xibalba from their original designs with a few extra demonic-looking temples added. Then, war erupted between the forces of the Xibalbans and the evil god, Camazotz. The victor was Cam-



azotz, the majority off Xibalba demons were forced back to hell and their dimensional overlapping with the Yucatan negated. Tikal suffered greatly in that conflict, leaving half the buildings in ruin and the city abandoned. Abandoned until the Werejaguars known as the **Jaguar People** laid claim to them. Since then, about three years ago, Tikal has become one of the most populated Werejaguar communities in Mexico, with an estimated 1,000-2,000 Jaguar People scattered among the ruins.

Tikal was one of the greatest of the Maya cities, and over time it may become so again, provided Camazotz's rise to power can be halted. The Maya city is crisscrossed with ley lines and has the fourth most powerful ley line nexus point in the Yucatan. Only *Uxmal*, *Chichen Itza* and *Coba* are more powerful (in that order). As a consequence, the Jaguar People do not so much own or control Tikal as inhabit it. All manner of demons and monsters from the Rifts use the nexus point to come to Earth. The most dangerous are set upon by the Jaguar People and their human loyalists who worship them. The rest either flee back through the Rift or escape into the jungle. From there, they may join forces with Camazotz, the Vampire Kingdoms or go anywhere on Earth.

Tikal Population: Exact number unknown. An estimated 1,000-2,000 Jaguar People (Werejaguars indigenous to Earth), 300-400 Wereocelots, 90-120 Werepanthers, 9 Wereserpents, 300 humans (many of Maya decent) and 100 D-Bees live within the ruins themselves and worship the Jaguar People.

Note: The region around Tikal and throughout the old Xibalba territory is all dense rainforest. An unknown number of lone hunters and small family groups of Werecoats and other werebeasts are found in the rainforests of all of Southern Mexico, the Yucatan, Central America and parts of South America. Their exact numbers are impossible to pin down, as werebeasts range over vast territories and often take the guise of humans and animals. Most werebeasts, humans and D-Bees live in small to medium-sized tribes or villages of 2D4x10. There are a growing number of monsters in Xibalba, but thankfully, most demons and monsters tend to gather as pairs and small groups seldom larger than 3D6 members. This does not include Camazotz's minions stationed at other ruins and locations in Xibalba. There are also one or two thousand Xibalban survivors scattered throughout Xibalba, but they are, at least for now, focused on the destruction of Camazotz and his minions.

Uaxactun

Uaxactun is a half day's journey from Tikal, about 12 miles (19 km). Its Maya ruins had also been restored to their former grandeur by the Xibalbans and was the second largest of the demon cities. A gargantuan pyramid-like structure remains the most prominent building, but much of the city was destroyed when Camazotz attacked and conquered it. The pyramid is in a reasonably good state and is located directly on a ley line nexus. The arch mounted on the top is a dimensional doorway. Camazotz's minions control the pyramid and occupy the ruins.

Uaxactun Population: A mere skeleton crew of 20 Chichen Itza Secondary Vampires, 30 Wild Vampires who patrol the jungle around the ruins and do as the Secondaries command, two H-Men (priests of Camazotz; 4th and 7th level), 12 Iron Zombies and two Iron Guards who defend the pyramid, and there are 80 human slaves to serve them.

Xultun

Xultun is located about 40 miles (64 km) northeast of Tikal and 20 miles (32 km) northeast of Uaxactun. It was the smallest of the Xibalban demon cities, but the most savage and warlike. Its main structure is a comparatively small, sacrificial pyramid, which once served as the lair of Hun-Came, Warrior King. The stairs are decorated with carved human skulls and the stairs themselves are still littered with real skulls and the skeletal remains of hundreds of victims. When there is the ruler, snakes writhe at the foot of the throne and a foul, sweet smelling incense, reminiscent of burning flesh, fills the air. Near this pyramid is a Well of Blood.

Xultun Population: With the Demon Lord Hun-Came missing in action (one rumor claims he is dead, another that he is held prisoner at Chichen Itza, trapped inside the Soul Forge!) and his Xibalban troops defeated, the city is again in ruins. A crew of two Secondary Vampires, 8 Wild Vampires, six H-Men (one is 6th level the rest 3rd) and a crew of 200 slaves work at adding statues, carvings and paintings of Lord Camazotz and defacing any depicting Xibalbans. Work has been interrupted several times by raids from Werecoats and, according to rumor, of a new kind of Spider Demon with a hate for vampires and/or Camazotz.

El Mirador, La Muralla and Tintal

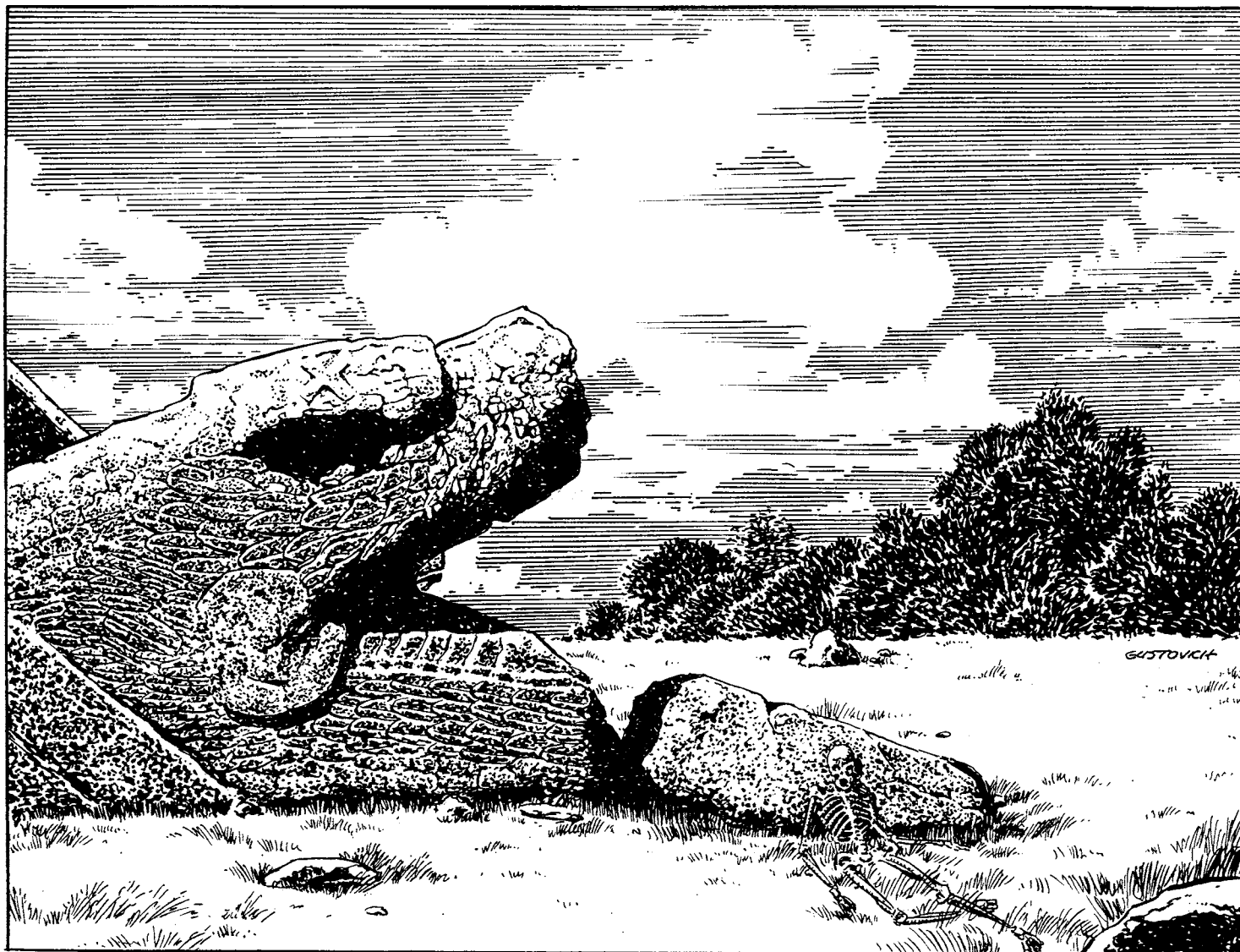
Three other ruins of Maya cities are clustered within a 20 mile (32 km) area near the northern border of Xibalba. A mile (1.6 km) north, beyond *El Mirador*, travelers leave the Xibalba, Region of Phantoms. None of the towns were ever part of the demon community, but 2D6x10 Xibalbans can be found lurking around in the area, where they lay in ambush to attack the minions of Camazotz, vampires and mortals who attract their wrath or look like good eating.

Located along a nearly a straight line north of El Mirador (what was once a modern, pre-Rifts city), through 180 miles (288 km) of rainforest, are the fabled ruins of **Uxmal**. 80 miles (128 km) northeast is demon-plagued **Chichen Itza** and 80 miles southeast of it is **Coba**. Each the location of ancient Maya ruins and the three most powerful ley line nexus points in Central America! One hundred miles (160 km) directly east of El Mirador is **Altun Ha**.

Altun Ha

Long ago, the city of Altun Ha was a major Maya community five miles (8 km) from the coast of the Caribbean Sea in the country of Belize. Today it is recognized by its crumbling temples and the energy surge of a ley line nexus.

About 20 miles (32 km) south, on a little peninsula, are the pre-Rifts ruins of **Belize City**. A growing human fishing village of 540 people (humans and D-Bees) live in and around the ruins, but an equal number of Vampire Hunters, mercs and adventurers are usually present. A small group of warriors have reclaimed the airfield there and have established a travel hub and resupply point



for Vampire Hunters and adventurers, and the whole operation is quietly managed by the Black Market. The base has been in place for almost two decades, and Vampire Hunters from near and far may be found there. (Only recently has it been discovered by *Slayers of Vampire Hunters*. *Deathspike* is doing intelligence now, and planning attacks in the near future.) The base was founded by *Sir Anthony the Brave* (9th level), an aging, unstable Cyber-Knight who is known for his lunatic assaults on the undead and monsters in the region. He is still the official leader, but much of the operation is secretly run by the Black Market.

The Vampire Intelligence at **Rio Bec** is their primary enemy target, and Sir Anthony has lost many, many men over the years trying to destroy it. There are usually around 1D4x100+150 individuals at the base, half of which are Vampire Hunters, Merc Soldiers and other combat personnel seeking to fight the undead. The rest are adventurers, explorers and treasure hunters. Werejaguars and other werebeasts that have become enemies of vampires are also welcome at the base and use their supernatural abilities to assist human Vampire Hunters as scouts and local guides.

Rio Bec

Rio Bec is a Maya ruin occupied by a Vampire Intelligence and located on a ley line nexus. The Vampire Intelligence has surrounded itself with flocks of bats (scares people away) and a tribe of **human cannibals** (270 warriors, average 3rd level, quite bloodthirsty; 20% use captured energy weapons), taught by their god (the intelligence) to drink the blood and eat the flesh of their fellow man. An insane warrior shaman leads his cannibal warriors to glory before his god. The shaman is powerful, knows magic and possesses psionics. He has a head for strategy and tactics, which is why after all these years, he and his followers (there always seem to be more) have managed to survive many attacks on them and his master.

The Shaman, Atu Caotz is a wildman who takes crazy chances, fights like a demon and is a natural at strategy and tactics. Some believe he is the human embodiment of their god. Diabolic, but fanatically loyal to the Vampire Intelligence (his "god"). Age 32. I.Q. 14, M.A. 24, M.E. 9, P.S. 24, P.P. 21, P.E. 18, P.B. 8, Spd. 22. 8th level Shaman/Ley Line Walker. **Major psionic:** 73 I.S.P., Clairvoyance (4), Intuitive Combat (10), Mind Block (4), Presence Sense (4), See the Invisible (4), Sixth Sense (2), Telepathy (4) and Total Recall (2).

Magic powers of note: 149 P.P.E., Armor of Ithan (10), Call Lightning (15), Carpet of Adhesion (10), Chameleon (6), Climb (3), Commune with Spirits (25), Cure Minor Disorders (10), Energy Bolt (5), Escape (8), Fly (15), Eyes of the Wolf (25), Exorcism (30), Fire Bolt (7), Fear (5), Globe of Daylight (2), Heal Wounds (10), Impervious to Fire (5), Levitate (5), Reduce Self, Sleep (10), Swim as a Fish: Superior (15), Superhuman Speed (10), Trance (10) and Turn Dead (6).

Skills of note: Astronomy, Holistic Medicine, all Wilderness skills and W.P. Blunt.

Vampires: For reasons unknown, the Vampire Intelligence at Rio Bec never has more than 1D6x10 Secondary Vampires and 3D6x10 Wild Vampires to protect and serve him. Six Xibalbans have been accepted into the tribe as well and also serve to protect the intelligence.

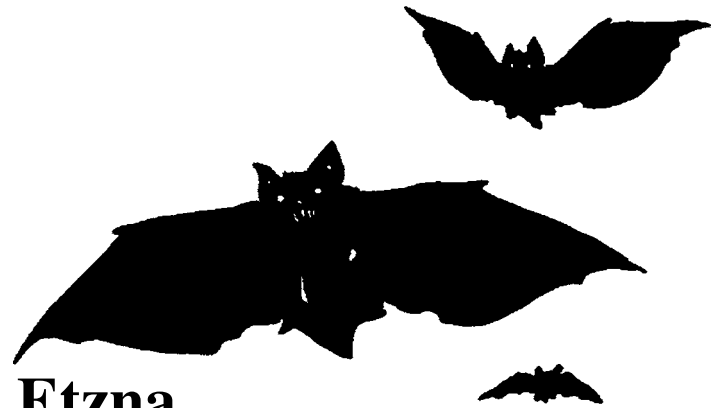
The Becan Cluster

Twenty miles (32 km) northwest of **Rio Bec** is a cluster of ancient ruins that form a small triangle of ley lines. Each ruin is about two miles (3.2 km) away from the other and each bears a small nexus point, but **Becan**, which is also linked to Mayapan, 200 miles (320 km) to the north, is the largest and most powerful.

Each ruin is inhabited by a *Death Weaver Spider Demon*. The one at Becan is the most powerful, a 10th level Shifter, while the other two, one at **Xpuhil** and the other at **Chicanna**, are both 8th level. Although Death Weavers seldom associate with others of their kind, these three are sisters and they work together gathering mystic knowledge and treasure so that they may one day become gods. Each is Diabolic evil and attack anyone who appears to be a potential threat or rival. They have successfully defended their triplex against several would-be invaders, including a new Vampire Intelligence that was weak and injured when it arrived. The sisters and their minions amuse themselves by experimenting with magic, summoning demons, and opening Rifts. This brings all types of monstrosities into the Yucatan Peninsula, many of whom find their way to Mexico and South America.

To help them in their endeavors, they have acquired two dozen human and D-Bee warriors, and a dozen Xibalbans, led by a Forest Runner dragon (5th level); all are evil and fairly loyal to the spiders. The spiders have also enslaved around 1,000 people (humans and D-Bees) at each location. People to function as their slaves and unwilling worshippers.

The demon spiders have also amassed a treasure trove. The Becan treasure is the largest (the others are half as big) and contains six million credits' worth of gold, silver, jade and gems, two TW flaming swords, a dozen scrolls, several TW water weapons and devices, a dozen energy pulse rifles, a suit of SAMAS power armor, and the mechanical remains of two Coalition Combat Cyborgs. Plus two crude, clay statues of twin giants. Closer inspection will show that they are really two mud-caked, but otherwise functional, pre-Rifts Glitter Boys with Boom Guns and ammo and bearing the American Empire's USA logo and flag emblem; worth more to some collectors as relics than as war machines.



Etzna

Lair of the Muluc Intelligence

The ruins of Etzna are located some 30 miles (48 km) east from the Gulf Coast. An equal distance northwest are the ruins of the pre-Rifts city of **Champton**. Fishing villages dot coast and the village of Champoton has a consistent population of 3,000-4,000 people (70% human, low-tech, fishers & farmers).

Etzna is rumored to be a place of evil and avoided by the humanoids in the area. Indeed, it is the secret lair of the Vampire Intelligence responsible for the **Muluc Vampire Kingdom**. The horrid creature keeps a low profile, seldom ventures outside and is protected only by 24 Secondary Vampires, 48 Wild Vampires and its Demon Familiar. It stay here to avoid attempted assassination by its rivals. Few know about its hiding place here.

Uxmal

Maya ruins mark one of the most powerful ley line nexus points on Rifts Earth. So powerful that no Vampire Intelligence or supernatural being has been able to claim and control its energies for themselves, though many have tried. Like the Calgary and St. Louis Archway Rifts, the Uxmal Rift tears open, out of control, to spew forth new horrors into the already demon plagued world. Remember, Uxmal and all of the Yucatan Peninsula ley lines are unknown to the rest of the world. Only some practitioners of magic and supernatural creatures native to the land know and use these formidable places of magic power, otherwise there might be more fights over its control.

Uxmal is located about 40 miles (64 km) south from the pre-Rifts city of Merida and 85 miles (136 km) west of **Chichen Itza**. About halfway between Uxmal, Merida, and Chichen Itza are the ruins and ley line nexus of **Mayapan**. About six miles (9.6 km) north of Merida are the ruins of **Dzibilchaltun**.

Coba

Coba was another of the famous archeological sites of Maya mastery. Over the years, it has been fought over by a number of supernatural powers. For years it was held by a dragon, but the dragon has disappeared – slain or moved on. Now it is rumored to be under the control of an ancient god, while others claim a race of demonic Spider People have taken it over.

One of the interesting features of Coba is that one of its temples has an active teleportation/dimensional portal to Xibalba.

The portal will instantly transport an individual to **Tikal** in the Region of Phantoms or to **Copan**, far away on the northern border of Guatemala and Honduras. **Copan** has a similar portal, hidden in the tall hills, that will teleport a person from Copan to Tikal or Coba. Note that whoever has control of the ruins does not appreciate unexpected guests.

Merida

Before the Great Cataclysm, Merida was a modern city and the major pre-Rifts metropolis of northern Yucatan. Several highways ran along the coast and Highway 180 weaved around Chichen Itza to Coba. When the Rifts came, virtually all of the Yucatan coastal and lowland cities were obliterated by tidal waves and the seismic eruption of the Rifts at nexus points and along ley lines. It was only the mystic energy that had been channeled through the Maya temples and pyramids for thousands of years that preserved the majority of the Maya cities; after all, that is what they had been built for. Shortly after the eruption of the Rifts, the entire Yucatan Peninsula was shifted into a different dimension. The tech-city of Merida was pretty much obliterated, leaving behind only a handful of M.D.C. buildings and the highway, and they are mangled and covered over by vegetation.

Chichen Itza

The Lair of Camazotz, Lord of the Bats

The pyramids and temples at Chichen Itza were among the most famous Maya ruins in pre-Rifts times. The city is located approximately 75 miles (120 km) east-southeast of the pre-Rifts city of **Merida**; both are located toward the tip of the peninsula.

Chichen Itza is the home of the Quiche-Maya deity, **Camazotz, Lord of the Bats and Darkness**. For generations, there were questions as to whether the being calling itself Camazotz was really the Maya god or a pretender. In the last decade, the monster has left little doubt of his deific power, proving himself to be more powerful than the average Vampire Intelligence. Camazotz has forced the Vampire Intelligence that previously inhabited and controlled the ley line nexus at Chichen Itza into being his obedient slave and lapdog. The Intelligence still lives, but it and its vampires do the bidding of Camazotz. Though scholars of vampire lore say it is not possible, somehow the Lord of the Bats has usurped the undead created by the Vampire Intelligence and forced them to serve him and him alone. However, the power of Camazotz must have its limits, because he has not seized control of any of the other Vampire Kingdoms, nor do they seem afraid of him or his own legion of undead. The latter may be a mistake. The only reason Camazotz has not waged all-out war against the other Vampire Kingdoms is because he has been too busy in other pursuits. Most recently, forcing the Xibalbans back to the plane of hell they crawled out of and claiming the Xibalba holdings.

Since the Craftsman arrived, the dark god has begun plotting and building a new army, and arming his priests and most trusted warriors, including a number of Secondary Vampires, with Soulcraft Dark Weapons and Armor. With the addition of the Craftsman and his anti-life weapons, Iron Zombies and Iron Guards, Camazotz has moved up his plans to conquer all of Mexico. However, being a cunning and malevolent god, Camazotz will

let Reid's Rangers and their allies strike first, and wait to see how much damage they can unleash upon his undead rivals. During that time, Camazotz has decided the mortals will leave him alone, unmolested, enabling him to continue to build his army. An army of vampires, Soulcraft monstrosities, H-Men (dark priests) and mortals (both willing servants and those pressed into service against their will).

In Maya mythology, Camazotz, Lord of Bats and Darkness, represents the underworld, death and the devouring dark. It is said that even the undead are not safe from his hunger and games. The bat god is an evil creature that thrives on chaos and agony. Thus, he has had no qualms about sending thousands of his vampire minions into the rainforests of the Yucatan, Central America and Mexico to kill and cause mayhem to humanoids and vampires from rival kingdoms alike.

Part of the mayhem is to cause trouble between the Vampire Kingdoms of Mexico by creating dissent amongst them. This may involve anything from lies and manipulation to outright attacks on vampire villages, towns and humanoids owned by rival vampires, to assassinations, sabotage and attacks designed to cause the rival kingdoms to fight amongst themselves. Camazotz loves to disguise his minions as members of rival Vampire Kingdoms, both to cover up his true involvement and to trick the Vampire Kingdoms into fighting with each other.



Minions of Camazotz, circa 109 P.A.

In addition to the Vampire Intelligence and the intelligence's demon familiar to protect and serve Camazotz, there are usually 3D6x10 Secondary Vampires (night) and 4D6x10 zombies (day) wandering the ruins of Chichen Itza, as well as the occasional visiting demon.

1 Vampire Intelligence; Camazotz's obedient and submissive slave; for reasons nobody can fathom.

2 Master Vampires; one willingly serves the God of Bats and Darkness and sees himself as the general of Camazotz's legions,

and destined for greatness. One who despises the dark god and wishes him dead.

370 Secondary Vampires; still stinging from the losses of the war against the Xibalban. Casualties were great.

1,350 Wild Vampires; stinging greatly from the losses of the war against the Xibalbans. Their numbers reduced by two-thirds.

500 Zombies created by Camazotz himself.

1 Soulcrafter and his Soul Forge. A powerful ally who would be king. He expects to serve at the right hand of the God of Bats, ahead of the Master Vampires and all others. At least until he is ready to make his move against the deity, but that will not be anytime soon.

32 Iron Guards in the service of Camazotz, but who are really only loyal to the their maker.

600 Iron Zombies in the service of Camazotz, but who are really only loyal only to the their maker.

258 H-Men, Dark Priests; 25% are 8-11th level, 25% are 5-7th level, half are 1-4th level. They give their lives to the service of the God of Bats and Darkness.

330 Xibalbans who have submitted to Camazotz's will and now (grudgingly, for half) serve him as their god and master.

2,400 Human and D-Bee (40%) Agents of Camazotz: Willing servants and worshipers who fight and do as their god commands. They see themselves as the soldiers and seed for a great, new empire.

2,600 human slaves, the majority captured in his conquest of Xibalba and forced to worship him or suffer and die. As a result, 69% hate their tyrant Lord and would love to see him destroyed or banished from Earth.

780 D-Bee slaves in the same boat as the human slaves, above.

1,300 human cattle for his vampire legions. These are the defiant human captives who have refused to bend to his will. A year ago, there were three times their number.

Camazotz, Lord of Bats & Darkness

Maya God of the Underworld, Bats and Darkness

Alignment: Diabolic

Attributes: I.Q. 18, M.A. 18, M.E. 28, P.S. 28 (Supernatural), P.P. 18, P.E. 28 (Supernatural), P.B. 18 in human form (6 as a monster), Spd 38 (25 mph/40 km) running, 114 (75 mph/120 km) flying and he has no limit to altitude.

M.D.C.: 6,500

Human Form: Weight: 200 lbs (90 kg). **Height:** Camazotz can adjust his exact size and appearance, so when he wants to look completely human, he is 6.6 feet (2 m) tall. When he wants to look human and attractive, but divine, he makes himself 7-12 feet (2.1 to 3.6 m) tall.

Bat God Form: 10-20 feet (3 to 6.1 m) tall; can vary size at will.

Horror Factor: 17 Bat God or Black Sphere form, none in human guise.

P.P.E.: 3,000. **I.S.P.:** 1,000.

Experience Level: Magic is equal to a 15th level mage.

Disposition: Camozotz always seems relaxed and in control. Speaks in a warm, gentle voice, unless angry, but is cruel, vindictive, domineering and a sadistic tormentor. Loves to create confusion, chaos, and misery. Demands to be worshiped by lesser creatures, especially those who are of a bat-like nature. As Lord of the Bats and Darkness, he believes the undead and the Vampire Intelligences that created them, should bow

down and accept him as their master. His goal is to make the vampires of Mexico and Central America acknowledge him as their ultimate lord. The Lord of Bats sees humans and D-Bees as interesting creatures often underestimated by vampires and other gods. He finds they make excellent pawns, allies and worthy worshipers.

Skills of Note: Astronomy, Disguise, Literacy: Maya and Dragone/Elf, Math: Basic and Advanced, all Lore skills, all Wilderness skills, at 98% proficiency.

Natural Abilities: Supernatural P.S. and P.E., hover and fly, leap 50 feet (15.2 m) high and 100 feet (30.5 m) lengthwise, Nightvision 2,000 feet (610 m), keen normal vision, see the invisible, magically understands all languages, Dimensional Teleport 80%, Bio-regenerate 2D6 M.D.C. per melee round and regenerates any lost body parts overnight.

Deific Abilities: The following are Camazotz's god powers.

Animal Spies (special): Many Maya gods, Camazotz included, can use mosquitoes and bats to spy upon the living. In the case of a *mosquito*, the insect must first drink the blood of a particular person (01-10% the victim will notice in time to swat it dead). Once it has the person's blood in its system, the mosquito can follow or stay with that person unnoticed for 2D4x10 minutes. Everything the bug sees and hears while with that person Camazotz also knows. As a god, Camazotz can have as many as 200 mosquito spies transmitting information to him at any given time.

Bats are a different story. The Bat God can send out as many as 100 bats in search of a specific individual or general, but obvious type of person (e.g. a Vampire Hunter, Mage, cyborg, vampire, etc.). Once located, Camazotz, knows exactly where that individual can be found and what he is doing at the moment he was first located. The bat can follow the person to allow Camazotz to continue to know the subject's location. Unlike the mosquito, the deity does *not* see and hear everything the bat does. However, the bat can fly back to Camazotz and tell him, via telepathy, everything it saw and key things it heard.

Empower Minions: Those who worship and accept Camazotz as their lord and master can be become his agents/warriors and priests. Both honors that come with "gifts."

Agents of Camazotz: Those humans who willingly serve the Bat god and are prepared to die in his service are given special bonuses and gifts. All are impervious to the undead, meaning they cannot be turned into vampires, zombies or any form of undead (except by Camazotz), nor are they affected by the powers of Wild Vampires, and Secondary Vampires see the range and effectiveness of their powers cut in half. Agents of Camazotz, also known as Agents of Darkness, are also +2D6 to S.D.C. and +1 to save vs possession and mind control.

H-Men, the Dark Priests of Camazotz: The warrior priests of Camazotz draw on his power and get special abilities. H-Men are impervious to the powers and mind control of vampires, cannot be turned into an undead (except by Camazotz), are impervious to disease and possession, and can cast magic. 1D6x10 P.P.E. to start, +10 P.P.E. per level of experience. **Magic** is limited to two new spells per level of experience selected from the Level 1-7 spell invocations known by their god, but they start with Cleanse (6), Cloak of Darkness (6), Death Trance (1), Tongues (12) and Turn Dead (6). **H-Men**



Bonuses: +2D6 to S.D.C., +1 attack per melee round, +2 on Perception Rolls involving vampires and their duties to Camazotz, +1 to strike, +3 to save vs possession and Horror Factor, and they learn to enjoy torturing others (+10% to Interrogation skill, if applicable).

Deific Metamorphosis (special): Camazotz can assume three different embodiments: Human, god bat humanoid and a floating black sphere. Vulnerable to all Mega-Damage weapons, magic and psionics in humanoid form. Half damage as Blackness.

Human Form: His human disguise is a handsome human male with dark skin and black hair.

God Bat Form: Camazotz's physical deific manifestation is that of a human body with dark or black (as in pitch black) skin, a large bat head with massive, tooth-filled maw, a black mane, and with or without a pair of great leather wings. Can vary in size from 10-20 feet (3 to 6.1 m) tall.

The Blackness: Camazotz's natural form is a black sphere 10 feet (3 m) in diameter, like a mini-black hole. In this form, the deity is aware of all supernatural beings within a 10 mile (16 km) radius, can pinpoint them and tell if they are good, selfish or evil. He can also sense the use of magic and pinpoint its location. Once a target has been identified, Camazotz can teleport as many as 40 vampires or 80 mortal servants (be they bats, humans or D-Bees) to that location to attack, capture or assist him, as the case may be.

On Earth, the manifestation of Blackness can be maintained for only one minute on a ley line and 10 minutes on a

nexus point. In this form, energy and physical attacks inflict half damage, but magic still does full damage. And though he cannot Bio-Regenerate as Blackness, he can teleport anywhere on any of the connecting ley lines.

Impervious to Undead. Camazotz is impervious to ALL powers of vampires and other undead, including Mind Control. This impervious ability can be granted to humans who are NOT his minions, but only lasts for 48 hours. Moreover, one must have a convincing argument as to why the Lord of the Bats and Darkness should bestow such a great gift.

Power of Darkness (special): As Blackness, the Lord of Bats and Darkness can turn the sky along any ley line where he is located, as well as any connecting ley lines, to *night* during daytime. Night runs across the length of the ley line(s) and extends one mile (1.6 km) beyond the ley line's own width. The night sky remains for as long as Camazotz remains in the form of Blackness, and for an additional 10 minutes after the Lord of Bats and Darkness returns to humanoid form or vanishes back to his underworld Realm of Darkness. While the daytime sky is turned to night, the undead and all creatures of the night (including werebeasts) can come out and function as they would at night. The night begins to turn gray a minute or two before it vanishes, signaling creatures of the night to flee and take cover. **Note:** This power can only be used once every 24 hours.

Power Over the Undead (special): As the Lord of Bats and Darkness, Camazotz, is impervious to the powers of vampires, can bring one Vampire Intelligence under his complete control, and command that Intelligence's undead legion as if they were his own. Only the Master Vampires can resist Camazotz's influence, because they started out as mortals and brought the vampire plague to their world. Slay the Vampire Intelligence (it has half its normal attacks and bonuses while controlled by the dark god) and Camazotz's control over the rest is broken. However, without the Vampire Intelligence to guide them, 1D4+50% of Wild Vampires and 1D4x10+30% of Secondary Vampires are likely to look to the God of Bats as their master. The rest run off on their own and the Master, without his creator, becomes a powerless mortal, shunned by the undead.

Storm of Bats (special): The dark god can create a Ley Line Storm with black, rolling clouds, only the clouds are made of screeching bats! When the storm of bats rolls in, communication becomes impossible. Visibility is reduced to five feet (1.5 m), people cannot hear over the screeching animals and the flapping of their wings, and even movement and combat are diminished. Likewise, radar, motion detectors, sonic sensors and sonic systems are all scrambled and unintelligible for the duration of the Storm of Bats. Even the range of radio communication is reduced by half and the loud, ambient noise level garbles transmission from inside power armor, robots and vehicles. Trying to talk by using radios built into body armor or trying to talking on a portable radio or walkie-talkie in the storm is absolutely impossible, causing squealing feedback and garbling every word. **Duration:** A passing Storm of Bats rolling along a ley line lasts for 2D6 minutes before moving down the ley line. A storm sent to a specific location covers a half mile (0.8 km) diameter area and lasts for 2D4x10 minutes. **Penalties for combat** are in place due to the noise level, poor visibility, and constant movement of the bats swooping and fluttering all around, making it difficult to discern real targets and react to them. -4 to Perceptions Rolls, -1 melee attack/

action, and reduce all combat bonuses, skill performance and Spd by half while inside the storm.

Vanish to Realm of Blackness (special): This can be done once per 24 hours, but once Camazotz has returned home, he cannot return to Earth for 48 hours. During this time, his vampires and other minions remain obedient, but confused and without any leadership (-2 attacks per melee and reduce all combat bonuses by half). Furthermore, when Camazotz returns, his M.D.C. starts at 2,500 points +1,000 per day until he reaches full M.D.C.

Attacks per Melee: Six.

Mega-Damage: As per Supernatural P.S. 28. Restrained Punch or kick: 5D6 S.D.C. damage. Full strength punch or kick: 3D6 M.D. Power Punch: 6D6 M.D. Claw Strike: 6D6 M.D. Bite Attack: 1D6x10 M.D. Power Bite: 2D6x10 M.D., but counts at two attacks.

Bonuses (includes attribute bonuses): +5 on all Perception Rolls, +5 on initiative, +6 to strike, +5 to parry and dodge, +2 to disarm and pull punch, +4 to roll with impact, +14 to save vs Horror Factor, +7 to save vs poison & drugs, +7 to save psionics and magic, impervious to disease and possession, impervious to cold and normal S.D.C. weapons. Normal fire does no damage.

Vulnerabilities: M.D. energy weapons, rail gun rounds and explosives do full damage, but Camazotz has so much M.D.C. and heals so fast, it's hard to make a dent on him.

Magic weapons do full damage and Soulcraft Dark Weapons and Bone Magic and Bone Weapons do double damage, as do holy weapons and demon slaying weapons.

Silver weapons do their equivalent damage x2 as M.D. to the god. So if a sword does 3D6 S.D.C. damage, it inflicts 6D6 M.D. to Camazotz.

Magic: P.P.E. 3,000 and spell strength 16. Knows ALL spell invocations level 1-7, plus all summoning spells, all metamorphosis spells, and all dimensional travel magic (including Teleport, Time Hole and Open Rift), plus Anti-Magic Cloud (140), Commune With Spirits (25), Create Magic Scroll (100), Create Zombie (250), Dispel Magic Barrier (20), Id Barrier (600), Mystic Portal (60), Negate Magic (30), Oracle (30), Restoration (750), Transferal (50) and Transformation (2,000).

Psionic Powers (limited): I.S.P. 1000, Astral Projection (8), Commune with Spirits (6), Empathy (4), Exorcism (10), Hydrokinesis (varies), Mind Block (4), Mind Block Auto-Defense (special), Mind Bolt (varies), Object Read (6), Presence Sense (4), Psi-Shield (30), Psi-Sword (30), Psychic Diagnosis (4), Psychic Purification (8), Psychic Surgery (14), See the Invisible (4), Sense Evil (2), Sense Magic (3), Stop Bleeding (4), and Telepathy (4; at triple the usual range).

Weapons and Equipment: Relies on his natural and deific abilities, Supernatural P.S., magic, psionics and minions. NEVER uses technology himself. Never wears body armor. Bionics not possible.

The Healing Well of Chichen Itza

A new feature of Chichen Itza is that the old freshwater cenote that supplies this particular well (and for which the city was named "the Well of the Itza") has the greatest, known, mystical healing properties on the continent. All wounds, no matter how grievous, are healed with but one sip of the Chichen Itza water. **Note:** The water always stays fresh-tasting and cool to the touch no matter how long the water has been removed from the well. A person who drinks the water feels totally refreshed. To an injured mortal, the water restores all Hit Points and S.D.C., or 2D6x10 M.D.C. to Mega-Damage creatures and supernatural beings, an instant after drinking eight ounces (0.23 liters). (Drinking more does not restore more.) The water also instantly negates magic curses and magic induced ailments. It is even rumored that the well cenote can bring the recently deceased (within 6 hours) back to life by bathing with, or immersing the corpse in, the healing waters. This includes any person of a good alignment who died at the hands of supernatural evil (undead included), and in this case, the individual can have been dead for as long as one week. The healing water does NOT restore missing limbs or organs.

Only from the Well of Healing at Chichen Itza does the healing property of the water last for 10 days after being removed from the well. Unfortunately, the well is right in the middle of the city complex and in plain sight of the pyramid lair of Camazotz and the Vampire Intelligence. Consequently, there are always 3D6 Secondary Vampires, zombies or minions around the well, and there is a 01-80% likelihood of trespassers being noticed by them. 01-50% chance of being noticed by the Vampire Intelligence, and a 01-30% chance of being noticed by Camazotz, himself. Disguise can reduce those odds by half. As a result, few are lucky enough to have used or stolen its water without getting caught. A cup (8 ounces) of the healing water can command anywhere from 30,000 to 300,000 credits on the open market. Super, super rare! Virtually non-existent.

The healing waters from the Well of Itza allow untold horrors to be inflicted upon the slave stock without fear of accidentally killing them before they can be sacrificed within the Soul Forge.





Northern Mexico

Southern Mexico

Yucatan Peninsula

Central America

Gulf of Mexico

Caribbean Sea

Pacific Ocean

The Yucatan Peninsula co-exists in another dimension and is not visible nor accessible from the air.

Central America is no longer connected to South America.

To South America

The Yucatan Peninsula



Experience Point Tables

Here are experience tables for the O.C.C.s presented in **Rifts® Vampire Kingdoms** and **Rifts® Vampires Sourcebook**.

Bandit Vampire Hunter O.C.C.

Silver Swords Militia O.C.C.

1	0,000 - 1,950
2	1,951 - 3,900
3	3,901 - 8,800
4	8,801 - 17,600
5	17,601 - 25,600
6	25,601 - 35,600
7	35,601 - 50,600
8	50,601 - 70,600
9	70,601 - 95,600
10	95,601 - 125,600
11	125,601 - 175,600
12	175,601 - 225,600
13	225,601 - 275,600
14	275,601 - 325,600
15	325,601 - 375,600

Mage Vampire Hunter O.C.C.

1	0,000 - 2,050
2	2,051 - 4,100
3	4,101 - 8,250
4	8,251 - 16,500
5	16,501 - 24,600
6	24,601 - 34,700
7	34,701 - 49,800
8	49,801 - 69,900
9	69,901 - 95,000
10	95,001 - 130,100
11	130,101 - 190,200
12	190,201 - 240,300
13	240,301 - 290,400
14	290,401 - 350,500
15	350,501 - 450,600

Bone Werejaguar R.C.C.

1	0,000 - 2,150
2	2,151 - 4,300
3	4,301 - 9,000
4	9,001 - 19,000
5	19,001 - 28,000
6	28,001 - 40,000
7	40,001 - 60,000
8	60,001 - 80,000
9	80,001 - 100,000
10	100,001 - 150,000
11	150,001 - 200,000
12	200,001 - 275,000
13	275,001 - 350,000
14	350,001 - 425,000
15	425,001 - 525,000

Vampire Hunter O.C.C.

1	0,000 - 2,000
2	2,001 - 4,000
3	4,001 - 8,200
4	8,201 - 16,400
5	16,401 - 24,500
6	24,501 - 34,600
7	34,601 - 49,700
8	49,701 - 69,800
9	69,801 - 94,900
10	94,901 - 129,000
11	129,001 - 179,100
12	179,101 - 229,200
13	229,201 - 279,300
14	279,301 - 329,400
15	329,401 - 389,500

Werebeasts R.C.C.s (General)

1	0,000 - 2,100
2	2,101 - 4,200
3	4,201 - 8,400
4	8,401 - 16,800
5	16,801 - 25,000
6	25,001 - 35,000
7	35,001 - 50,000
8	50,001 - 70,000
9	70,001 - 96,000
10	96,001 - 138,000
11	138,001 - 192,000
12	192,001 - 248,100
13	248,101 - 306,200
14	306,201 - 396,300
15	396,301 - 476,400

H-Man/Priest of Darkness O.C.C.

1	0,000 - 2,200
2	2,201 - 4,400
3	4,401 - 8,800
4	8,801 - 17,600
5	17,601 - 27,800
6	27,801 - 37,900
7	37,901 - 55,100
8	55,101 - 75,200
9	75,201 - 100,300
10	100,301 - 145,500
11	145,501 - 190,600
12	190,601 - 245,700
13	245,701 - 295,800
14	295,801 - 345,900
15	345,901 - 415,100

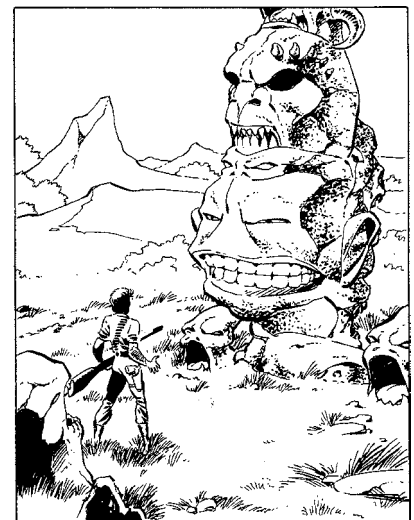
Reid's Rangers

Vampire Hunter O.C.C.

1	0,000 - 2,100
2	2,101 - 4,200
3	4,201 - 8,400
4	8,400 - 16,800
5	16,801 - 24,600
6	24,601 - 34,800
7	34,801 - 50,000
8	50,001 - 70,000
9	70,001 - 96,000
10	96,001 - 132,000
11	132,001 - 182,100
12	182,101 - 232,300
13	232,301 - 282,500
14	282,501 - 335,700
15	335,701 - 395,900

Werecat Vampire Hunter R.C.C.

1	0,000 - 2,140
2	2,141 - 4,280
3	4,281 - 8,560
4	8,561 - 17,520
5	17,521 - 25,520
6	25,521 - 35,520
7	35,521 - 50,520
8	50,521 - 71,000
9	71,001 - 96,100
10	96,101 - 140,200
11	140,201 - 190,300
12	190,301 - 250,400
13	250,401 - 320,500
14	320,501 - 400,600
15	400,601 - 480,700



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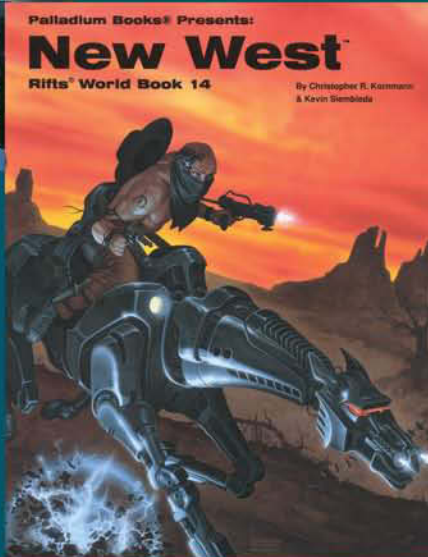
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