



PYRAMID[®]

Issue 3/67 May '14

TOOLS OF THE TRADE: VILLAINS

YOU AND WHAT ARMY?

by Michele Armellini

HOW VERY TEMPTING

by Christopher R. Rice

TIGERPHOBIA

by Hans-Christian Vortisch

THE COMPLEAT JUMPSUIT

by Matt Riggsby

VILLAIN'S RESIDENCE

by David L. Pulver

DESIGNER'S NOTES:

GURPS ZOMBIES

by Sean Punch

STEVE JACKSON GAMES

Stock #37-2667



IN THIS ISSUE

CONTENTS

FROM THE EDITOR 3

YOU AND WHAT ARMY? 4
by Michele Armellini

HOW VERY TEMPTING 14
by Christopher R. Rice

EIDETIC MEMORY:
VILLAIN'S RESIDENCE 20
by David L. Pulver

TIGERPHOBIA 23
by Hans-Christian Vortisch

THE COMPLEAT JUMPSUIT 28
by Matt Riggsby

DESIGNER'S NOTES:
GURPS ZOMBIES 32
by Sean Punch

RANDOM THOUGHT TABLE:
IT'S A HEROIC DOOMSWORD NOW! . . . 38
by Steven Marsh, Pyramid Editor

ABOUT GURPS 40

What's a villain without his wonderful accouterments? This month's *Pyramid* looks at tools of most use to villains, as it straps you to a table and threatens to zap you with its laser-like awesomeness. Do we expect you to talk? No; we expect you to roll dice!

If the fantasy heroes are smirking at your villains by asking them, "*You and What Army?*" now you have an answer, thanks to five pregenerated tactical forces described by **GURPS WWII: Grim Legions** author Michele Armellini. With battle tactics, ideas for roleplaying each army's leader, and full **GURPS Mass Combat** stats, you'll instantly have friends (fiends?) to help you conquer the world . . . or die trying. You also get a new **Mass Combat** troop feature!

Powerful beings eager to bestow your heart's desire? *How Very Tempting* . . . In return, they only want your soul! Now, you can have **GURPS** mechanics – including new character traits – for such spiritual transactions. You'll discover what your soul is worth, what you can get for it (the good, bad, and ugly), and what the buyer gets out of it. *Caveat venditor* – let the seller beware!

Bad guys always need a place to kick back, relax, and hatch their global plots. In this month's Eidetic Memory, David L. Pulver – author of **GURPS Reign of Steel** – has a *Villain's Residence* for you. This multistory mansion is complete with maps for each level, suitable for any modern gaming system, and ready to move in.

The *Panzerkampfwagen VI Ausführung E Tiger* (or Panzer Tiger for short) was so feared during World War II that soldiers began to see them everywhere, resulting in *Tigerphobia*. Hans-Christian Vortisch – co-author of **GURPS High-Tech** – reveals the secrets of the Nazi's most feared tank, including **GURPS** stats for the vehicle and its armaments, plus **Mass Combat** stats for the typical German Tiger company.

When you need to quickly assemble henchmen for building your latest world-dominating device – or simply to staff your various headquarters – turn to *The Compleat Jumpsuit*. You'll get **GURPS** templates for seven popular varieties of modern-day henchmen – plus new character traits – from Matt Riggsby, author of **GURPS Dungeon Fantasy Adventure 1: Mirror of the Fire Demon**.

Are undead minions more to your liking? Then get new ideas for them with *Designer's Notes: GURPS Zombies* by Sean Punch. It includes insights into that popular supplement's creation, plus an original sample campaign and three new zombies.

The issue concludes with Random Thought Table, which discusses the perils and possibilities when *heroes* end up with villainous tools. Whether you're an established mastermind with a world-spanning headquarters or a fledgling villain with a soul and a dream, this issue is sure to have tools you can use!

Article Colors

Each article is color-coded to help you find your favorite sections.

- Pale Blue:* In This Issue
- Brown:* In Every Issue (humor, editorial, etc.)
- Green:* Columnist
- Dark Blue:* **GURPS** Features
- Purple:* Systemless Features

COVER ART
Abrar Ajmal

INTERIOR ART
Nikola Vrtis

Editor-in-Chief ■ STEVE JACKSON
e23 Manager ■ STEVEN MARSH
GURPS Line Editor ■ SEAN PUNCH
Assistant **GURPS** Line Editor ■
JASON "PK" LEVINE

Art Director ■ SAMUEL MITSCHKE
Assistant Art Director ■
BRIDGET WESTERMAN
Production Artist and Prepress Checker ■
NIKOLA VRTIS

Chief Operating Officer ■ PHILIP REED
Marketing Director ■ LEONARD BALSERA
Director of Sales ■ ROSS JEPSON
Page Design ■ PHIL REED and
JUSTIN DE WITT

FROM THE EDITOR

AN EVIL ISSUE OF *PYRAMID*?

This issue is another installment of our “tools of the trade” subtheme, which stretches all the way back to the first issue of the relaunched volume of *Pyramid*. It’s also the first issue specifically designed with the bad guys in mind. (Of course, we’re confident the heroes might be tempted by *some* of the goodies herein . . . see pp. 38-39 for more.)

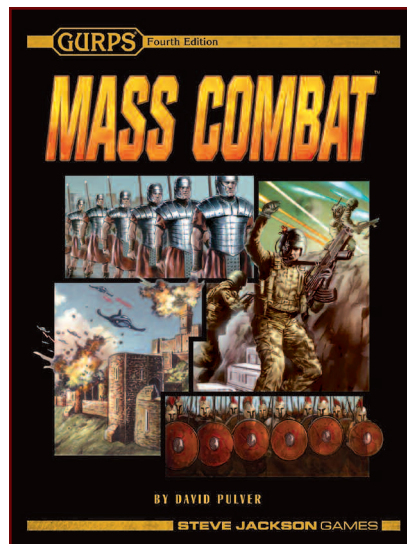
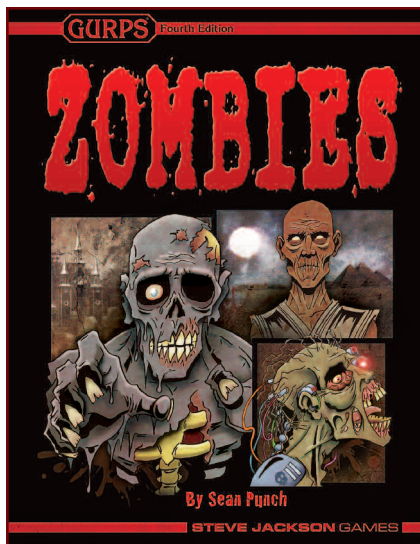
In assembling this issue, we realized that we could have gone even more focused than our basic villainous-acouterments theme, perhaps with “Tools of the Trade – Fantasy Villains” or “Tools of the Trade – Espionage Enemies.” However, in our nonstop quest to cram in as much fun as our own evil masterminds will allow, we decided to offer a smorgasbord of options that cover a variety of genres, from epic fantasy to battlefield-realistic to cinematic spies. It’s especially interesting how cross-genre many of these offerings are; what right-minded wrong-hearted villain *can’t* benefit from more insight into the walking dead or a Faustian bargain?

One of the most amazing aspects of *GURPS* is that it is a universal, multigenre system, and *Pyramid* has done what it can to support, expand, and enhance all corners of *GURPS* gamerdom. An issue that appeals to different types of gaming – while still being united by a theme – is just one more way we try to push the limits of what *Pyramid* is capable of. And with its awesome power, **WE WILL RULE THE WORLD!**

(Sorry . . . we got a bit too into the theme.)

WRITE HERE, WRITE NOW

Speaking of pushing the limits and taking over the world, how close did we get this month in our goal of global domination? Was it a fully armed and operational battle station? Or was it a teetering contraption one flung gear from exploding under its own weight? We’d love a report from all the evil geniuses who peruse these pages, either privately at pyramid@sjgames.com, or amid the evil legionnaires of doom at forums.sjgames.com.



Pyramid, *GURPS*, Warehouse 23, and the all-seeing pyramid are registered trademarks of Steve Jackson Games Incorporated. e23 and the names of all products published by Steve Jackson Games Incorporated are registered trademarks or trademarks of Steve Jackson Games Incorporated, or used under license. *Pyramid* is copyright © 2014 by Steve Jackson Games Incorporated. All rights reserved.

Submission of your photos, letters, humor, captions, and marginalia constitutes permission to Steve Jackson Games Incorporated to use them in all media. All such submissions become the property of Steve Jackson Games Incorporated and will not be returned.

The scanning, uploading, and distribution of this material via the Internet or via any other means without the permission of the publisher is illegal, and punishable by law. Please purchase only authorized electronic editions, and do not participate in or encourage the electronic piracy of copyrighted materials. Your support of the authors' rights is appreciated.

YOU AND WHAT ARMY?

BY MICHELE ARMELLINI

No self-respecting arch-villain can make do without an army. He may be the meanest elder demon in this dimension, but he can't be everywhere. He needs a tool to promote his agenda all over the place. In the Middle Ages, and in most fantasy worlds loosely based on that historical era, controlling the land is of paramount importance: The villain must send out armed forces to teach the locals that he is boss; rake in harvests, taxes or loot, and spread his message. If Sauron and Saruman needed armies, then no other arch-enemy should feel ashamed to have one.

Here are a few ready-made armies, tailored for villains of specific flavors. They are presented in the *GURPS Mass Combat* format, with all the calculations already done, and with advice about how to best use them.

NO BIG BATTLE?

GURPS Mass Combat offers a quick way to resolve army-level clashes while giving the PCs chances to display command genius and heroic bravery. It's possible, however, that a gaming group has no interest for fighting large-scale battles.

In that case, these armies provide ideas for smaller-sized fights, a colorful backdrop for the adventurers to cause mayhem

against. If the heroes choose to solve the situation by cutting the snake's head the night before the battle, the GM will find here what kind of opponents will be sleeping – or *not* sleeping – in the enemy encampment when the PCs slip into it.

For a low-key encounter, possibly an appetizer for greater things to come, these forces could send out patrols to scout, forage, and pillage. Each description gives the GM ideas about the composition of patrols.

A pitched battle may also remain entirely in the background while the adventurers exploit it as a diversion and infiltrate the army's camp, or a nearby dungeon or castle. The GM can use the descriptions to paint that background and determine the battle's outcome (either with *Mass Combat* or with his own imagination) and its effects on the PC party's mission.

BASELINE INFORMATION

GURPS Mass Combat provides rules for fielding armed forces. The one thing that all these armies have in common is a cap on the price tag, none of them costing more than \$10 million to raise. One of them, however, "cheats" on that condition, by using mercenaries.

All armies are TL3.

THE ARMY OF DARKNESS

The staple arch-villain is a necromancer. Who can beat a guy who digs his own soldiers from cemeteries? The undead are exceptional troopers: Super-Soldiers (see *Mass Combat*, p. 10). An army of zombies, vampires, and other unspeakable creations of death will certainly give any mundane general pause, but it can be beaten, like any other enemy, by a judicious application of brute force – especially if that's applied by indomitable heroes.

Undead are also Sealed: they don't need to breathe. A ruse with some of the units in this army is to hide their rank and file on the bottom of a lake!

THE LEADERS

This largely undead army has been entrusted to Johann the Black, a junior necromancer. He's very intelligent (IQ 14) and well-versed in the black arts: Magery 2 and a wide selection of Necromantic, Mind Control and Fire spells. He has Strategy-12, Leadership-11 and Administration-13. The eldest vampire, Taygeta-San ("Drunk With Blood"), provides Intelligence Analysis-12.

The mercenary orcs are led by their own chieftain, a big warrior called Ghourd. He knows about small-unit operations (Tactics-11).

*Everyone imposes his own system
as far as his army can reach.*

– Joseph Stalin

Unfortunately, he has several flaws (Bad Temper, Bloodlust, Impulsiveness). Mercenaries, of course, also have typical drawbacks (see *Mass Combat*, p. 10).

THE TROOPS

Total elements: 77. Total cost: \$9.716M to raise, \$1.9M to maintain (but see *Orcish Warriors*, p. 6, and *Orcish Bowmen*, p. 6).

Johann the Black

Battle Mage

This necromancer alone is as effective as a full team of battle mages. He's well equipped with an array of magic items.

TS: 10. WT: 1.

Classes: Art, C3I, F, Rec. Mobility: Foot.

Quality: Good equipment; Good troops.

Features: Hero.

Cost: \$500K to raise; \$68K to maintain.

Johann counts as one element, for a total TS of 10.

Zombies

Medium Infantry

They are mostly armed just with clubs, but it's difficult to put them down and their morale is unshakeable. They'd be exceptional fighters but they aren't really bright, which lowers their Troop Quality.

TS: 9. WT: 1.

Classes: None. Mobility: Foot.

Quality: Basic equipment; Good troops.

Features: Sealed; Super-Soldiers.

Cost: \$5.292M to raise; \$856.8K to maintain.

This unit has nearly 420 undead (it's difficult to count them, considered that they fall apart now and then), for 42 elements and a total TS of 378.

Abominations

War Beasts

These towering, shambling horrors are a patchwork of bones – on the outside. The insides contain undead muscles and other stuff. For all practical purposes, they are undead armored vehicles, something most other armies will lack.

TS: 20. WT: 4.

Classes: Arm. Mobility: Foot.

Quality: Basic equipment; Inferior troops.

Features: Sealed; Super-Soldiers.

Cost: \$3.24M to raise; \$648K to maintain.

These are three such undead war-beast jigsaws, for three elements and a total TS of 60.

Vampires

Light Infantry

The small vampire teams are well-equipped, very determined, and deadly. Their specialty is killing enemy leaders; they are also valuable as night-time prowlers. However, they require powerful magic assistance to operate in daylight, and even then, their Troop Strength is halved.

Army of Darkness Roster

<i>Elements</i>	<i>Total Day TS</i>	<i>Total Night TS*</i>	<i>Classes</i>	<i>Mobility</i>	<i>Features</i>
Johan the Black (Battle Mage)	10	5	Art, C3I, F, Rec	Foot	Hero
42 Zombies (Medium Infantry)	378	189	–	Foot	Sealed, Super-Soldiers
3 Abominations (War Beasts)	60	30	Arm	Foot	Sealed, Super-Soldiers
3 Vampires (Light Infantry)	15	30	(C3I), Rec	Foot	Nocturnal, Sealed, Super-Soldiers
20 Orcish Warriors (Light Infantry)	30	30	Rec	Foot	Mercenaries, Night
10 Orcish Bowmen (Bowmen)	16	16	F	Foot	Mercenaries, Night
<i>Armor TS</i>	<i>60</i>	<i>30</i>			
<i>Artillery TS</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>5</i>			
<i>C3I TS</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>5</i>			
<i>Fire TS</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>21</i>			
<i>Neutralize C3I TS</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>30</i>			
<i>Recon TS</i>	<i>55</i>	<i>65</i>			
<i>Force TS</i>	<i>509</i>	<i>300</i>			

* Fighting at night is a viable option for this army.

TS: 10. WT: 1.
Classes: (C3I), Rec. Mobility: Foot.
Quality: Good equipment; Elite troops.
Features: Nocturnal; Sealed; Super-Soldiers.
Cost: \$684K to raise; \$98.4K to maintain.

There are three such teams, amounting to three elements and a total TS of 30 at night and 15 during the day.

Orcish Warriors

Light Infantry

These are Ghourd's mercenaries, lightly and poorly equipped and no more reliable than their leader.

TS: 1.5. WT: 1.
Classes: Rec. Mobility: Foot.
Quality: Poor equipment; Average troops.
Features: Mercenaries; Night.
Cost: \$0 to raise (being mercenaries); \$152K to maintain if regularly allowed to pillage and loot. Otherwise, \$190 to maintain.

There are 20 elements, for a total TS of 30.

Army Size

Some of the forces described in this article are smaller than 1,000 individuals. That's puny for a modern "army." However, in the Middle Ages, and in most fantasy settings, keeping such a force in the field was no easy feat. There are also practical reasons to keep the numbers down here.

First, the smaller the army, the greater the impact a handful of Hero elements – the PCs! – may have on it. Second, for forces with less than 100 elements (such as the Army of Darkness, pp. 4-6, and the Demonic Army, pp. 8-10), the combat turns last just 30 minutes (see *Mass Combat*, p. 32). The bigger options offered here don't require more than one hour per battle turn. Third, the fewer the villain's goons, the more likely the heroes are to be able to put together a matching force with Allies, hirelings, and volunteers.

Nevertheless, if a GM wants Tolkienian-sized battles, he can always multiply these armies by any factor he wishes. He also needs to decide how he wants to handle the villain's Heroes. For some scenarios, they can be multiplied like the rank and file. The demonic army offered here has one hellish warlord riding a flying monster, but Sauron, after all, controlled several of those.

Orcish Bowmen

Light Infantry

This is Ghourd's best unit, armed with shortbows.

TS: 2. WT: 1.
Classes: F. Mobility: Foot.
Quality: Basic equipment; Average troops.
Features: Mercenaries; Night.
Cost: \$0 to raise (being mercenaries); \$76.8K to maintain if regularly allowed to pillage and loot. Otherwise, \$96K to maintain.

There are eight elements, for a total TS of 16.

STRATEGY

The name of this army is no propaganda stunt; this force is better suited than most to night fighting. Ghourd's orcs belong to a tribe that has adapted to sunlight over the generations; they have the Night feature (see *Mass Combat*, p. 10). They still hate the sun, but they suffer no penalty to military operations in daylight. However, they are still capable of seeing in the dark, and can fight at night. The vampires are Nocturnal (see *Mass Combat*, p. 10), which means they are fully effective in the dark only. Therefore, the leader of this army may well decide to take the (hefty) night penalty on his main troops' TS (who lack the Night feature), relying on the fact that any other army will be even more penalized in a night action – not to mention the value of surprise.

Even when the Army of Darkness fights in daylight, it will have carried out nighttime reconnaissance.

The exceptional advantage of this force is that the vampires are special-ops elements dedicated to beheading the command elements of enemy forces (Neutralize C3I, *Mass Combat*, p. 10). In fantasy settings, this means they'll hunt the enemy wizards.

The main weakness is the lack of cavalry. Ideally, this army will engage in broken terrain, thus minimizing the role of enemy mounted units.

THE BARBARIAN HOST

This is a no-nonsense cavalry army for a world where magic is rare or unsuitable for the battlefield. It looks like a tiny Mongol force: lots of horses, lots of bows, and some Levy footmen taken from subjugated tribes (see *Mass Combat*, p. 9).

THE LEADERS

Thangis the Warlord rates as a Hero because he is an experienced general with Strategy-16, Leadership-14, and

Administration-14. His lieutenant Hanash leads the main horse unit and doubles as intelligence officer with Intelligence Analysis-13.

THE TROOPS

Total elements: 134. Total cost: \$9.985M to raise, \$1.9095M to maintain (but see *Tribal Levies*, p. 8; *Vassals*, p. 8; and *War Machines*, p. 8).

Thangis the Warlord

Medium Cavalry

He's a capable general and a great warrior, equipped with the best weaponry available to him.

TS: 6. WT: 2.

Classes: Cv, F. Mobility: Mtd.

Quality: Good equipment; Good troops.

Features: Hero.

Cost: \$375K to raise; \$51K to maintain.

Thangis counts as one element., with a total TS of 6.

Warlord's Horsemen

Medium Cavalry

These are chosen warriors, equipped with recurve bows, a light lance, sword, shield, and light armor.

TS: 4.5. WT: 2.

Classes: Cv, F. Mobility: Mtd.

Quality: Good equipment; Average troops.

Cost: \$900K to raise; \$180K to maintain.

Some 40 riders amount to four elements for a total TS of 18.

Warlord's Horse Archers

Horse Archers

This unit is optimized for harassing the enemy with missile fire, and it's good for recon, too.

TS: 2. WT: 2.

Classes: Cv, F, Rec. Mobility: Mtd.

Quality: Basic equipment; Average troops.

Cost: \$1.68M to raise; \$336K to maintain.

There are 140 archers for 14 elements and total TS of 28.

Horsemen

Medium Cavalry

More basic barbarian cavalry, their equipment is not as good as the warlord's. They are also less easy to control.

TS: 3. WT: 2.

Classes: Cv, F. Mobility: Mtd.

Quality: Basic equipment; Average troops.

Features: Impetuous.

Cost: \$2.25M to raise; \$450K to maintain.

These are 15 elements representing about 150 horsemen and a total TS of 45.

Tribal Horsemen

Light Cavalry

These tribal raiders are even less well equipped, with much shorter-ranged bows or javelins. However, they are useful for scouting, foraging, and raiding – and there are a lot of them.

TS: 1.5. WT: 2.

Classes: Cv, Rec. Mobility: Mtd.

Quality: Poor equipment; Average troops.

Cost: \$2.4M to raise; \$480K to maintain.

A swarming mass of 320 light horsemen amount to 32 elements and a total TS of 48.

Tribal Horse Archers

Horse Archers

The additional unit of mounted bowmen is poorly equipped.

TS: 1.5. WT: 2.

Classes: Cv, F, Rec. Mobility: Mtd.

Barbadian Host Roster

<i>Elements</i>	<i>Total TS</i>	<i>Classes</i>	<i>Mobility</i>	<i>Features</i>
Thangis the Warlord (Medium Cavalry)	6	Cv, F	Mtd	Hero
4 Warlord's Horsemen (Medium Cavalry)	18	Cv, F	Mtd	–
14 Warlord's Horse Archers (Horse Archers)	28	Cv, F, Rec	Mtd	–
15 Horsemen (Medium Cavalry)	45	Cv, F	Mtd	Impetuous
32 Tribal Horsemen (Light Cavalry)	48	Cv, Rec	Mtd	–
20 Tribal Horse Archers (Horse Archers)	30	Cv, F, Rec	Mtd	–
34 Tribal Levies (Light Infantry)	17	Rec	Foot	Levy
10 Vassals (Medium Infantry)	15	–	Foot	Disloyal, Levy, Sluggish
4 War Machines (Light Artillery)	(6)	Art	Foot	Levy
	<i>Full Force</i>	<i>Mounted Only*</i>		
<i>Artillery TS</i>	(6)	–		
<i>Cavalry TS</i>	175	175		
<i>Fire TS</i>	127	127		
<i>Recon TS</i>	123	106		
<i>Force TS</i>	207	175		

* Data for fielding only the mounted elements of this army.

Quality: Poor equipment; Average troops.
Cost: \$1.8M to raise; \$360K to maintain.

These consist of 20 elements, for a total TS of 30.

This no-nonsense, nonmagical army gives you lots of horses and bows.

Tribal Levies

Light Infantry

These are light infantry levied auxiliaries. They are adequately trained, but poorly equipped and unenthusiastic.

TS: 0.5. *WT:* 1.

Classes: Rec. *Mobility:* Foot.

Quality: Poor equipment; Inferior troops.

Features: Levy.

Cost: \$340K to raise; \$25.5K to maintain (half the cost for being a Levy).

A large unit of 340 footmen makes up 34 elements, for a total TS of 17.

Vassals

Medium Infantry

These levies from recently subjugated peoples are better equipped, trained as medium infantry, but *extremely* reluctant.

TS: 1.5. *WT:* 1.

Classes: None. *Mobility:* Foot.

Quality: Basic equipment; Inferior troops.

Features: Disloyal, Levy, Sluggish (p. 10).

Cost: \$120K to raise; \$15K to maintain (half the cost for being a Levy).

There are just some 100 infantrymen in 10 elements and a total TS of 15.

War Machines

Light Artillery

City dwellers could once defy the barbarian cavalry from behind their walls. Now they have to fear these stone-throwers, which were a recent addition provided by a vanquished people.

TS: (1.5). *WT:* 1.

Classes: Art. *Mobility:* Foot.

Quality: Poor equipment; Average troops.

Features: Levy.

Cost: \$120K to raise; \$12K to maintain (half the cost for being a Levy).

There are enough machines and crewmen for four elements, with a total TS of (6).

STRATEGY

The strength of this force is obviously in its numerous mounted elements – even though an enemy general being told that he has to face a horse-riding barbarian host might well be surprised by the presence of artillery and infantry.

Since cavalry is expensive, this army can't field a lot of basic strength. It shouldn't try to win in a toe-to-toe match, but rather harass the enemy with arrows and carry out short charges after having weakened the opposition. The Raid strategy (*Mass Combat*, p. 35) seems tailored for Thangis. Skirmishing also looks appealing, but there's the catch of having an Impetuous unit.

An interesting, though tricky, option is to leave all foot elements behind. This reduces the total TS further, but gives a bonus in the initial reconnaissance on any army that is not entirely mounted (see *Mass Combat*, p. 29) and avoids problems with that Disloyal unit.

A wise general facing this army will exploit difficult terrain. If he has a large army and enough missile troops (or other kinds of special superiority), he might be content with defending, waiting for this smaller force to be depleted. Otherwise, he'll try to come to melee contact.

THE DEMONIC ARMY

Whenever demon worshippers open the gates to a hellish dimension, all sorts of infernal creatures come through. A demon who is . . . hell-bent on becoming a major villain will organize them into an army.

This force fields several fantastic elements (see *Mass Combat*, p. 18), magic and otherworldly beasts being important assets.

THE LEADERS

The demonic villain has appointed an elder demon, Hillehwuzorogdath, to lead this army. With Magery 3, he knows many Fire spells, and with centuries of experience, he's a good general, too (Strategy-14, Leadership-13); sometimes he gets carried away by his disadvantages (Paranoia and Sadism). When it comes to logistics and intelligence, he relies on the head of the demon worshippers, High Priest Balt

(Administration-12, Intelligence Analysis-10), who wrongly believes he is on a fast track to greater power. He leads the cultists with Magery 1, as well as Fanaticism and Intolerance.

THE TROOPS

Total elements: 99. Total cost: \$9.85M to raise, \$1.5468M to maintain.

Hillehwuzorogdath

Battle Mage

The elder demon counts as a squad of battle mages. Tough as nails, he's a Super-Soldier, too. He doesn't walk into battle, he rides a flying monster (p. 9). However, he lacks the Airborne feature (see *Mass Combat*, p. 8).

TS: 30. WT: 1.
 Classes: Art, C3I, F, Rec. *Mobility*: Foot.
Quality: Basic equipment; Elite troops.
Features: Hero, Super-Soldier.
 Cost: \$1.2M to raise; \$176K to maintain.

This is one element, for a total TS of 30.

Giant Harpy

Flying Beast

This monstrous being is the army commander's flying mount.

TS: 1. WT: 2.
 Classes: Air, T1. *Mobility*: SA.
Quality: Basic equipment; Average troops.
Features: Hero.
 Cost: \$120K to raise; \$40K to maintain.

This great monster counts alone as one element, for a total TS of 1.

Greater Demons

Battle Mages

These are teams of powerful, fireball-hurling, magic-endowed demons. Each team is similar in power to Hillehwuzorogdath, but they have less experience and no mounts.

TS: 20. WT: 1.
 Classes: Art, C3I, F, Rec. *Mobility*: Foot.
Quality: Good equipment; Good troops.
Features: Super-Soldiers.
 Cost: \$2.7M to raise; \$444K to maintain.

There are three such elements, for a total TS of 45.

Demons

Heavy Infantry

They are the shock unit of this army, fighting in close formation and using claws, fangs, and good-quality weapons.

TS: 8. WT: 1.
 Classes: None. *Mobility*: Foot.
Quality: Good equipment; Good troops.
 Cost: \$1.4M to raise; \$190.4K to maintain.

This is a company of 140 demons in 14 elements, with a total TS of 112.

Imps

Flying Infantry

These are minor demons, but they can fly! They escort the commander's harpy into battle and provide valuable reconnaissance. They are less determined than more powerful devils.

TS: 2. WT: 1.
 Classes: Air, Rec. *Mobility*: Foot, SA.
Quality: Basic equipment; Average troops.
 Cost: \$480K to raise; \$160K to maintain.

There are just eight swarms of these flying around, for eight elements and a total TS of 16.

Hell Hounds

Beasts

Big, four-legged intelligent creatures from hell are this army's mounted arm. Controlling them is difficult.

TS: 1.5. WT: 2.
 Classes: Cv, Rec. *Mobility*: Foot.
Quality: Basic equipment; Good troops.
Features: Impetuous.
 Cost: \$2M to raise; \$240K to maintain.

They run in an enormous pack of 20 elements, for a total TS of 30.

Demonic Army Roster

Elements	Total TS	Classes	Mobility	Features
Hillehwuzorogdath (Battle Mage)	30	Art, C3I, F, Rec	Foot	Hero, Super-Soldier
1 Giant Harpy (Flying Beast)	1	Air, T1	SA	Hero
3 Greater Demons (Battle Mages)	60	Art, C3I, F, Rec	Foot	Super-Soldiers
14 Demons (Heavy Infantry)	112	–	Foot	–
8 Imps (Flying Infantry)	16	Air, Rec	Foot, SA	–
20 Hell Hounds (Beasts)	30	Cv, Rec	Mtd	Impetuous
52 Cultists (Medium Infantry)	195	–	Foot	Fanatic
Air TS	17			
Artillery TS	90			
C3I TS	90			
Cavalry TS	30			
Fire TS	90			
Recon TS	136			
Force TS	444			

Cultists

Medium Infantry

The fireball fodder of this army are its human believers. They have indifferent training but high morale, and poor weaponry. They are fanatics (see *Mass Combat*, p. 8), and thus a real bargain as to recruitment. While serving with this army, their fanaticism means they'll almost always count as Impetuous, too (*Mass Combat*, p. 9).

TS: 3.75. WT: 1.
 Classes: None. *Mobility*: Foot.
Quality: Poor equipment; Good troops.
Features: Fanatic.
 Cost: \$1.95M to raise; \$296.4K to maintain.

This rabble amounts to 52 elements, for a total TS of 195.

STRATEGY

This army may have fewer elements than others, but it's well balanced as to specialized arms. In particular, not many fantasy forces will have so much command and control, nor so much artillery firepower; what's more, these demons will almost always have air supremacy. This can be a battle-winning factor not just tactically but from the point of view of morale, too. These unique capabilities mean a high likelihood for this army to gain multiple bonuses for Special Class

Superiority (see *Mass Combat*, p. 31), and that's this army's main advantage.

The drawback is that, in order to fully exploit these bonuses, careful planning will be needed. On the tactical level, with plenty of Impetuous and Fanatic troops, Hillehwugzorogdath must discard long-term alternatives. He will have only one chance to execute his plan.

Speaking of the demon-in-chief, this force also wagers a lot on that one giant harpy. Shooting it down, with the general on its back, takes down the whole army a peg or two.

THE LIVING AUTOMATONS

This army was put together by a mysterious school of mind-controlling wizards who believe they have every right to enslave common people. Every last soldier in the force is a puppet. The cost to maintain these units should be lower than the usual, but the controllers have to invest significant magic resources in keeping them under their spell, so the expenditure evens out.

Being mind-controlled, the soldiers might be considered Fanatic and having high Troop Quality. However, fanaticism brings about impetuosity, and these individuals lack the free will that would be required for that. Also, high morale is important for Troop Quality, but so are training and initiative, which this army distinctly lacks.

Apparently, the brainwashing works well as long as the troops have to stand their ground or advance carefully. When ordered to charge, the natural self-preservation instinct contradicts the conditioning, and makes all the troops, save the mages, Sluggish (see below).

There's no cavalry at all here. It is not known whether this is because the faceless villains can't control animals, or because the horses sense that the soldiers in this army have something wrong about them and are spooked by them.

New Optional Feature: Sluggish

-10% to Raise

Units with this feature are as steadfast as any in the defense, and reasonably reliable in careful, plodding attacks, but they really aren't into charging the enemy. If a force contains at least 10% Sluggish elements by percentage of total elements *or* total TS, the force commander must try a Leadership roll at -1 per 10% of the force who are Sluggish (by number or TS, whichever is greater) every time he chooses All-Out Attack, Attack, or Raid as his strategy. Failure means he gets -2 to Strategy, as he has to expend effort to command the reluctant elements forward.

Elements may be Sluggish because they were initially raised from less than optimal manpower pools, or simply because their training was skimpier when it came to teaching them how to assault. This makes them slightly less expensive to raise.

THE LEADERS

This army has no room for individuality or variety. The nameless wizards leading it have Strategy-11, Administration-12, and Intelligence Analysis-10. Their *adjusted* level in Leadership is assumed to be 15 (it's easier to lead mind-controlled troops!).

THE TROOPS

Total elements: 229. Total cost: \$9.985M to raise, \$2.218M to maintain.

Wizards

Battle Mage

These squads of mind controllers lead their automatons in battle and pepper the enemy with offensive spells.

TS: 5. WT: 1.

Classes: Art, C3I, F, Rec. Mobility: Foot.

Quality: Basic equipment; Average troops.

Cost: \$1M to raise; \$200K to maintain.

There are five such squads, for five elements and a total TS of 25.

Invincible Battalion

Pikemen

This is the sizable core of the army and its response to enemy horsemen. Pikemen deny cavalry superiority. They have a reputation of invincibility.

TS: 4. WT: 1.

Classes: (Cv). Mobility: Foot.

Quality: Basic equipment; Average troops.

Features: Sluggish.

Cost: \$6.21M to raise; \$1.38M to maintain.

This big square of bristling pikes counts 115 elements, with a total TS of 460.

Crossbowmen

Bowmen

These support the pikemen with missile fire.

TS: 2. WT: 1.

Classes: F. Mobility: Foot.

Quality: Basic equipment; Average troops.

Features: Sluggish.

Cost: \$1.44M to raise; \$320K to maintain.

The 400 crossbowmen make up 40 elements, with a total TS of 80.

Scouts

Light Infantry

These light troops are mostly useful for recon duties. Unfortunately, initiative is even more important for this than for massed formations, thus this unit is of lower quality.

TS: 1. WT: 1.

Classes: Rec. Mobility: Foot.

Quality: Basic equipment; Inferior troops.

Features: Sluggish.

Cost: \$768K to raise; \$192K to maintain.

These are 48 elements, for a total TS of 48.

Dwarven Miners

Miners

The wizards enslaved a number of dwarves and use them as engineers.

TS: 1. WT: 1.

Classes: Eng. Mobility: Foot.

Quality: Basic equipment; Average troops.

Features: Sluggish.

Cost: \$567K to raise; \$126K to maintain.

There are 21 such elements, worth a total TS of 21.

STRATEGY

This force typically carries out defensive strategies or deliberate attacks; as long as it does that, it's hard to crack. Given the

presence of the dwarven engineers, it pays for this army to start a battle encamped, waiting for the enemy to come at it. The lack of cavalry is made much less of a problem by the presence of the pike hedgehog. The normal strategy for opponents is to thin that down with missile fire, but the crossbowmen and mages are there to fire back.

An additional complication for scrupulous opponents is that the soldiers in this force are unwilling slaves; a merciful enemy commander might feel compelled to capture as many troopers alive as possible, in order to break the mind control.

The living automatons have no weakness that common troop types can easily exploit, though a sizable armored element (war beasts, for instance) would be an uncommon but effective solution to the hedgehog dilemma.

This army is suitable for off-the-battlefield special operations. Not only can the heroes try to break the spell, at least on key individuals in this force, but the mind-controlling wizards also can use pre-battle subtlety! Maybe the PCs will realize that only as their squires try to murder them . . .

Living Automatons Roster

Elements	Total TS	Classes	Mobility	Features
5 Wizards (Battle Mages)	25	Art, C3I, F, Rec (Cv)	Foot	-
115 Invincible Battalion (Pikemen)	460		Foot	Sluggish
40 Crossbowmen (Bowmen)	80	F	Foot	Sluggish
48 Scouts (Light Infantry)	48	Rec	Foot	Sluggish
21 Dwarven Miners (Miners)	21	Eng	Foot	Sluggish
Artillery TS	25			
C3I TS	25			
Engineering TS	21			
Fire TS	105			
Neutralize Cv TS	460			
Recon TS	73			
Force TS	634			

THE ORCISH HORDE

Just like many orcish invasions, this army is the consequence of a shaky alliance among several orc tribes. The arch-villain has selected the toughest and most cunning chieftain to lead this fearsome horde. From the point of view of any non-orc, these units may look similar; but there's more than meets the eye.

THE LEADERS

Hrakuk the Great is the commander, and woe unto the orc who doesn't readily acknowledge that. He also is the leader of his own tribe, one of the best armed in recent history thanks to tireless and ruthless looting. Hrakuk is smart (IQ 12) and has

learned through hard experience how to lead his warriors (Strategy-12, Tactics-14, Leadership-12, Intelligence Analysis-11). He rates as a Hero.

Another tribe in the army is Wraka's, who still is its chieftain because he was quick to bow to the arch-villain and to his lieutenant, Hrakuk. He's in the invasion force because of loot (Greed is his main disadvantage). He's the logistician, which is not a good idea (Administration-9).

The third tribe follows Kehru, and they do that half-heartedly. Hrakuk's orcs have essentially forced them to join. These are Disloyal troops (*Mass Combat*, p. 8). Kehru is affected by his Cowardice and has Tactics-8.

Orcish Horde Roster

Elements	Total TS	Classes	Mobility	Features
Hrakuk the Great (Heavy Chariot)	10	Cv	Mtd	Hero
12 The Brotherhood (Heavy Infantry)	72	-	Foot	Impetuous
47 Hrakuk's Warriors (Medium Infantry)	141	-	Foot	-
8 Hrakuk's Raiders (Light Infantry)	12	Rec	Foot	-
10 Hrakuk's Wolf-Riders (Horse Archers)	20	Cv, F, Rec	Mtd	Impetuous, Night
12 Dire Wolves (Beasts)	18	Cv, Rec	Mtd	Impetuous, Night
7 Wraaka's War Band (Light Infantry)	14	Rec	Foot	Night
10 Wraaka's Hunters (Bowmen)	30	F	Foot	Night
16 Kehru's Tribe (Medium Infantry)	36	-	Foot	Disloyal
10 Kehru's Archers (Bowmen)	15	F	Foot	Disloyal
24 Savage Orcs (Stone-Age Warriors)	18	Rec	Foot	Terrain: Swampland
2 Man-Eating Giants (Giants)	40	Arm, Art, Eng	Foot	-
<i>Armor TS</i>	40			
<i>Artillery TS</i>	40			
<i>Cavalry TS</i>	48			
<i>Engineering TS</i>	40			
<i>Fire TS</i>	65			
<i>Recon TS</i>	82			
Force TS	426			

Classes: None. *Mobility:* Foot.
Quality: Basic equipment; Good troops.
Features: Impetuous.
Cost: \$960K to raise; \$115.2K to maintain.

These 120 orcs count as 12 elements, for a total TS of 72.

Hrakuk's Warriors

Medium Infantry

The backbone of Hrakuk's tribe, these are average orc warriors in light armor.

TS: 3. *WT:* 1.

Classes: None. *Mobility:* Foot.
Quality: Basic equipment; Average troops.

Cost: \$1.41M to raise; \$282K to maintain.

There are some 470 of these warriors in 47 elements, for a total TS of 141.

Hrakuk's Raiders

Light Infantry

The younger warriors serve as light infantry and, most importantly in reconnaissance duties. Unfortunately, they are poorly equipped.

TS: 1.5. *WT:* 1.

Classes: Rec. *Mobility:* Foot.

Quality: Poor equipment; Average troops.

Cost: \$240K to raise; \$48K to maintain.

Eight elements make up this unit, with a total TS of 12.

Hrakuk's Wolf-Riders

Horse Archers

Orcs of small stature are selected to ride magically enhanced giant wolves. They are armed with shortbows and javelins but, given what their mounts are, they are more than willing to close in on the enemy, too. The wolves lead their riders at night.

TS: 2. *WT:* 2.

Classes: Cv, F, Rec. *Mobility:* Mtd.

Quality: Basic equipment; Average troops.

Features: Impetuous; Night.

Cost: \$1.44M to raise; \$288K to maintain.

There are little more than 100 of these mounted archers in 10 elements, with a total TS of 20.

Dire Wolves

Beasts

Smaller wolves run in packs without riders. While they can't hit from afar, they are even more aggressive. Hrakuk is said to be able to understand their reconnaissance reports.

THE TROOPS

Total elements: 159. Total cost: \$9.976M to raise, \$1.4432M to maintain.

Hrakuk the Great

Heavy Chariot

Hrakuk is a great fighter and therefore a Hero, equipped with the best he could loot. He enters battle in style, on a heavy chariot drawn by vicious wild boars, which serves as the fulcrum of his horde.

TS: 10. *WT:* 4.

Classes: Cv. *Mobility:* Mtd.

Quality: Good equipment; Elite troops.

Features: Hero.

Cost: \$560K to raise; \$60.8K to maintain.

This is one element, with a total TS of 10.

The Brotherhood

Heavy Infantry

The commander's guard consists of well-equipped, very aggressive heavy infantry, who always follow his chariot.

TS: 6. *WT:* 1.

TS: 1.5. *WT:* 2.
Classes: Cv, Rec. *Mobility:* Mtd.
Quality: Basic equipment; Good troops.
Features: Impetuous; Night.
Cost: \$1.32M to raise; \$168K to maintain.

There are some 120 of the fiends in 12 elements, with a total TS of 18.

Wraka's War Band

Light Infantry

Wraka's infantry is from a tribe of orcs who can see pretty well in the dark.

TS: 2. *WT:* 1.
Classes: Rec. *Mobility:* Foot.
Quality: Basic equipment; Average troops.
Features: Night.
Cost: \$336K to raise; \$67.2K to maintain.

About 70 warriors form seven elements, with a total TS of 14.

Wraka's Hunters

Bowmen

The best and most numerous of Wraka's orcs are armed with bows and make up this missile unit.

TS: 3. *WT:* 1.
Classes: F. *Mobility:* Foot.
Quality: Basic equipment; Good troops.
Features: Night.
Cost: \$880K to raise; \$112K to maintain.

Some 100 archers account for 10 elements, with a total TS of 30.

Kehru's Tribe

Medium Infantry

These are the unenthusiastic and poorly armed followers of Kehru.

TS: 2.25. *WT:* 1.
Classes: None. *Mobility:* Foot.
Quality: Poor equipment; Average troops.
Features: Disloyal.
Cost: \$360K to raise; \$72K to maintain.

About 160 spear carriers make up 16 elements, for a total TS of 36.

Kehru's Archers

Bowmen

The second unit from Kehru's tribe is like the first one, but it's equipped with bows.

TS: 1.5. *WT:* 1.
Classes: F. *Mobility:* Foot.
Quality: Poor equipment; Average troops.
Features: Disloyal.
Cost: \$300K to raise; \$60K to maintain.

These bowmen are less than 100, amounting to 10 elements and a total TS of 15.

Savage Orcs

Stone-Age Warriors

There's a number of smaller, much more primitive tribes that also follow Hrakuk. Their effectiveness on the battlefield is questionable, but they are useful for recon and for moving in difficult terrain.

TS: 0.75. *WT:* 1.
Classes: Rec. *Mobility:* Foot.
Quality: Poor equipment; Average troops.
Features: Terrain: Swampland.
Cost: \$570K to raise; \$90K to maintain.

Over 240 of these savages mill around the horde; they can be counted as 24 elements with a total TS of 18.

Man-Eating Giants

Giants

A very valuable addition to Hrakuk's army, these fearsome giants can throw huge rocks, destroy fortifications, and generally wreak havoc. And they are tough as steel.

TS: 20. *WT:* 8.
Classes: Arm, Art, Eng. *Mobility:* Foot.
Quality: Basic equipment; Average troops.
Cost: \$1.6M to raise; \$80K to maintain.

These are just 10 individuals, but five of them are enough for one element and a total TS of 40 for all giants.

STRATEGY

This is a reasonably balanced army allowing a flexible strategy, even though, with several Impetuous units, an aggressive stance will usually be preferable. While it's an infantry army, it can rely on small cavalry and missile units. Naturally, most of the remaining specialized capabilities are due to just two, non-orcish elements, the giants. The general should therefore take good care of them. It's worth noting that with those giants, an assault on a walled town is a possibility.

This force's Achilles' heel is obvious: the unreliable tribe. Wily enemies could try to establish contacts with Kehru well before the battle, in order to encourage him to rebel. However, Hrakuk expects something like that.

Orcs banding together to pillage better.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Michele Armellini lives in Udine, Italy, with his very understanding wife, Silvia. Michele makes a living out of foreign languages, but he loves dabbling with and studying the obscure and the uncanny – and trying to convert them into game mechanics! He has written for *Pyramid*, and he is the author of **GURPS WWII: Grim Legions**. He is the author or co-author (with Hans-Christian Vortisch) of several digital products: **GURPS Locations: St. George's Cathedral**, **GURPS WWII: Their Finest Hour**, **GURPS WWII: Doomed White Eagle**, and **GURPS WWII: Michael's Army**.

HOW VERY TEMPTING

BY CHRISTOPHER R. RICE

Selling your soul (or spirit) to another being is a story as old as time. Often it's just a metaphor: "You sold your soul to ensure you got the position!" In fiction, it can be *literal*. Now you can get guidelines for doing this very thing in your campaigns.

These new optional rules expand upon concepts found in *GURPS Thaumatology* and *GURPS Horror* and can provide a way to get quick access to power – at a price.

SELLING YOUR SOUL

The idea of selling your soul is an *old* notion that threads its way through many cultures. Usually a soul (or other supernatural animating force) is traded away for something that the seller couldn't otherwise get. In some cases, "buyers" (p. 15) *actively* look for those desperate enough to make deals.

Hereafter, the one who is exchanging his soul for some good or service is referred to as the "seller" and the person who is purchasing it is referred to as the "buyer."

WHY SELL YOUR SOUL?

There are many reasons to sell your soul, but if you know what awaits you, why do it? The answer can range from "I have no other choice" to "I want power!" The GM should decide whether those who sell their souls know the value (below) and what people can exchange for it (p. 17).

WHO HAS A SOUL?

In campaigns that feature such buying and selling, the GM should decide who actually has a soul. If souls are valuable and can be sold, then they become a commodity like anything else. The question is who has this commodity and who doesn't? This can get especially confusing when you bring other elements into the mix. For instance, do sapient magical automations or undead have souls? What about a human that was created (e.g., cloned) rather than born? The easiest way to define this is to ask if a creature or race is sapient (p. B15). If the answer is yes, then they probably have a soul. Regardless, the GM should decide during the planning stage what beings in his campaign have a soul. The GM should pick which races and creatures in his campaign have a soul; for those that do not, add "Feature: Does not have a soul." This doesn't necessarily mean that the PCs *know*. Indeed, an entire campaign could revolve around an antagonist who has sold his soul for power, even though most believe his particular race is unable to do that!

WHAT IS A SOUL WORTH?

Before seeking a buyer, a would-be Faust should first try to determine what his soul is worth. This could be done by viewing the character's aura (see *GURPS Magic*, p. 101), testing his "purity," or some other method. The GM will set the exact means in his campaign, but a successful roll will reveal a given character's *soul value*, which is determined as follows.

All souls begin with a base value of 25 soul points. (This is the same cost as Extra Life, p. B55, with good reason – coming back to life after an "unjust" death is a common theme when selling your soul!)

To determine a *specific* soul's worth, take the absolute value of the points in "bad" disadvantages (e.g., Bully, Sadism, Selfish, etc., but not Damnation, pp. 18-19, which counts separately). This is the value of its "Impurity Level." Do the same for "good" disadvantages (e.g., Charitable, Honesty, Selfless, etc.). This is the value of its "Purity Level."

The GM will have to create a list of which disadvantages fall into which category in his campaign. In some cases, other traits such as advantages or skills also count toward either the Purity Level or the Impurity Level. For example, the GM could decide that, in the current campaign, Higher Purpose counts as a "pure" trait, while Magery counts as an "impure" trait.

In some campaigns, certain souls might be more or less desirable than others. This might apply to a specific race (e.g., elves might have powerful souls compared to humans), those who follow a particular lifestyle choice (e.g., virgins), or those who occupy certain social positions (e.g., rightful kings or ordained priests). The GM decides what this exact number is (it can be any positive whole or fractional number), and it represents the soul's "Intrinsic Value Multiplier." The default number is 1 for the average person. Likewise, a GM who is running a campaign with high starting point totals could alter this number. A good guideline is to set the multiplier equal to (starting points)/200, rounded up.

(When introducing soul-selling in long-running campaigns, the GM might decide to use current point totals instead of starting point totals to determine the multiplier.)

Optionally, a given buyer might increase the soul value to whatever the GM is comfortable with to “sweeten the deal.”

To determine the soul value in soul points, use the following equation, where P is the Purity Level, I is the Impurity Level, and V is the Intrinsic Value Multiplier.

$$\text{Soul value in soul points} = (25 + P - I) \times V$$

The minimum value for a soul is 5 soul points. For those who already have levels of Damnation (see pp. 18-19) any soul points traded away are subtracted after this total, to a minimum of 1 point.

CONTACTING A BUYER

Finding a buyer for your soul depends on the campaign. In one campaign, all the seller must do is go down to a crossroad at the stroke of midnight to find a willing buyer. In another setting, the seller might have to go through a complex ritual to summon a specific type of supernatural being who brokers deals between two different parities. Regardless of the method, most buyers *want* to be contacted.

Only one roll to find a buyer can be made per week. Multiple sellers seeking a single buyer can combine their efforts at the same time. When making this roll, start with the best skill level, add a bonus equal to the number of sellers who *know* the skill (no defaults!), and subtract a penalty equal to group size.

The GM must decide which skill is used to locate (or summon) a buyer; the following skills are suitable.

- Area Knowledge can be used to find a buyer if the seller actually goes to the general physical location.
- Expert Skill (Psionics), if the buyer is a psi.
- A Hidden Lore specialty appropriate to the sort of buyer the seller is summoning.
- Law (Esoteric Contract) (p. 19) for demons or spirits; success by 5+ or a critical success on this roll gives +1 to the Quick Contest for determining the seller’s contract (see below).
- Occultism or Thaumatology, if the buyer is a mage.
- A Religious Ritual specialty appropriate to a specific deity that the seller is trying to contact.
- Ritual Magic, if the buyer is a spirit.

The following special modifiers may apply.

Specific Buyer: -5 on Area Knowledge, Hidden Lore, or Religious Ritual to locate a specific buyer. For particularly elusive or hidden entities, add a penalty of -1 to -10.

Seller’s Soul’s Value: -3 for 5 points or less; -2 for 6 to 15 points; -1 for 16 to 24 points; 0 for 25; +1 for 26 to 35 points; +2 for 36 to 45 points; +3 for 46 to 55 points; +4 for 56 to 65

points; and +5 for 66 points or higher. For multiple sellers seeking the same buyer, use the *highest* value as the modifier.

Other modifiers might apply, but those are mostly setting dependent. For instance, the Dark Gods might love corrupting the souls of elves. When an elf turns his back on the Light, contacting buyers is easy, giving him +2 to his roll, in addition to any other modifiers.

Interactions With Other Systems

Similar “selling your soul” systems already exist in *GURPS*, so why another one? *Magic* presented *Demonic Contracts* (p. 156), *Thaumatology* further generalized those rules into *Assisting Spirits* (pp. 90-94), and *GURPS Thaumatology: Urban Magics* considers a few of the socio-economic ramifications of *Spirit Transactions* (pp. 7-9). *Horror* brought new rules for the corruption of characters (p. 146), allowing people to gain dark power at a cost. However, these systems primarily are geared toward those who use magic or supernatural powers, *not* your everyman. The system presented here assumes that *anyone* could make a “deal with the Devil.”

The GM can use the rules for existing systems separately, or he can integrate them into the system presented here. For games with Black Penalty (see *Magic*, p. 156) or Spiritual Distortion (*Thaumatology*, pp. 93-94), replace those traits with Damnation (pp. 18-19). The GM can otherwise use the existing rules as is. For campaigns using the *Power Corrupts* model from *Horror*, each 10 points of Corruption is approximately equal to one level of Damnation. The GM then decides if there are any other effects.

WHEELING AND DEALING

Once the buyer and seller meet, both parties must come to an agreement. Terms typically include what both parties want and what happens if the contract is broken. Complicating the deal further, other addendums may also be added, much to the seller’s chagrin. This can either be roleplayed out or reduced to a series of skill rolls. If the former is chosen, both player and GM will have to come to an agreement.

If the latter is used, the GM decides what skill is rolled – typically, Law (Esoteric Contract) (see p. 19). The buyer and the seller then engage in a Quick Contest of skill, as they “hammer out” the contract. This usually takes an hour, but if either one has time to prepare, he may come to the negotiation table with a pre-written contract. Use the *Time Spent* rules (p. B346) to garner a bonus to skill rolls – something the seller will need given the negotiating skill of typical buyers!

Unfortunately, Law (Esoteric Contract) is complex and the rules are constantly changing. This makes it easy to be “too clever” and inadvertently introduce loopholes the buyer can exploit. On a roll greater than or equal to (17 - the seller’s contract bonus), the buyer spots a loophole (p. 17) in the contract. This doesn’t alter the roll’s other results! If the buyer is desperate or time is of the essence, the buyer can also decrease the time it takes to come to an agreement by accepting the corresponding penalty.

*Redemption is a rare and special thing, after all.
It is not for everyone.*

– Rich Burlew, *The Order of the Stick* #464

If the seller wins, the buyer pays more for the soul: +5% times his margin of victory. But if the seller loses, the buyer pays less: -5% times the margin of loss. A tie means fair value for the soul. See *What the Seller Gets* (p. 17) for details.

Unlike most Quick Contests, critical success and critical failure matter on this particular roll. If a critical success is rolled, add 10 to the margin of success before determining the percentage. Optionally, the GM may allow a critical success to create a “loophole” in the contract that the person who generated the critical success can exploit later (see p. 17). With a critical failure, the other party’s margin of success is increased by 10. In the highly *unlikely* event of a critical success and a critical failure being rolled at the same time, the effects are *additive*. If both sides roll a critical success, at the GM’s discretion, treat the results as a tie.

THE DEVIL IS IN THE DETAILS

The contents of a contract can be either predetermined or flexible. Predetermined contracts spell out precisely what the seller is getting, what his obligations to the buyer are, and vice versa. Flexible contracts are specific about the obligations of both buyer and seller, but leave exactly *what* the seller is getting intentionally vague.

In some settings, a seller might not have to sell all of his soul to a single buyer. This means he could sell part of his soul to one buyer, part to another, and so on. Sellers should beware! Doing this indebts them to multiple beings, and serving more than one master is difficult at the best of times. Represent multiple contracts with Duties to each buyer.

Predetermined Contracts

Predetermined contracts are the most common and require no additional rolls on the part of the seller. The buyer *must* fulfill his end of the bargain, or he forfeits his claim on the seller’s soul (and soul points). This sort of contract typically comes with a preset time limit for the seller. At the end of that time

limit, the buyer comes to collect (see *The Ugly*, p. 17). However, the buyer may impose other demands, such as Hazardous and Involuntary Duties, instead of a time limit.

Should the buyer fail to uphold up his end of the bargain, the seller keeps anything he gained from the deal while the buyer loses all rights to the seller’s soul! The seller can then go on to negotiate *another* contract with the same or a different buyer if he so chooses . . .

Flexible Contracts

Flexible contracts require a few additional steps. First, both parties have to agree to a flexible contract (and most buyers won’t). Because of this, the GM might require the seller to make a reaction or Influence roll. If the seller gets a Good reaction or better, the buyer will agree to a flexible contract. Second, because of the nature of a flexible contract both parties must agree exactly how much help the buyer is going to be able to give the seller. Game mechanics-wise, this takes the form of an Ally, Contact, or Patron with the Costs Soul Points modifier (p. 19) and a frequency of appearance of 12 or higher.

If the buyer is represented as an Ally, it must have Summonable and Supernatural Abilities. If a Contact, the buyer must include “provides supernatural information.” If a Patron, the buyer must have Highly Accessible and Special Abilities. The seller pays for the new advantage out of his soul points and any unspent character points he has. Third, some buyers require that the seller take on a Duty, and perform “favours” for the buyer. (Sellers do not get points for any duty imposed by the buyer.) These sorts of duties always have Involuntary and often have Hazardous. *Not* fulfilling the Duty to a buyer means the seller is in a breach of contract, resulting in the immediate loss of his soul!

The seller can contact the buyer whenever he wants to spend some of his soul points. Once contacted, the seller rolls a Quick Contest of Law (Esoteric Contract) against the buyer. If the seller succeeds, the buyer does what he wants. If he fails, the buyer finds a loophole to subvert the orders. If the seller critically succeeds, *he* finds a loophole to subvert. If he critically fails, something bad happens (GM’s discretion).

Precious Supply or Renewable Resource?

Depending on the campaign, souls can be either a precious resource or a renewable one. If souls are valued things that are gone once used or bought, then predetermined contracts (above) are going to be the preferable deal for buyers. If souls can “regenerate,” then flexible contracts (above) are going to be the favored method, as buyers can get more bang for their buck by harvesting the soul energy slowly.

If the GM decides that souls can regrow, he’ll need to figure out how often and how they do so. For example, souls might regain 1 soul point per week, but only if its possessor is in a relaxed state for the duration. Combat, stress, and so on negate this!

The GM might also allow people to purchase soul points. If he permits this, each soul point costs one character point, and the GM sets the upper limit.

The GM could let characters tap into their own souls, using them as an alternate source of power to fuel their abilities. In most campaigns, this would be a perk: Unusual Training (Can tap into own soul points). In others, this might require an Unusual Background costing 10 points or more. Someone who reaches 0 soul points either dies or becomes soulless (see *It’s a Gray Life*, p. 17).

Alternatively, The GM could allow *player* characters to be soul brokers themselves! The cost would vary from campaign to campaign, but Unusual Background (Soul Broker) for 10 points is fair for most settings. Of course, the character would still need to purchase abilities to give a seller what he wants. See *GURPS Powers* (p. 119) for possible solutions to “granting wishes.” Sellers who have a Duty to the protagonist should be bought as Allies or Patrons, possibly with the Unwilling limitation.

Finally, there is no specific time limit on flexible contracts; they're up when the seller runs out of soul points (see *The Ugly*, p. 17).

Loopholes

Loopholes usually occur because of failed rolls in the actual bargaining process (p. 16). The exact nature of a loophole is up to the GM. For example, the seller could keep all that he bargained for *and* his soul. Another possibility is that he bargained so well that he actually *enslaved* the buyer, making him the servant. Regardless of the form, the GM's decision is final.

WHAT THE SELLER GETS

Once all the details have been ironed out, the seller receives what it was that he bargained for. Unless the GM deems otherwise, the buyer can produce anything the seller could ask for.

The Good

Most of the time, the seller is going to want things that also have character point values. For instance, someone with Paraplegic (p. B141) that struck a deal to be able to walk again would give up 30 soul points to buy off the disadvantage.

The GM should keep in mind that some things might not necessarily have a direct correlative value to soul points. In such instances, he should use his best judgment. The GM might also want to create a chart for his campaign if many pacts are going to be made. The following are a few examples.

- Soul points can be converted into cash. Each point so spent is the equivalent of the campaign's Average Starting Wealth (p. B27). This is a better deal than *Trading Points for Money* (p. B26).
- Any disadvantage that the seller possesses can be bought off, reduced in level, have modifiers added or removed, or replaced with another disadvantage (or disadvantages) of equal cost. This costs soul points equal to the difference in values, minimum 1 point.
- Any advantage that the seller possesses can be improved by having modifiers added or removed, increasing its level, or replacing it with another advantage (or advantages) of equal cost. This costs soul points equal to the difference in values, minimum 1 point.
- Any new trait that could be purchased in the campaign can be acquired for soul points equal to its value.
- One soul point can be converted into a pool of 25 FP that can be spent on anything that a person could normally spend FP on (Extra Effort, powering supernatural abilities, etc.).

In campaigns using *GURPS Power-Ups 5: Impulse Buys*, the GM may allow soul points to be spent as if they were character points on any option he uses in his campaign. Logically, this extends to any other ways a GM permits character points to be used.

The Bad

The seller *also* gains levels of Damnation (pp. 18-19). Damnation represents how much of the character's soul is "gone" or "used up." If a buyer demands all of a seller's soul (and thus his

soul points), as happens most of the time, then the seller receives a Damnation level of 10 (the highest possible) and his soul is completely the property of his buyer.

In rare instances, only a portion of the soul is bargained away. First, divide the seller's total starting soul points by 10. Every time he spends that number of soul points, he gains one level of Damnation. For instance, if a character had 30 soul points to begin with, every 3 soul points he spent would earn him one level of Damnation.

The Ugly

Most deals include a time limit of some sort, which might be marked by the passage of months, the occurrence of an event, or the spending of all soul points. At the end of the limit, the buyer comes to collect the soul of the seller . . . and he dies or becomes soulless. This is represented by the Terminally Ill disadvantage (see p. B158), for contracts ending in death, or by gaining a restrictive Duty or a collection of disadvantages of equivalent value (see *It's a Gray Life*, below, for suggestions). See *What Happens If You Change Your Mind?* for some additional options.

Of course, the seller does not receive any points for Terminally Ill or other disadvantages gained while under contract.

It's a Gray Life

In some campaigns, it's possible to live without a soul – if you want to call that life. Maybe it's the standard operating procedure, or maybe it's a loophole introduced by the seller, but when the buyer comes calling, he leaves with a soul without having taken a life.

The effects of being soulless depend on the setting, but it usually results in apathy (Chronic Depression, Indecisive, Killjoy, etc.), lack of focus (Absent-Mindedness), lack of self control (Bad Temper, any Compulsive Behavior, Impulsiveness, Kleptomania, etc.), lack of empathy (Callous, Low Empathy, etc.), memory problems (Cannot Learn), and so on. On top of this, a soulless character cannot be resurrected, and might display Supernatural Features. The GM is the final arbiter on the effects, and he should be cruel. This replaces Terminally Ill for deals with time limits. See *Lost Souls (Urban Magics)*, p. 45 for more possibilities of living without a soul.

WHAT THE BUYER GETS

Once the buyer collects the seller's soul per the terms of the contract (either once the seller dies or once he spends his soul points), the contract controller gains a variety of benefits.

First, souls are *raw* power. They are literally a piece of creation itself. This makes them, in effect, a kind of battery that can be drawn off to fuel paranormal abilities. The GM can use one of a few different game mechanics to represent this. In any case, once spent, the points are gone for good.

- Each soul point that the buyer acquires is converted into a special pool similar to an Energy Reserve (*GURPS Powers*, p. 119), at a rate of 25 FP per soul point. Unlike a normal Energy Reserve, these points can be spent on *anything* that requires energy points or FP.

Example

Lord Hyrum was a human holy warrior in a *Dungeon Fantasy* campaign. Seeking revenge for the death of his family, Hyrum sold his soul to gain power. Since Hyrum was once a pure and virtuous soul with multiple “good” disadvantages (Charitable, Honesty, etc.) and few “bad” ones (a quirk level version of Alcoholism), he had a total of 252 soul points: 25 (the base) + 60 (his Purity Level) - 1 (his Impurity Level), or 84 points, × 3 (since this *Dungeon Fantasy* game started at 250 points, this increased the Intrinsic Value Multiplier by one; the GM increased it by a further one because Hyrum is a champion of good and the rightful ruler of Southmarch).

The GM now spends the points to give Hyrum his wish. The return of his wife and child gives each of them a level of Extra Life each, for 50 soul points total. Next, to avenge his wife and child's death, Hyrum becomes a vampire (*Pyramid #3/50: Dungeon Fantasy II*, p. 14) for 60 points. He also “converts” to an unholy warrior with the death knight lens (*Pyramid #3/50*, p. 14) and another 20 points worth of power-ups, spells, etc., for a total of 70 soul points. Hyrum is then given control over a vast army composed of various undead: Allies (1,000 undead warriors, 25% of points; Constantly Available; Minion, +0%), for 72 points. Finally, Lord Hyrum gains a Damnation of 10 and all that that entails. This uses all of Hyrum's soul points, which, because of the nature of the contract, the buyer can now use. Meanwhile, the buyer, decides that, instead of a time limit, Hyrum must become a servant of chaos, giving the newly formed unholy warrior a Duty (15 or less; Hazardous; Involuntary).

- The soul points can substitute for character points and can be spent to power the various options described in **Power-Ups 5**. However, they cannot be used to buy additional advantages.

- The soul points can be used to power abilities that have the Costs Soul Points limitation (see p. 19).

Second, even when all of a soul has been “used up,” some of it remains. This is the “core” of a soul. This essence is what goes onto whatever afterlife it is bound for, typically Hell or other dimension of “punishment.” Depending on the setting, souls bound to a specific dimension can also provide additional benefits once their power is “spent.” In some settings, they may be a form of currency. In others, they might provide the “grist” needed to create matter; souls could form the buildings or very rocks that a hell dimension is made of! In yet others, they could become the larval form of that dimension's native beings (given proper time and nurturing of course). The GM will have to decide exactly how it works in his setting.

WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU CHANGE YOUR MIND?

When a buyer has fulfilled his part of the bargain and the time limit on the deal has ended . . . it's over. The seller's soul is forfeited. But it doesn't mean the seller has to wait for his buyer to come to collect. He has options, even if they are bad ones. Once a deal is made, there are only three ways that either party can break it. First, both sides could dissolve the deal if they agree; everything goes back to the way it was before the deal. Second, one party could seek to exploit a loophole in the original agreement; see p. 17. The third – and, perhaps, the hardest – is to try to redeem oneself.

In order to attempt to redeem oneself, the seller must first give away anything he gained from his deal, not use any powers or abilities he acquired, and otherwise publically renounce his previous actions and choices. Once this is done, the character must “withdraw” from the world for $(30 - Will) \times$ (Damnation score) days (minimum of one day per level of Damnation). He doesn't need to go to a mountaintop monastery or into the wildness, but he does need to seclude himself. Additionally, the GM could place other restrictions on the seller depending on what he desired. For example, a seller who bargained to become wealthy might have to live in poverty in addition to living in seclusion.

After this time has lapsed, the seller must make a Quick Contest of his Will (with a penalty equal to half his Damnation score) vs. the buyer's Will. *Success* means the seller has broken free of his bargain with the buyer, but at a cost – he loses everything he bargained for originally. Additionally, he *permanently* loses a number of soul points equal to 1/5 of what he traded away. He *also* gains a number of disadvantages and/or loses advantages, attributes, or secondary characteristics equal to the number of soul points he lost. For example, if a seller gained the Filthy Rich advantage, he would *lose* that advantage, lose 10 soul points, *and* gain -10 points of reduced abilities or new disadvantages.

Critical success means the seller breaks free of his contract, but suffers no other ill effects – he got lucky! *Failure* means the seller's soul was too “damaged” – he can try again, but is at a cumulative -1 per attempt. Furthermore, the buyer knows his exact location (if he didn't before), and will probably try to come to collect what he is owed before the seller can try again. *Critical failure* results in a mystical backlash that causes the character to suffer from a *Heart Attack* (p. B429).

CHARACTER TRAITS

Several traits are essential to this system.

New Disadvantage: Damnation

-5 points/level

Players who wish to start the game with a character that has already bargained away a piece of his soul (or the whole

thing!) should take this disadvantage. The GM may have players purchase abilities received from selling their souls using just their soul points, or the GM may allow players to purchase abilities with a combination of soul points and starting character points. The player and the GM also need to decide who has a vested interest in the protagonist's soul.

Each level represents the ability to use 10% of the character's starting soul points; see pp. 14-15 to determine exactly how many soul points the character has. Round *up* to the nearest whole number divisible by 10 (e.g., 25% of your starting soul points would round up to 30%)

Example: An adventurer has 25 soul points. He wants to spend 10 of those points on special abilities. Since this is 40% of his soul points, he has Damnation 4.

Damnation level acts as a penalty to resist the buyer's supernatural abilities, spells, Influence skills, and any other rolls the GM deems appropriate. Additionally, anyone who can see auras, read souls, etc., reacts to him at -1 for every three levels (or fraction thereof) of Damnation. The GM should roll 3d when he meets someone new; on a 10 or less, the new person senses something "off" with the damned and reacts at the same penalty as an aura reader.

With a Vision-3 roll, anyone who can perceive auras or who has Blessed, Power Investiture, or True Faith can realize that the person is damned. This doesn't give anyone the exact measure of Damnation, except on a critical success. With a critical failure, the GM lies to the viewer!

If a character has sold his soul to multiple buyers, then he must decide who is "responsible" for each level of Damnation and notate it. For instance, a character who has Damnation 5 and three buyers expresses his trait as "Damnation 5 (3 Mephistopheles, 1 Algaliarept, 1 Baphomet)." This means that against Mephistopheles, he has -3 to resist supernatural abilities, spells, influence rolls, etc. and suffers only -1 against Algaliarept and Baphomet.

No one may have more than 10 total levels of Damnation.

Special Enhancements

Hellbound: Your inner corruption is becoming noticeable on the outside. Every time you gain further Damnation *or* critically fail a "bad" disadvantage you possess, you spontaneously manifest a *permanent* physical deformity. This can be represented as Distinctive Features, Unnatural Features, lowered Appearance, and so on. You get no points for this! The GM might allow you to buy off these disadvantages relatively easily with the right justification (e.g., magic that permanently alters appearance). He might even allow the character's buyer to remove the "taint" at the paltry price of a mere soul point. +20%.

Tainted: Others react badly to you. You suffer the full reaction penalty with everyone that you encounter, because others sense your tainted soul. This is incompatible with Virtuous Cloak (see above). +20%.

Special Limitations

Free-Willed: You have a lenient buyer or you found a loophole (p. 17) in your contract. Whatever the reason, you never suffer penalties when resisting your buyer's supernatural abilities, spells, influence skills, etc. -20%

Virtuous Cloak: You never receive reaction penalties from others because the corruption of your soul is "masked" from others; this modifier is worth -20%. If your aura *also* doesn't give you away, and your damned state can only be sensed on a critical success, this is -40%.

New Limitation: Costs Soul Points

Special

Like "Costs Character Points" (*Power-Ups 5*, p. 13), except the ability is fueled by soul points. These soul points don't necessarily have to be yours. Buyers typically have this on at least a few of their abilities, making them much cheaper in the short run, but forcing the character to drain souls to power them. Traits with this modifier require the expenditure of 1 soul point per activation and have 1/5 the normal cost.

For example, a character with Divine Favor 10 (*GURPS Powers: Divine Favor*, p. 4) could apply this modifier to that trait, reducing the cost from 70 to 14! However, each use, whether it works or not, costs him 1 soul point.

New Skill Specialty: Law (Esoteric Contract)

see p. B204

Esoteric Contract: This specialty covers verbal contracts with summoned beings and their summoners, actual contracts with such beings, and other eldritch bargains. The GM should decide ahead of time what a given buyer's skill is. Optionally, he can determine it randomly: Roll 1d-3 (minimum 1) and add the buyer's IQ. Most typical buyers have a skill of 16 or better; "named" beings have 20 or *higher*.

This specialty defaults to IQ-6, Hidden Lore (appropriate specialty)-4, Law (Criminal)-4, or Law (Liturgical)-2.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Christopher R. Rice sold his soul for a library card and a Snickers bar – no seriously, his girlfriend, L.A., owns it – don't ask. From Portsmouth, Virginia, he dreams of being able to write full-time, or at least eke out a living doing it. He wishes to thank L.A., his muse, as well as the rest of his gaming group; Christian Gelacio and Troy Loy for their unique viewpoints; Antoni Ten Monrós; Beth "Archangel" McCoy, the "Sith Editrix"; Douglas Cole; Patrick "Celti" Burroughs; and Emily "Bruno" Smirle, for being most excellent sounding boards.

Playing With Assumptions

The system assumes that selling one's soul is *bad*. It's typically the last resort of magicians, musicians, and maniacs. Nevertheless, this doesn't need to always be the case. For instance, devotion to a specific deity and his ways could count as "selling" your soul. The GM will need to decide who can actually buy souls in his campaigns.

The GM could also switch up how deals are made or even function. For instance, someone who's been killed and sent to Hell could make a deal with Lucifer to come back and take revenge on his murderers. In exchange for his soul, he could gain numerous powerful magical abilities, *but* all the abilities have a cost. Every time they're used, they consume a tiny piece of the character's soul (soul points). When the character runs out of soul points, he goes back to hell . . .

Finally, if the Purity Level (p. 14) or Impurity Level (p. 14) of a soul doesn't matter, everyone could start with 25 soul points (multiplied by any Intrinsic Value Modifiers, pp. 14-15).

EIDETIC MEMORY

VILLAIN'S RESIDENCE

BY DAVID L. PULVER

This is a “generic” villain’s lair for a modern TL8 setting, though with some reworking, it can be used at other TLs. The description *omits* detail of the place’s location, history, owner, or minions – even the scale. (Rooms are perfectly sized for the amount of action that needs to take place in them.) The location can be modified for use as the home and headquarters of a crime boss, drug lord, vampire, cult leader, or super villain.

THE GROUNDS

The residence sits on a large property – perhaps a private island, rural area, mountaintop, or just an oversized suburban lot. It’s surrounded by a high fence with two gates. This encloses a grassy lawn dotted with clumps of olive, juniper, oak, and cedar trees; a pond filled with exotic koi (or piranha); and an austere rock garden. The infrared cameras on the roof (see p. 22) of the main house scan the entire area every 10 seconds. Floodlights illuminate the grounds at night. Servants take the villain or guests around the grounds in electric golf carts.

Fence: A 9’ lethal electric fence with the smart fence upgrade (*GURPS High-Tech*, p. 205).

Gates: These include a hidden remotely controlled electromagnetic car stopper (*High-Tech*, p. 203) and an anti-vehicle barrier (2” thick steel bar) that can be raised or lowered by guards in a sentry box. The sentry box has an intercom and a handheld chemical detector (*High-Tech*, p. 48) to check visitors or cars for explosives, poison gas, etc.

Kennels: Space for a pack of fierce guard dogs who prowl the grounds at night or when the garden or pool is not being used.

Garage: The four-car garage has a central platform that rotates so the driver doesn’t have to back out. Possible vehicles might include Mercedes Benz limos or SUVs, supercars by Maybach or Bugatti, an autogyro, or perhaps an anonymous black Ford van. Mechanical tools and a few hundred gallons of gasoline are stored in an annex behind the garage. The roof may be strengthened to function as a helipad; if so, jet fuel is also stored here.

Pool: The spacious patio surrounds a swimming pool with a secret underwater door. The door leads to a passage connected to a water tank in the underground level (see *BB. Water*

Tank and Boiler Room, p. 22). A carbon-fiber (DR 15) pool top cover can slide closed in bad weather – or to trap someone.

Shed: Located near the patio, this houses a changing room; one side holds pool supplies in a cabinet.

MAIN HOUSE

The sprawling two-story mansion is a century old. It sports two one-story extensions that spread out like wings on either side. A small tower juts from the south wing, topped by a weather vane and an array of antennae, camera stalks, and a satellite dish.

Outer Walls: 6” brick. *Interior walls:* Treat as 3” wood. *Interior Doors:* 1” wood on first two floors; 1/2” mild steel underground. Doors have standard good-quality locks (DR 6, HP 3). All rooms have smoke detectors, sprinkler systems, and appropriate lighting. Fire extinguishers are in every third room.

Main Floor

A. Front Door. A gravel path leads to the house’s front door, which is 1” steel with a wood veneer. The steps are white marble and flanked by two bronze lions or dragons. The door frame conceals a walkthrough metal detector and a CT scanner (p. B207) with the readout in the security center (see below).

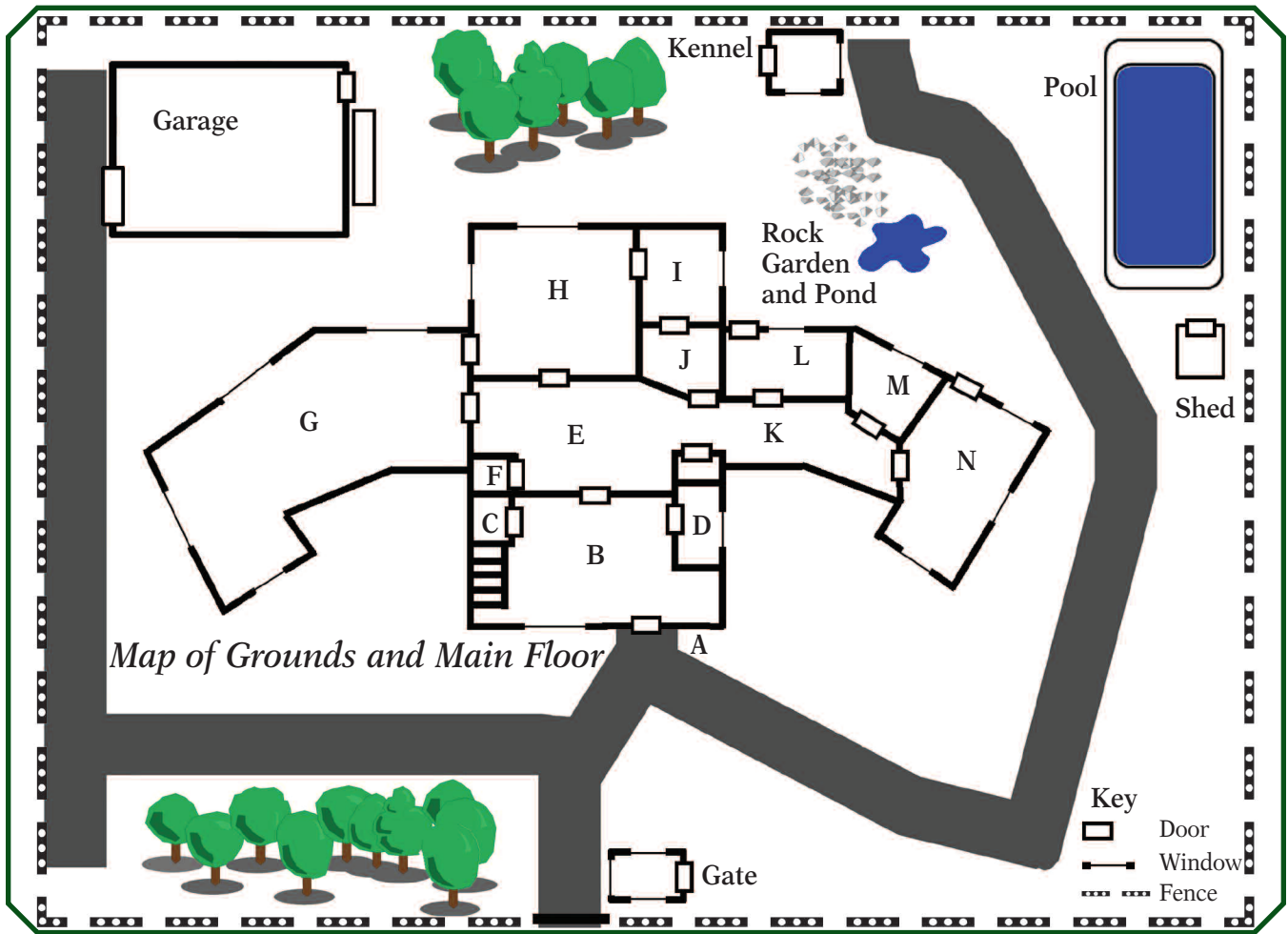
B. Entry Hall. The impressive reception hall has a teak wood-paneled interior, picture window, and thick carpets. An alcove offers coat hooks and an umbrella stand. A staircase winds upward and downward.

C. Elevator and Stairwell. Entering either one requires identify verification of some sort (*High-Tech*, p. 205) – perhaps a retinal scanner. A video surveillance camera monitors the area.

D. Security Center. A metal desk dominates the room. It has a multi-channel radio and a bank of three telephones, and buttons controlling select doors. A large TV monitor has small displays of various locations, including the gates. The room is designed to be staffed by two to three guards.

E. Central Gallery. Heroic-style sculptures of the villain or representations of any ethos he serves adorn this room.

F. Supply Closet. Holds cleaning supplies, such as vacuum cleaners, brooms, chemicals, so on.



Map of Grounds and Main Floor

G. Great Hall. This enormous room has solid oak floors. It is used as a ballroom, training dojo (useful for fencing or martial arts matches with visiting adventurers), audience chamber, or indoor squash court. A grand piano occupies one end of the hall.

H. Dining Room. The formal dining room has a table with seating for 12 people.

I. Kitchen. The kitchen is almost as deadly as the armory: surgically clean stainless steel counters, an array of razor-sharp cutlery, giant gas range and oven, a lethal garbage disposal (1d cutting/second; good for punishing traitorous minions), and a walk-in freezer (that locks from the outside). The pantry, fridge, and freezer are well-stocked with whatever the villain enjoys (Iranian caviar, Wagyu steaks, blood, etc.).

J. Servant's Quarters. Simple quarters with bunks and lockers house two to four servants or renfields. Across the hall is the laundry room (a good place to steal minion uniforms).

K. Gallery. An expensive art collection lines the walls. The collection may feature a stolen "lost" masterpiece or two, like Van Gogh's "Congregation Leaving the Reformed Church in Nuene" or Pablo Picasso's "Le pigeon aux petits pois."

L. Barracks. The quarters (including bunks) accommodate up to a dozen guards. An armory and lockers hold their weapons and other tactical equipment (camping gear, wet gear, etc.). A typical loadout is an assault vest (DR 12; *High-Tech*, p. 67), Glock 17 pistol (*High-Tech*, pp. 100-101), Steyr AUG assault rifle (*High-Tech*, p. 118) with laser targeting sights (*High-Tech*, pp. 156-157), TASER (*High-Tech*, p. 90),

night vision goggles (*High-Tech*, p. 48), and gas mask (*High-Tech*, p. 72). There may be a few heavier weapons (a Stinger missile or RPG or AT-4 rocket launcher; see p. B281 and *High-Tech*, pp. 142-149) for emergencies.

M. Washroom and Showers. Used by minions.

N. Conference Room. The long central table has pop-up lap-top terminals and 12 chairs. One wall and the table are marked with the villain's sigil. The room also has an imposing executive desk, a complete sound system, and a pair of large interactive whiteboards. A cinematic villain may have one or more of the chairs rigged to dispose of minions that have displeased him – perhaps with arm rests that snap shut (pinning the victim with ST 20) while a high voltage electric shock (1d burn damage/second) is delivered, or dropping the victim down a chute slide into an underground tank (see *BB. Water Tank and Boiler Room*, p. 22).

Top Floor

The upper level is furnished with living quarters and other personal rooms for the villain and his family, consort, or important guests. An elevator and a stairway connect to the main floor. The map is on p. 22.

O. Library. The library is a place for entertaining as well as research. It includes a large antique globe, comfy chairs, display cases of maps and valuable curios (perhaps a Fabergé egg?), and eight shelves (4,000 volumes) of books with at least one fine-quality (+2 to Research) collection on an area of interest to the villain.

Other titles prominently displayed may include early editions of classics such as Machiavelli's *The Prince* or the complete works of Nietzsche.

P. Bedroom. Used by guests and family, with opulent furnishings.

Q. Executive Office. The imposing desk (possibly with built-in defenses) has a computer terminal. The villain and his personal assistant may work here, possibly dividing the space into an inner and outer office.

R. Master Bathroom. A luxurious bathroom in blue tile with large shower, gold or iridium fixtures, reading stand, antique claw-footed bathtub, and a sensor-equipped heated, massaging water-jet-equipped Japanese toilet.

S. Tower Armory. A stairway leads up to the tower (below). Hanging on the walls or on stands beside the stairs are a collection of antique weapons and armor to suit the villain's proclivities – a suit of TL4 full plate, a pair of crossed broadswords or sabers, or a brace of flintlock dueling pistols.

T. Master Bedroom. The décor of the inner sanctum is either opulent or starkly austere depending on the villain's personality and whether or not the bedroom is shared. Besides the usual furnishings (bed, wardrobe, etc.), there's a large walk-in closet and a door leading to the tower armory (see above). There may be a few trophies on display – perhaps the skull or personal weapon of an enemy, or antique jade statuery. If the villain has a pet (such as a white fluffy cat or a wolf), it may be found curled up here.

V. Guest Bedroom. A less-luxurious version of the master bedroom, probably with hidden video and/or audio bugs feeding into the security center (p. 20) or war room (below!)

U. Guest Bathroom. Similar to *R. Master Bathroom* (above), but with silver rather than gold fixtures.

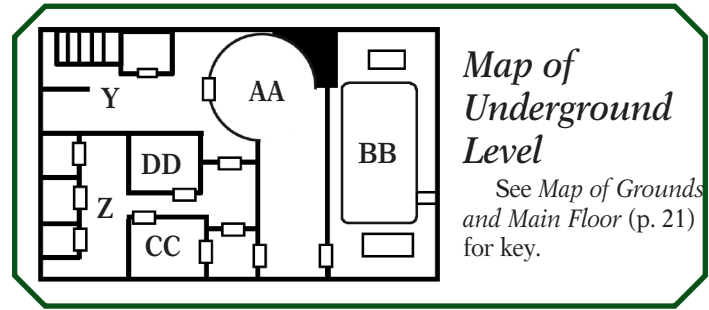
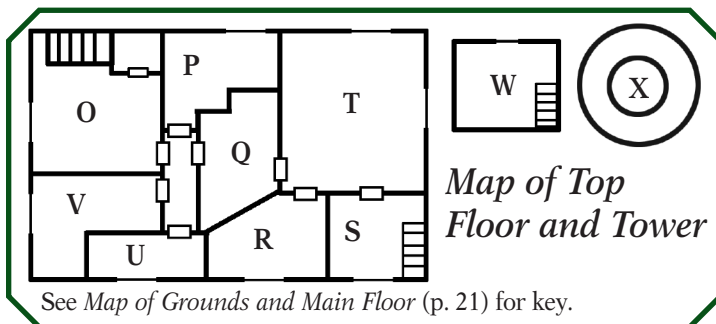
Tower

W. Tower Room. The tower has a narrow window perfect for standing and overlooking one's domain, but it's made of DR 40 bulletproof plastic just to be sure. The chamber also houses a large radio with ECCM, encryption, and satellite uplink options (*High-Tech*, pp. 38-39). Narrow steps lead to the roof (below).

X. Roof. The roof has a narrow balcony that offers access to long-range antennae (*High-Tech*, p. 39) and a satellite dish, as well as four remote-controlled 4x thermal imaging surveillance cameras (*High-Tech*, p. 48) at each corner, which constantly scan the grounds.

UNDERGROUND LEVEL

The underground level is built as an emergency fallout shelter. It is designed to be airtight and fire-, gas-, and germ-proof.



Nuclear-biological-chemical filters are on all air-conditioning ducts.

Y. Basement. The elevator and stairs also run down to a basement storage area. The slightly cool room is filled with packing crates and several shelves (which have packaged foods and emergency supplies). If there are enough guards in the lair, a guard post likely is here.

Z. Detention Rooms. This guard post has three narrow jail cells, each with 1" steel doors. Each has a washbasin, toilet, double bunk, and armored light and camera. The doors have tough locks (-5 to pick). The guard station optionally may be furnished as a torture chamber.

AA. War Room. This curving red-lit room is the nerve center for whatever plans the villain has. There are five workstation terminals, a command chair, and a giant "big board" screen. Three hardened mainframes (Complexity 5 at TL8) run the place. Villains who are inventors rather than strategists may replace the war room with a laboratory complex or a workshop center filled with rapid prototyping systems.

BB. Water Tank and Boiler Room. The complex's heating system and emergency generator are in the basement. The big 500-kW diesel generator (or more exotic power supply, perhaps capable of self-destruct) has a nearby tank holding a week's worth of fuel. Also present is large transparent tank with thick (DR 10) walls. It could be a water reservoir or a tank for exotic pets such as sharks or piranha. It connects via an underground pipeline to the swimming pool (and, perhaps, to a minion-disposal chute in the conference room; see *N. Conference Room*, p. 21).

CC. Infirmiry. Well stocked with 200 patient-days of medical supplies, plus truth serum, poisons, and portable surgery and anesthesia machines. Cinematic villains may add items such as a surgical laser – and find non-medical uses for them!

DD. Wine Cellar. Heavy wooden racks hold 2,000 bottles, the most exclusive of which are reserved for toasting victories (e.g., 40-year old Château d'Yquem, at \$100,000/bottle).

ABOUT THE COLUMNIST

David L. Pulver is a Canadian freelance author. An avid SF fan, he began roleplaying in junior high with the newly released *Basic Dungeons & Dragons*. Upon graduating from university, he decided to become a game designer. Since then, David has written over 70 roleplaying game books, and he has worked as a staff writer, editor, and line developer for Steve Jackson Games and Guardians of Order. He is best known for creating *Transhuman Space*, co-authoring the *Big Eyes, Small Mouth* anime RPG, and writing countless *GURPS* books, including the *GURPS Basic Set, Fourth Edition*, *GURPS Ultra-Tech*, and the *GURPS Spaceships* series.

TIGERPHOBIA

BY HANS-CHRISTIAN VORTISCH

*Tiger-men! Conserve!
Take advantage of the thick armor! Close in!
Running over is cheaper than the MG!
The MG is cheaper than the main gun!*

– Generalinspekteur der Panzertruppen,
D 656/27 Die Tigerfibel (1943)

The Tiger is probably the most famous tank of World War II and is excellently suited for **GURPS WWII** campaigns using Fourth Edition rules, especially in combination with **GURPS High-Tech**. The five-man tank can be used by Nazi villains or deployed by the PCs, likely commandeered from the enemy.

In addition to historical military campaigns, the tank can be employed by villains against Allied superheroes using **GURPS WWII: Weird War II** and **GURPS Supers** or encountered while hunting down monsters during the war by combining **Weird War II** and **GURPS Monster Hunters**. The Tiger could appear in various alternate timelines from **GURPS Infinite Worlds**. The tanks would be appropriate on Dixie-5 or Merlin-3, or as obsolete surplus on Reich-1 or Reich-2. Finally, full stats for use with **GURPS Mass Combat** are provided.

HENSCHEL PzKpFW VI AUSF E TIGER (GERMANY, 1942-1944)

The armor of the Tiger, at the time of its appearance, was the thickest ever to be fitted on any German tank . . . The Tiger engine requires very skilled driving and maintenance to get the best performance, and in the hands of insufficiently trained crews mechanical troubles are apt to appear. This characteristic has been the tank's principal disadvantage.

– U.S. War Department, **TM-E 30-451
Handbook on German Military Forces** (1945)

The *Panzerkampfwagen VI Ausführung E Tiger* (“armored fighting vehicle mark VI pattern E Tiger”) is a heavy tank produced by Henschel in Nazi Germany. The official designation was changed in 1943 to *PzKpfw Tiger Ausf E*, and was often simply shortened to *Panzer Tiger*. Its internal designation was *Sonderkraftfahrzeug 181* (“special motor vehicle 181”) or *SdKfz181*. It’s a 21’ long, rectangular, tracked tank with a large turret and a long-barreled main gun (total length with the gun forward is almost 28’). It has a crew of five.

Its thick armor and powerful main gun made it superior to most contemporary Allied tanks. Although not flawless, it did rake up a number of stunning successes. Among both Western and Soviet troops, its success is reputed to have led to widespread fear of the vehicle, a phenomenon now called “tigerphobia.” Soldiers would see Tigers everywhere, often misidentifying

the similar-looking but much smaller *PzKpfw IV (High-Tech*, pp. 238-239). It’s alleged that the prospect of facing a Tiger generated considerable anxiety, although whether this was actually a problem for morale is dubious. Eventually, better-armed Allied tanks such as the British Sherman VC Firefly (**GURPS WWII: Motor Pool**, p. 62) and Soviet IS-2 (**GURPS WWII: Red Tide**, p. 78) appeared that could deal with the Tiger on equal terms. By the time of the Normandy landing, relatively few Tigers remained in service, although they still proved to be formidable.

The Tiger was mainly issued to 11 heavy tank battalions in the *Heer*, but three such battalions were also formed by the *Waffen-SS*. A heavy tank battalion nominally had 45 of the beasts (plus assorted other armored vehicles and trucks), in three 14-tank companies (p. 27) plus a three-tank command element. In practice, most units never had their full complement. As the war went on, pairs and even single Tigers would be deployed together with other armored fighting vehicles, always accompanied by mechanized infantry.

The Tiger served on most fronts, including in North Africa, on the Eastern Front, in Italy, in France, and finally in Germany itself.

A total of 1,355 were built. By January 1945, only about 200 were still in service, and few of these survived the end of the war. A dozen Tigers were supplied to Hungary. Japan bought and paid for a single Tiger in 1943, but it was never delivered. Today, only half a dozen remain in museums; one of them is still running.

THE TIGER IN DETAIL

The “TIGER” is of course outstanding by reason of its being the heaviest A.F.V. in general service . . . The workmanship appears to be of a high order . . . An interesting development in German A.F.V. construction is the introduction of plate interlocking in addition to the normal stepped jointing. This method has no doubt been made necessary by the use of thicker armour. The transmission and steering units are extremely complicated and undoubtedly costly in man/hours to produce. The resultant light control of such a heavy vehicle may be some justification, since those who have driven the tank comment favourably on this feature.

– School of Tank Technology, “Report on
Pz Kw VI (Tiger) Model E” [sic] (1944)

The Tiger is a fairly complicated machine that requires a well-trained crew to operate smoothly.

Crew

The crew consists of the driver, radio operator/bow gunner, commander, gunner, and loader. The driver sits in the body on the front left. He needs Driving (Tracked).

The Tiger's steering wheel and manual transmission make it easier to drive than contemporary Allied tanks, most of which use a pair of steering levers. The driver is also responsible for maintaining the engine and tracks, which requires Mechanic (Tracked).

The commander sits in the turret rear, on the left. He needs Leadership and Tactics. The radio operator/bow gunner sits in the body on the front right. He needs Electronics Operation (Comm) and Gunner (MG). The gunner sits in the turret front on the left. He needs Gunner (Cannon) and Gunner (MG). The loader sits in the turret right. In addition to loading the guns, he's also responsible for keeping gun and ammunition in order, which requires Armoury (Heavy Weapons). A ST-based Gunner (Cannon) roll shaves off one second from the main gun's reloading time.

The driver, radio operator, gunner, and loader have only restricted vision through vision slits or periscopes (-3 Vision rolls), while the commander has a total of five vision slits in his cupola for all-around vision; late cupolas have six periscopes instead. The vision slits or periscopes can be attacked at -10. A hit on a periscope will destroy it; a hit on a vision slit can attack someone peering through it, if the 94mm (3.7") thick armor glass (DR 75) is bypassed.

There are hatches in the roof above the driver's and radio-operator's seat in the body, as well as above the commander's and loader's stations in the turret roof. Most Tigers have an escape hatch in the right rear of the turret, at the loader's position.

A gun port (*High-Tech*, p. 228) in the left rear of the turret allows deployment of small arms for suppressive fire by the commander. An ERMA MP40 submachine gun (*High-Tech*, p. 124) with six magazines is carried for this purpose as well as for close-in security during bivouac and refueling/rearming. All crewmembers are issued a sidearm with one spare magazine, typically a Luger P08 (*High-Tech*, p. 98) or Walther P38 (*High-Tech*, p. 99).

Engine and Equipment

The Tiger has a 515-kilowatt gasoline engine in a separate engine compartment on the rear. The engine compartment is fitted with an integral five-shot fire extinguisher (*High-Tech*, p. 229), which goes off automatically in case of a fire or is manually initiated by the loader.

Four fuel tanks are located in the rear third on the left and right of the engine, which hold a total of 140 gallons (0.46 tons of gasoline). This gives the vehicle a 60% endurance (p. B463) of five hours. Its Range is 60 miles off-road. Refueling from 5.3-gallon fuel cans takes 25 minutes.

The maximum loaded weight of the Tiger is 61.6 tons. With a full load of fuel, this leaves 1.5 tons of payload, including crew, cargo, and ammunition.

Between the driver and radio operator is the radio, which can only be operated from the radio operator's position. It has a nominal range of five miles, but usually achieves less than four miles, often barely 1.5 miles depending on terrain and other circumstances. Normally, only the radio operator can hear incoming messages and send himself, but he can allow the rest of the crew to listen in. Alternatively, both the commander and radio operator can send and receive messages. The internal communications system allows the driver, gunner, and commander to talk to each other.

The Tiger lacks night-vision equipment except for a single headlight.

Guns and Ammo

A ball mount in the right front of the body holds a Rheinmetall MG34 general-purpose machine gun (*High-Tech*, pp. 132-133). A 1.75x optical sight (p. B471) gives +0 Acc. Traverse of the mount is limited and only allows fire in the frontal facing. The gun feeds from a 150-round belt; the standard load is ball and tracer mixed 3:1 (*Tactical Shooting*, p. 31). Nine more belts are stored near its position.

The electro-hydraulically powered turret (*High-Tech*, pp. 229-230) mounts an 88mm Krupp KwK36 cannon (p. 26) and a coaxial Rheinmetall MG34 machine gun. A 2.5x optical sight gives +1 Acc for either gun. Tanks made after the spring of 1944 have a 2.5-5x variable sight, which gives either +1 Acc or +2 Acc. The gunner turns the turret using two foot pedals, but the hydraulics are slow. Normally, 10 Ready maneuvers are required to change facing, but with the engine revved, this can be reduced to three Ready maneuvers. The guns can be elevated +17°. Tigers produced from the summer of 1943 have a commander's cupola that allows attachment of a fully traversable pintle mount (p. B467) for a third MG34 to be used against low-flying aircraft. The latter is seldom fitted, however.

A total of 92 main gun rounds are stored in steel cabinets in the body around and under the turret. Only half of these are accessible to the loader with the gun forward. The basic load is 46 APEX and 46 HE. If heavy tanks are expected, half a dozen APHC and/or HEAT rounds can replace some of the APEX rounds – if they can be supplied, which is seldom the case, as these make up a tiny fraction of the ammunition produced, and manufacture of either ceased in 1943. The APHC round with its tungsten-carbide core is especially scarce, and actually removed from service by the end of 1943 to recycle the tungsten. Crews often carry additional rounds, as up to 120 shells can be stuffed in a Tiger if every nook is used. From late 1944, many Tigers receive internal racks for 16 additional rounds, bringing the basic load to 108.

The coaxial MG34 feeds from a 150-round belt; another 21 belts are stored in belt pouches in the turret and the body beneath the turret. The basic ammunition load for all the machine guns is 4,800 rounds, although some carry more.

The Tiger at the Movies

The Tiger be seen in *Band of Brothers* #4 and #7, *The Battle of Neretva*, *Hot Snow*, *Kelly's Heroes*, *Saving Private Ryan*, and *White Tiger*. In all of these, the props were built from other tanks, but they are close enough.

Tigers made until the summer of 1943 have smoke dischargers (*High-Tech*, p. 229), with three smoke grenade launchers mounted on either side of the turret, firing forward. All six are fired in one salvo by the commander. The smoke dischargers were quickly discontinued, as they are vulnerable to small arms fire; ignited in place, the smoke can incapacitate the crew – treat as smoke (p. B439), but resisted at HT-2 and afflicting drowsy (p. B428) instead of coughing. Aiming for the dischargers requires -5 to hit.

Most Tigers produced in 1943 have a close-in defense system that consists of five SMi35 bounding anti-personnel mines (*High-Tech*, p. 189) in stubby pot launchers, one on each corner of the body facing diagonally away from the corner and a fifth in the mid-section, facing to the left. These “Bouncing Betties” are triggered individually by the commander and explode about two yards away from the tank at a height of 10', showering approaching infantry with fragments. From late 1943, installation of these is dropped.

From early 1944, all newly made Tigers with the thicker turret roof receive the *Nahverteidigungswaffe* (“close-defense weapon”), a fully traversable, breech-loaded mortar in the roof over the loader’s station. This fires 90mm smoke bombs from under armor. Each generates a gray cloud for about 150 seconds, 10-yards in diameter and about 45 yards from the tank. The loader can fire one every four seconds. Twelve smoke bombs are carried.

With its breech open, the *Nahverteidigungswaffe* can also be used as a roof firing port for the Walther LP28 flare pistol (*High-Tech*, p. 142). This can launch various flares and special rounds, including an HE-AB grenade for close-in defense, which explodes about 10 yards from the tank. The latter is essentially fired blind, using Guns (Grenade Launcher) at -6 for visibility but +4 for targeting an area rather than a person. The Tiger carries 20 HE-AB rounds and 24 signaling and flare rounds. Tigers with the *Nahverteidigungswaffe* lack the smoke dischargers, mine launchers, and rear turret gun port.

Armor

A tank’s armor is of crucial importance for its success. The Tiger’s rolled homogeneous armor steel is 100mm (3.94”) thick on the body front, 80mm (3.15”) on the body sides and rear, and 25mm (0.98”) on the underbody and top. The cast steel gun mantlet on the turret front is up to 200mm (7.87”) thick (but only about 110mm on average), the turret sides and rear 80mm, and the turret top 25mm. Tigers produced after early 1944 had the turret top increased to 40mm (1.57”) to improve protection against artillery and ground-attack aircraft. Although the old-fashioned armor layout lacks sloping, the

Hit Location Table

Instead of the generic *Vehicle Hit Location Table* (p. B554), use this for the Tiger.

Roll	Location (Penalty)	Note
3-5	Body (0)	[1]
6-7	Caterpillar Track [C] (-2)	
8	Turret [T] (-2)	[1]
9-11	Body (0)	[1]
12	Turret [T] (-2)	[1]
13-14	Caterpillar Track [C] (-2)	
15-16	Body (0)	[1]
17-18	Vital Area (-3)	

Note

[1] Check for an occupant hit (p. B555).

sheer thickness of the Tiger’s hide protects it against most Allied tank and antitank guns. Unlike many contemporary tanks, it also has thick rear armor, making the standard tactic of attacking from the back less effective.

The Tiger does have a few weak spots (p. B400) – use either the generic rule of halving DR for chinks in armor or the more specific figures listed here. The lower front immediately above the ground is sloped when the tank is horizontal, but presents a weakness (DR 165) when the tank’s nose is in the air, for example while cresting a steep hill. The lower sides, while partially covered by the wheels and impossible to hit in a hull-down position, are also easier to penetrate (DR 165). A penetrating hit in the rear third can reach a fuel tank, which typically instantly catches fire, dooming the vehicle. The 0.4” slit between the body and turret can be attacked with heavy machine guns and antitank rifles at -10. A hit will jam the turret, preventing it from turning. The engine grill on the top rear deck is vulnerable to Molotov cocktails (*High-Tech*, p. 191), and can be attacked as a vital area at -3.

Henschel PzKpfw VI Ausf E Tiger Table

Terms and notation are as defined in *Vehicle Statistics* (pp. B462-463).

DRIVING (TRACKED)/TL6

TL Vehicle	ST/HP	Hnd/SR	HT	Move	LWt.	Load	SM	Occ.	DR	Range	Cost	Loc.	Note
6 Henschel Tiger Ausf E	200	-2/6	10fx	2/17	61.6	1.5	+5	5	275/220	100	\$680,000	2CT	[1]

Note

[1] Higher DR is for body front; lower DR is for body sides and rear. DR 70 on top and underbody. The turret has DR 330 on the front, DR 220 on the sides and rear, and DR 70 on top (late tanks have DR 110 on the turret top).

Tiger Armament Table

Terms and notation are as defined on pp. B268-271.

GUNNER (CANNON) (DX-4 or other Gunner at -4)

TL Weapon	Damage	Acc	Range	EWt.	RoF	Shots	ST	Bulk	Rcl	Cost	LC
7 Krupp KwK36, 88x570mmR <i>follow-up</i>	6d×9(2) pi++ 5d [4d+2] cr ex	6	2,400/10,000	2,970/34	1	1(8)	61M	-15	4	\$48,000	1

From late 1943, the Tiger received a *Zimmerit* coat on all vertical surfaces, a rough, anti-magnetic layer that prevents attachment of magnetic limpet mines and shaped-charges. This was mostly a wasted effort, since the main user of magnetic shaped-charges in Europe was the German army! Late vehicles omit it.

Tiger Armament

Hitting the mark is an art, but not black magic. In order to hit better than your opponent, you've been provided with the more accurate gun and the sharper intellect. Using the 8.8 you can shoot off a mosquito's right eyetooth.

– Generalinspekteur der Panzertruppen,
D 656/27 Die Tigerfibel (1943)

The heart of the Tiger is its powerful main gun. Also see *High-Tech*, p. 138.

Krupp 8.8cm KwK36, 88×570mmR (Germany, 1942-1944)

The *8.8cm Kampfwagenkanone 36* (“fighting vehicle gun model 1936”) is a cannon with a 194” rifled barrel. It uses the same cartridge case and projectiles as the Krupp FLAK18 and FLAK36 antiaircraft guns, the famous *Acht-Acht* (“eight-eight”), but ammunition is not actually interchangeable since the tank gun uses electric ignition, while the air-defense artillery employs percussion ignition.

Each shell weighs 34 lbs.; a wooden box holds three (115 lbs.). Aside from APEX (in the table), it fires APHC (-1 Acc, Dmg 6d×13(2) pi++), HE (Dmg 6d×13(0.5) pi++ with 6d×3 [4d+2] cr ex follow-up), and HEAT (-2 Acc, Dmg 5d×2(10) cr ex with 4d×4 cr ex linked). Both APHC and HEAT are rare.

Using the Tiger requires training and finesse.

USING THE TIGER

You're driving a tank that has few opponents, but also few brothers. It depends on you whether it becomes a predator ready to pounce – or a dead wreck.

– Generalinspekteur der Panzertruppen,
D 656/27 Die Tigerfibel (1943)

The Tiger is sensitive to improper handling. Even starting the engine can be difficult to the unfamiliar. The GM should rigidly enforce *Familiarity* (p. B169) for all skill rolls involving the tank and its components. Tank commanders, gunners, and drivers are usually experienced NCOs.

If the PCs want to steal a Tiger, the greatest difficulty is getting close to it – usually this means overcoming one or more checkpoints (*GURPS Action 2: Exploits*, p. 29) or fences (*Action 2*, p. 20).

The Tiger's hatches can only be locked from the inside. Entering a Tiger through a hatch and settling in a crew seat takes at least 10 Ready maneuvers. To start, the driver requires the ignition key (*Action 2*, p. 23). He can then either use the electric ignition button or the external starter crank, operated by another crewmember at the rear body. The latter is preferred as it prolongs battery life, but is slower and

involves at least two men. A fully serviced and fueled Tiger can be started by the driver in five Ready maneuvers, 60 if using the external crank. After starting the engine, the manual advises to allow it to warm up for five minutes in summer or 15 minutes in winter time, but this can be dispensed with in a hurry.

In combat, a Tiger crew will always try to engage an enemy from as far away as possible, making the most of its long-reaching gun. The main gun has better accuracy and range than almost all comparable Allied weapons, allowing the Tiger to engage opponents at 1,500 yards and more. Given its unstabilized weapon mount, the gun is usually fired while standing still. The time elapsed from detection of a target until the first shot is usually at least 20 seconds – enough time to change facing and for an All-out Attack (Determined) with Aim (pp. B365, 364). The turret mount adds +4 for Bracing (*GURPS Tactical Shooting*, p. 75). The total aiming bonus after three seconds is thus +14 (Acc 6 + 4 bracing + 1 AoA(D) + 1 sight + 2 aiming), +15 on late models with the improved sight. The APHC and HEAT rounds are saved for high-value targets; their improved penetration is bought with reduced accuracy and consequently shorter engagement ranges.

Despite the suggestions in the *Tigerfibel* pamphlet on its use, crews seldom close in; even the machine guns aren't used much.

The Tiger is often described as a lumbering behemoth. Actually, its wide tracks give it a lower ground pressure and consequently better performance over soft ground than the much lighter M4 Sherman (*High-Tech*, pp. 238-239)! In addition, it has excellent maneuverability in a tight spot for a vehicle its size. However, it does have a very short operational range, and is usually shipped near its deployment area by train, even for comparatively short distances. The complicated suspension is also difficult to maintain. Finally, it is too heavy for many bridges. About 495 Tigers are watertight and can be fitted with a snorkel kit, allowing it to ford rivers over 13' deep. This proves impractical, however, and the feature is deleted on later vehicles.

By 1944, Tigers are mainly used in defensive operations, often individually or accompanied by another, less powerful tank or a self-propelled artillery piece. There is always at least a squad of infantry deployed with a Tiger.

On the defense, Tigers are usually skillfully concealed. A properly applied camouflage pattern gives +2 to Camouflage (*High-Tech*, p. 77), and many crews display considerable ingenuity employing camouflage nets (*High-Tech*, p. 77), tree branches, etc. Tigers are often concealed *inside* buildings, including garages, barns, etc. This not only protects the tank and its accompanying infantry from visual detection, but also from enemy attack.

There are several ways to knock out a Tiger: Aim for one of its weak spots detailed above. The body and turret top can be attacked with artillery or aircraft, although historically ground-attack aircraft destroyed far fewer Tigers than is commonly imagined. At medium to short distances, a number of tank and antitank guns can be effectively used against its sides and rear, especially the powerful British 17-pounder gun. As with all tanks, the tracks and suspension are relatively vulnerable even to HE shells.

Loose Equipment

Internal racks hold the personal water canteens (*High-Tech*, p. 53) and gas masks (*High-Tech*, p. 72) of the crew.

The Tiger comes with a basic load of loose equipment that includes a small first aid kit (*High-Tech*, p. 221), portable Armoury and Mechanic tool kits (*High-Tech*, p. 24), a small fire extinguisher (*High-Tech*, p. 29), three 5.3-gallon water cans (*High-Tech*, p. 54), signaling flags, a Walther LP28 flare pistol (with 44 HE-AB, flare, and signaling rounds), an ERMA MP40 submachine gun with six magazines, two bipods and shoulder stocks to convert the Rheinmetall MG34 tank machine guns to the infantry role, and three spare barrels for the machine guns.

External clamps hold a set of pioneer tools consisting of a broad axe (*High-Tech*, p. 24), crowbar (*High-Tech*, p. 30), shovel (*High-Tech*, p. 25), and sledgehammer (*High-Tech*, p. 25), a 16.5-ton jack (*High-Tech*, p. 25), two 16' towing cables, and another small fire extinguisher.

Two cargo bins on the rear of the turret hold personal equipment such as spare clothes and sleeping gear for the crew.

THE TIGER COMPANY IN MASS COMBAT

From January 1944, a German Tiger company has the following elements and units:

Company HQ: Two Command Post elements, two Heavy Tank elements, and three Light Truck elements.

Tiger Company Roster

Elements	Total TS	Classes	Mobility	Features
14 Tiger (Heavy Tank)	14,000	Arm, F	Mech	–
2 Panzer HQ (Command Post)	(150)	C3I	0	–
3 Light Trucks	75	Cv, T1	Motor	–
<i>Armor TS</i>	14,000			
<i>C3I TS</i>	150			
<i>Cavalry TS</i>	75			
<i>Fire TS</i>	14,000			
<i>Force TS</i>	14,000			

1st, 2nd, and 3rd platoon: Four Heavy Tank elements.

At the GM's option, a *Waffen-SS* unit might be treated as Fanatic (*Mass Combat*, p. 8).

SdKfz 181 Panzer Tiger Ausf E

Heavy Tank

TS: 1,000. *WT:* 8.

Classes: Arm, F. *Mobility:* Mech.

Quality: Fine equipment; Good troops.

Cost: \$3M to raise; \$88K to maintain.

Panzer HQ

Command Post

TS: (75). *WT:* 1.

Classes: C3I. *Mobility:* 0.

Quality: Fine equipment; Good troops.

Cost: \$300K to raise; \$44K to maintain.

Light Trucks

Light Truck

This represents a *geländegängiger Personenkraftwagen* ("off-road personnel vehicle") or Kfz1, usually a VW Kübelwagen Typ 82 (*GURPS WWII: Iron Cross*, p. 72). The company has two of these cars. A third element represents two of the unique *leichtes Ketten-Kraftrad* ("light tracked motorcycle") or SdKfz2 (*WWII: Iron Cross*, p. 72). The company has two of these half-tracked motorcycles. All these vehicles are primarily used for liaison.

TS: 25. *WT:* 2.

Classes: Cv, T1. *Mobility:* Motor.

Quality: Fine equipment; Good troops.

Cost: \$75K to raise; \$5.5K to maintain.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Hans-Christian "Grey Tiger" Vortisch is the author or co-author of *GURPS High-Tech, Fourth Edition*, *GURPS Tactical Shooting*, and *GURPS WWII: Motor Pool*, among other books.

Special thanks to the Hellions.



THE COMPLEAT JUMPSUIT

BY MATT RIGGSBY

Many super-science and super-powered villains – like Ernst Stavro Blofeld, Lex Luthor, and Dr. Zin – don't fulfill their master plans by themselves. They employ hordes of minions to do the dirty or tedious work: building the rockets, assembling special casings for doomsday bio-warfare agents, shipping parts from a factory on one side of the planet to a special assembly facility on the other, and even utterly mundane tasks in close proximity to more villainous activities, like refueling the hovercraft and tidying up around the mansion. These are the jumpsuits, the modern action-adventure equivalent of the sci-fi redshirt. These are the faceless multitudes wearing hardhats and color-coded coveralls, filling in the backgrounds of bigger scenes or just going about their business in the corridors of secret lairs until an unreasonably attractive secret agent whacks one over the head, drags him to a nearby broom closet, and steals his ID card.

But jumpsuits aren't all the same. Some are technical specialists and grunt laborers, some are paramilitary, and some are administrators and buffers between the villain and the general public. Several types of minions might be found in a modern-day (or nearly so) action-adventure campaign working for a villainous mastermind. These descriptions and templates can help the GM quickly write up types suitable for a multitude of different uses.

We're followers, not thinkers. Like you said, the villains are in it for themselves. We get caught in the crossfire.

– Jamison Raymond and
Ryan Howe, *Henchmen* #1

JUMPSUIT TEMPLATES

Profoundly generic villainous employees can be divided into seven different varieties. Despite the title, not all of them come clad in a baggy one-piece garment. As suits their generic nature, they usually wear some kind of uniform, but that might be a conservative business suit instead of an industrial coverall.

The templates are written assuming a villain with a base Patron value of 15 points. More or less powerful villains may require adjustments to the stats.

Tech

20 points

The tech is the basic model of jumpsuit. Usually laboring in the background in color-coded coveralls, the tech performs the villain's grunt work. This may involve driving delivery vehicles and forklifts, maintaining and operating machinery, fetching and carrying, or simply cleaning up around the place.

In addition to day-to-day tasks directly in pursuit of their employer's goals, techs also do most of the basic support and maintenance jobs. After all, in a secret lair inhabited by a few hundred people, somebody has to do the washing up. Though full-time villainous cooks and janitors are a possibility, techs who could be otherwise employed may be selected for such tasks on a rotating basis or as punishment for infractions of minor rules.

Techs' skills are generally professional, but relatively modest. Though no villain is going to accept incompetent help, techs are selected first and foremost for their ability to keep their mouths shut and their eyes on their own work. Many are recruited from bad neighborhoods where a good income counts for a lot more than official authority. Like many wild animals, they will run away if confronted and fight only when cornered. Many do an admirable job of stubbornly repeating their cover story if captured and interrogated and providing a minimum of useful information when they do talk, if only because they're never trusted with much.

Attributes: ST 10 [0]; DX 10 [0]; IQ 10 [0]; HT 10 [0].

Secondary Characteristics: Damage 1d-2/1d; BL 20 lbs.; HP 10 [0]; Will 11 [5]; Per 10 [0]; FP 10 [0]; Basic Speed 5.00 [0]; Basic Move 5 [0]; Dodge 8.

Advantages: Patron (Villain; 9 or less) [15].

Disadvantages: Code of Honor (Minion's; p. 31) [-5] and Duty (Villain; 6 or less) [-2]. • One of Per -1 [-5] or Incurious [-5*].

Primary Skills: One of Boating/TL (any), Driving/TL (any), or Piloting/TL (any), all (A) DX+2 [8]-12; Animal Handling (any), Armoury/TL (any), Electrician/TL, Electronics Operation/TL (any), Electronics Repair/TL (any), Freight Handling/TL, Machinist/TL, or Streetwise, all (A) IQ+2 [8]-12; or one Professional Skill at (A) DX+2 or IQ+2 [8]-12.

Secondary Skills: Two of Crewman (E) IQ+1 [2]-11; Hazardous Materials/TL (A) IQ [2]-10; Housekeeping (E) IQ+1 [2]-11; Swimming (E) HT+1 [2]-11; or any Professional Skill at (A) DX or IQ [2]-10.

* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

Customization Notes

Techs have skills appropriate to their regular tasks for the villain they work for; the skill lists include only the most common options. For example, the guy who flies the helicopter will have Piloting, while the guy who feeds the sharks and fits them for laser helmets has Animal Handling.

Lab Coat

47 points

Lab coats are upscale techs who have no better options than to work for the villain: scholars kicked out of academia for sleeping with students, doctors who have lost their licenses for addiction or malfeasance, renegade nuclear scientists, etc. They provide advanced technological skills and often direct teams of techs or perform particularly delicate tasks themselves. Lab coats usually know more about a villain's plans than the techs, or at least are better at guessing what's going on. While most of them don't come from the same culture of silence as many techs, they do depend on their employer for a paycheck, legal protection, or the goods to feed their illicit addictions. Alternatively, they are simply from relatively mundane backgrounds and are more than usually terrified of their employer.

Attributes: ST 10 [0]; DX 10 [0]; IQ 11 [20]; HT 10 [0].

Secondary Characteristics: Damage 1d-2/1d; BL 20 lbs.; HP 10 [0]; Will 11 [0]; Per 11 [0]; FP 10 [0]; Basic Speed 5.00 [0]; Basic Move 5 [0]; Dodge 8.

Advantages: Patron (Villain; 9 or less) [15]; Minion Rank (p. 31) 1 [5]; and Lab Coat (p. 31) 2 [10].

Disadvantages: Code of Honor (Minion's; p. 31) [-5] and Duty (Villain; 6 or less) [-2]. • -10 points chosen from among Per -1 [-5], Addiction [-5 to -10], Cowardice [-10*], Oblivious [-5], Secret [-5 to -10], or worsen the Duty to Involuntary [-5].

Primary Skills: † One of Bioengineering/TL (any), Counterfeiting/TL, Cryptography/TL, Engineer/TL (any), Expert Skill (any), Finance, Forgery/TL, Intelligence Analysis/TL, Market Analysis, Metallurgy/TL, Pharmacy/TL (any), Physician/TL, or Veterinary/TL, all (H) IQ+4 [12]-15; or Computer Hacking/TL or Surgery/TL, both (VH) IQ+3 [12]-14.

Secondary Skills: † Two of Research/TL (A) IQ+1 [1]-12; Chemistry/TL, Diagnosis/TL, Geology/TL (any), Mathematics/TL, or Physiology/TL (any), all (H) IQ [1]-11; Biology/TL (any) or Physics/TL, both (VH) IQ-1 [1]-10; or another primary skill at (H) IQ [1]-11 or (VH) IQ-1 [1]-10.

* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

† All skills include +2 from the Lab Coat Talent.

Guard

43 points

Naturally, villains' lairs are defended, which is where the guards come in. Though they may be dressed in the same coveralls as techs, they're also armed. They typically carry pistols if that's the best they can get away with, or sub-machine guns if they're not subject to restrictions. They also may sport truncheons (or, at suitable TLs, stun guns and TASERS as nonlethal weapons) and knives, largely for use as tools but if necessary as a close-in weapon. They can use rifles,

grenades, and support weapons like mortars and machine guns if they need to, but those are rarely carried on a daily basis.

Unless they're ideological followers of the villain, guards are generally straight-up mercenaries. Like techs, guards are selected for an ability to keep their mouths shut and not ask questions. Many are disgraced former military or police, or simply retired and unable to readjust to the civilian world. Where techs flee if they can and fight if they must, guards prefer to fight first and retreat only if they have to or are ordered to do so. If captured, they, like techs, are good at not talking and don't know much if they do talk.

Attributes: ST 11 [10]; DX 11 [20]; IQ 10 [0]; HT 10 [0].

Secondary Characteristics: Damage 1d-1/1d+1; BL 24 lbs.; HP 11 [0]; Will 11 [5]; Per 10 [0]; FP 10 [0]; Basic Speed 5.25 [0]; Basic Move 5 [0]; Dodge 8, Parry (Brawling) 8.

Advantages: Patron (Villain; 9 or less) [15].

Disadvantages: Code of Honor (Minion's; p. 31) [-5] and Duty (Villain; 9 or less) [-5]. • One of Per -1 [-5] or Incurious [-5*].

Primary Skills: Brawling (E) DX [1]-11; Soldier/TL (A) IQ [2]-10; and Streetwise (A) IQ [2]-10. • Two of Driving/TL (Automobile) (A) DX-1 [1]-10; Guns/TL (Pistol or Sub-machine Gun) (E) DX [1]-11; Knife (E) DX [1]-11; or Short-sword (A) DX-1 [1]-10.

Secondary Skills: One of Gunner (any) or Guns (any), both (E) DX [1]-11; Climbing (A) DX-1 [1]-10; First Aid or any Crewman skill, all (E) IQ [1]-10; or Swimming (E) HT [1]-10.

* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

But Seriously, Folks

Many fictional villainous organizations rest on at least mildly cinematic assumptions. Quietly gathering a body of dozens or hundreds of people with suitable technical skills to assemble and launch a city-destroying laser or operate a nuclear missile submarine is difficult enough. It's harder when it's clear that the person running the project isn't a representative of a national government or other responsible body, even harder if they're aware that their workplace has its own detention facility, and harder still if the jumpsuits are aware that they might be called on to detain any armed, dinner-jacketed characters who might blow through. Career criminals would certainly be up for the work, but they present two problems. One is that that kind of career is rarely compatible with the kinds of technical skill master villains demand. The other is that putting that many professional crooks together without discipline problems and while maintaining operational security would seem to be an insurmountable challenge.

For game purposes, ignore the logistical issues associated with a villain's HR department. Assuming he can get them, these templates deals with what those employees look like.

Sergeant

75 points

As lab coats are like techs but only more so, sergeants are experienced guards. They command groups of guards, take the lead in combat, and often direct the care (or, inevitably, abuse) of prisoners. They're tougher and have a strong tendency towards cruelty, fanaticism, or both.

Like lab coats, they're closer to the villain's plan than their underlings, but may have less useful information, since they're rarely as smart or as versed in the technical details.

Attributes: ST 12 [20]; DX 11 [20]; IQ 10 [0]; HT 11 [10].

Secondary Characteristics: Damage 1d-1/1d+2; BL 29 lbs.; HP 12 [0]; Will 12 [10]; Per 10 [0]; FP 11 [0]; Basic Speed 5.50 [0]; Basic Move 5 [0]; Dodge 8, Parry (Brawling) 9.

Advantages: Patron (Villain; 9 or less) [15] and Minion Rank (p. 31) 1 [5].

Disadvantages: Code of Honor (Minion's; p. 31) [-5] and Duty (Villain; 9 or less) [-5]. • -15 points chosen from among Per -1 [-5], Bad Temper [-10*], Bloodlust [-10*], Bully [-10*], Incurious [-5*], or Sadism [-15*].

Primary Skills: Brawling (E) DX+1 [2]-12; Guns (Pistol or Submachine Gun) (E) DX+1 [2]-12; Leadership (A) IQ+1 [4]-11; Soldier/TL (A) IQ+2 [8]-12; and Streetwise (A) IQ [2]-10.

Secondary Skills: Two of Gunner (any), Guns (any), or Knife, all (E) DX [1]-11; Climbing, Driving/TL (Automobile), or Shortsword, all (A) DX-1 [1]-10; any Crewman skill, all (E) IQ [1]-10; or Swimming (E) HT [1]-11.

* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

The Named and the Nameless

Jumpsuits are, generally speaking, nameless, faceless, and interchangeable. At most, one jumpsuit in any group will ever be addressed by name. ("Klaus is a pretty thing, isn't he? But let us discuss these matters elsewhere." Or, "Sabrina, kill this man for me.") Even then, they are only spoken about once. If mook rules are in use, they most definitely apply to jumpsuits. Nevertheless, villains may have one or two henchmen with slightly better traits who are named and definitely not mooks.

Attaché

60 points

When a villain steps out in public, he's inevitably surrounded by a cloud of dark-suited assistants who carry his briefcase, fend off reporters, answer his cell phone, open doors, and clear paths through crowds. These are the attachés.

Attachés fill dual roles of personal assistants and bodyguards. Most of the time, they're busy arranging the villain's personal logistics (hotels, transportation, restaurants, etc.) and relaying the villain's orders to both his legitimate associates and underlings (assuming he has any) and his other henchmen. However, attachés always keep an eye out for potential threats and take the necessary steps against them. Although attachés aren't soldiers, they're competent in hand-to-hand combat and can use a gun if they have to. Since they're very close to the villain, attachés are usually very loyal, but they often know a lot.

I believe in the dignity of labor, whether with head or hand; that the world owes every man an opportunity to make a living.

– John D. Rockefeller, Jr.

Attributes: ST 10 [0]; DX 11 [20]; IQ 11 [20]; HT 10 [0].

Secondary Characteristics: Damage 1d-2/1d; BL 20 lbs.; HP 10 [0]; Will 11 [0]; Per 11 [0]; FP 10 [0]; Basic Speed 5.25 [0]; Basic Move 5 [0]; Dodge 8.

Advantages: Patron (Villain; 9 or less) [15] and Minion Rank (p. 31) 2 [10].

Disadvantages: Code of Honor (Minion's; p. 31) [-5] and Duty (Villain; 9 or less) [-5]. • -10 points chosen from among Per -1 [-5], Bully [-10*], Incurious [-5*], or Workaholic [-5].

Primary Skills: Administration (A) IQ+1 [4]-12; Current Affairs/TL (Business) (E) IQ+1 [2]-12; Guns/TL (Pistol) (E) DX [1]-11; and Intimidation (A) Will [2]-11. • One of Judo (H) DX [4]-11 or Karate (H) DX [4]-11.

Secondary Skills: Two of Area Knowledge (any) (E) IQ [1]-11; Connoisseur (any) (A) IQ-1 [1]-10; Current Affairs (any) (E) IQ [1]-11; Diplomacy (H) IQ-2 [1]-9; Savoir-Faire (any) (E) IQ [1]-11; or Streetwise (A) IQ-1 [1]-10.

* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

Arm Candy

20 points

Given how tedious many attachés are, most villains like at least a few pretty faces thrown into the mix. Attractive young people can often be found strewn around the swimming pool at the villain's palatial estate, attending parties in his wake, or acting as domestic staff.

Arm candy often function as internal spies, using their personal charm and innocuous appearance to get close to people around the villain and keep an eye on their movements. Alternatively, they're simply amusements for the villain.

Attributes: ST 10 [0]; DX 10 [0]; IQ 10 [0]; HT 10 [0].

Secondary Characteristics: Damage 1d-2/1d; BL 20 lbs.; HP 10 [0]; Will 10 [0]; Per 10 [0]; FP 10 [0]; Basic Speed 5.00 [0]; Basic Move 5 [0]; Dodge 8.

Advantages: Appearance (Beautiful) [12] and Patron (Villain; 9 or less) [15].

Disadvantages: -15 points chosen from among Per -1 [-5], Code of Honor (Minion's; p. 31) [-5], Compulsive Carousing [-5*], Impulsiveness [-10*], or Incurious [-5*].

Primary Skills: Carousing (E) HT+2 [4]-12 and Sex Appeal (A) HT+4 [2]-14†.

Secondary Skills: Two of Acting (A) IQ-1 [1]-9, Connoisseur (any) (A) IQ-1 [1]-9; Housekeeping (E) IQ [1]-10, Interrogation (A) IQ-1 [1]-9, Savoir-Faire (any) (E) IQ [1]-10, or Streetwise (A) IQ-1 [1]-9.

* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

† Includes +4 from Appearance.

Customization Notes

The list of secondary skills is not intended to be exhaustive. Arm candy with particular backgrounds could easily have any number of unusual skills, though generally at a low level. For example, one villain might keep an up-and-coming polo player as her lover, who would have Riding and Sports (Polo) skill, while a wannabe entertainment mogul might keep company with someone who fancies himself a singer, with Singing and Dancing skills.

Pocket Assassin

85 points

Though attachés aren't useless in a fight, sometimes a villain needs someone a little more professionally dangerous, something between a pure thug and a highly trained killer. This is where the pocket assassin comes in. The pocket assassin provides presentable muscle. If a nosy journalist or possible secret agent needs to be dragged off and worked over, it's by a pocket assassin, possibly leading a small team of guards and attachés.

Attributes: ST 11 [10]; DX 12 [40]; IQ 11 [20]; HT 10 [0].

Secondary Characteristics: Damage 1d-1/1d+1; BL 24 lbs.; HP 11 [0]; Will 11 [0]; Per 11 [0]; FP 10 [0]. Basic Speed 5.50 [0]; Basic Move 5 [0]; Dodge 8, Parry (Karate) 9.

Advantages: Patron (Villain; 9 or less) [15] and Minion Rank (p. 31) 2 [10].

Disadvantages: Code of Honor (Minion's; p. 31) [-5] and Duty (Villain; 9 or less) [-5]. • -10 points chosen from among Per -1 [-5], Bad Temper [-10*]; Bloodlust [-10*], Bully [-10*], or Incurious [-5*].

Primary Skills: Guns/TL (Pistol) (E) DX [1]-12; Karate (H) DX [4]-12; Knife (E) DX+1 [2]-13; and Stealth (A) DX-1 [1]-11.

Secondary Skills: Two of Driving/TL (Automobile) DX-1 [1]-11; Climbing (A) DX-1 [1]-11; Savoir-Faire (any) (p. 31) (E) IQ [1]-11; Streetwise (A) IQ-1 [1]-10; or Swimming (E) HT [1]-10.

* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

TRAITS

Most jumpsuits exhibit a few of these three traits.

New Advantage: Minion Rank

Villains generally run hierarchical organizations. Techs and guards are at the bottom of the organization, usually ordered around by lab coats and sergeants. Attachés and pocket assassins rarely interact with them directly, but are very much in charge when they do. They in turn take orders from the villain himself, or perhaps a few favored henchmen.

New Talent: Lab Coat

Lab coats have good abilities within their area of expertise, but not necessarily the broad abilities granted by IQ. Instead, most have a Talent – or rather, one of a family of Talents. Lab Coat Talents

include Research, but otherwise are individually tailored to their scientific or technical specialty. For example, a doctor might have a Talent including Physician, Diagnosis, and Surgery, while a nuclear arms expert might have a Talent covering Physics and an appropriate Engineer specialty or two.

New Disadvantage: Code of Honor (Minion's)

Don't ask questions. Don't talk to anyone outside the organization about what you do. Keep your head down. Do exactly what you're told to do, even if it doesn't make any sense. Seriously, *don't ask questions*.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Matt Riggsby's master plan has taken him to glamorous locations across four continents and has now embedded him in the midst of a European technology corporation, where he is surrounded by particle accelerators and custom-tailored radioactive bio-agents. His followers include a femme fatale, a sixth-grade henchman, and several mascots who are emphatically not white cats.

THE WORLD IS ENDING



LEVEL UP NOW!

STEVE JACKSON GAMES
apocalypse.worldofmunchkin.com



DESIGNER'S NOTES

GURPS

ZOMBIES

BY SEAN PUNCH

Among Steve Jackson Games' copious writers' guidelines is a warning that "Designer's Notes" articles shouldn't be "How thrilled I was to do the project" stories, so I'll permit myself one conceit early on and then shut up: When I received the green light to write *GURPS Zombies* in May 2012, I was ecstatic! *Zombies* was something I'd wanted to write since . . . well, since I'd finished writing *GURPS Undead* back in August 1998 and realized that I hadn't said *nearly* enough about zombies.

When I outlined *Zombies* in November 2010, then, I'd already spent more than 12 years thinking about what would go into a full-length supplement about zombies. More important, I'd had a dozen years in which to watch more zombie movies and play more zombie video games. The wait proved beneficial, because at some point during it – I'd say sometime in 2002 (the year of *28 Days Later* and the *Resident Evil* movie) or 2003 (which brought us *The Walking Dead* comic and *The Zombie Survival Guide*), although 2001 marked the first "zombie walk" – zombie fiction became popular enough to enjoy near-mainstream acceptance. And while many geeks hate it when their pet topic finds a wider audience, that development was a boon for *Zombies*, because it led to a horde of zombie-related productions battling for readers and viewers. Behind those was an army of creative people working to make their personal takes on zombies memorable, if not unique.

After my last comment, I feel I should pause to acknowledge that zombies were never one-dimensional. Although a kind of canon cropped up around "classic" zombie movies (whether you believe those were the films of the '60s, '70s, or '80s) – namely, the near-mandatory apocalypse of shambling undead ghouls – this was codified in hindsight, at the end of the arc. The standard was mortared together a brick at a time, as the living-but-enslaved victims of Vodou depicted in 1930s tales were slowly transformed into the diseased army of the walking dead by directors and writers adding personal touches: the shambling gait, flesh-eating, the headshot, contagion, and "Braaaaains!" But I digress.

The point is that there were all these new ideas out there. Some fiction put the iconic undead zombie into new settings, from the icy Norwegian wilderness of *Død Snø* to the tropical Cuban streets of *Juan de los Muertos*. Other tales changed how the walking dead behaved and even how they looked to give us

the likes of *Fido* and *Les revenants*. Still other works – notably *28 Days Later*, [*Rec*], and the 2010 remake of *The Crazies* – took tropes and visuals from movies about traditional zombies and applied them to stories of living plague victims. A few went way off the reservation; consider *Pontypool*, with its presentation of zombies as living victims of a sinister meme (adapted from a 1998 novel that predated Stephen King's *Cell* by eight years).

And it wasn't just movies! Video games like *Dead Space*, *Killing Floor*, and *Left 4 Dead* presented both classic undead and new-style infected – and things hard to identify as either – in a bewildering number of varieties with bizarre mutant powers. Not that this was anything new for video games . . . *Doom* mixed sci-fi with the occult to get zombies in space in 1993 (though we had to wait until 2005 for the movie), *Resident Evil* was full of bizarre mutants by 1996, and *Half-Life* depicted zombies as living people parasitized and mutated by alien "crabs" in 1998. But the 2000s saw video games go mainstream in a big way, adding their ideas to the pot.

There were countless other influences on the myth, too. In 2005, we got superheroes as flesh-eating ghouls in *Marvel Zombies*. By 2007, articles on live insects "zombified" by real-life fungi and bacteria began to turn up in mainstream news venues. Zombies were mixed with Jane Austen's work as *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* in 2009. *The Walking Dead* hit network TV in 2010. And 2012 brought tales of frightening assaults fueled by a "zombie drug." The point is that if a genre, medium, or event *could* be tied to zombies, somebody made sure it was.

A HORDE OF IDEAS

Which interpretations went into *GURPS Zombies*, then? All of them! No idea was too weird, too silly, or too far outside canon to be omitted. The book covers the undead, the living, and edge cases such as beings constructed from second-hand body parts – and even spirits solidified in the semblance of corpses. Anything that started out as a human and ended up mindless passed muster, as long as it looked like or acted like something that somebody, somewhere identified as a zombie at some point. Fast or slow, infected or undead, mad with hunger or just plain brainless . . . it made the cut.

While I could drone on about how there are lots of zombie traits in the book (there are), complete with design rules for assembling those into zombies (ditto), there's really no better way to illustrate the work's breadth than to let the sample zombies speak for themselves:

B-Movie Ghoul: This stupid, slow, undead brain-eater comes in three varieties, one each for plague, radiation, and toxic waste. It can't "turn" the living, but you'll join it if it kills you.

Bloated Carcass: A walking cadaver, bloated with corpse gas and waiting for some clueless hero to smack it like a piñata.

Buzzing Corpse: Is this "walking corpse" dead or alive? The body is definitely dead; the bugs reanimating it aren't.

Corpse Golem: A rotting, grotesque *thing* sewn together from parts of cadavers and animated by magic.

Crazy: Some horribly infectious plagues aren't lethal but will still kill you. The crazy would just love to *murder* you.

Face-Eater: This drug-abusing maniac has the munchies all right – for your flesh!

Galvanoid: A construct made from dead bodies and brought to life – genuine *life* – by electricity. Imagine Frankenstein's monster with serious downgrades to its IQ and sanity.

Ghoul: The definitive undead corpse-eater from fantasy, with a chilling touch and a ravenous appetite.

Infected: The archetypal *living* zombie of horror cinema, made mindless and ravenous by a virulent plague. Don't get bit!

Infester: Not all brain parasites kill. Some turn their victims into living slaves – the infesters – that hunt for a new home for the next generation.

Judgment's Legionary: This is what happens when there's no room in the afterlife and dead souls are given the semblance of bodies in order to punish sinners.

Lurcher: Fantasy living dead awakened by the evil in a place rather than by magic.

Neuroid: Take a living person, remove the brain, and install a remote control to work a little high-tech voodoo.

Possessed Thrall: A living person rendered mindless by demonic possession (yes, just like in *Prince of Darkness*).

Reanimated Corpse, Mummy, and Skeleton: The fantasy undead trio found in *GURPS Magic*, reimagined a bit for *Zombies*.

ReViv™-ified: Dead or alive? Well, it has vital signs, but the nanotech that animates it will do the same for you only *after* the zombie kills you.

Selfish Dead: A spirit forced to remain in grisly material form, slave to an oath taken . . . or broken.

Soldier X: A living creature that's more than human, with the minor postscript that it died to get that way and is utterly *inhuman* in its behavior. Paging Herbert West . . .

Vodou Slave: The traditional drug-controlled servant of a *bokor*. There's nothing like the classics!

Whisperer: A living victim of contagion. To avoid catching what he has, bring earplugs, not an environment suit.

Zombot: Another remote-controlled weird-science "robot," this one made from a corpse.

In and around these special friends are step-by-step guidelines for creating your own zeds, templates for people who have to face them, rules covering the struggle (including how to handle hordes, and notes on curing and *creating* zombies), and a detailed look at the genre – in the sense of both "where we're coming from" (inspirational folklore and fiction) and "where we're going" (how to use all this stuff in your campaign).

Needless to say, all of *this* is inclusive, too. You'll find detailed rules for biohazard and infection, and for abstracting mobs of zombie attackers, if your zombies work that way. However, there's also information on lone zombies zapped to life with electricity or even played as PCs. And much more.

*GURPS Zombies is about
zombies, not disasters.*

LEFT FOR DEAD

GURPS Zombies is inclusive, but also of finite length. Since it's always good to be honest about what *isn't* in a book, here are a few cautions in that direction.

First, *Zombies* was written as an encyclopedia of everything mindless and scary made from formerly unremarkable human beings. It couldn't spare the space to be an exclusive guide to the zombie apocalypse, which is a subset of zombie fiction that requires details vastly out of proportion to its place in the genre. That is, *Zombies* is about *zombies*, not *disasters* – it isn't *GURPS Survivors*. It does include a template for survivors, guidelines for survival skills, and advice on running survival campaigns . . . but ultimately, if you're all about the bunkers and the bullet-counting, you're going to want *GURPS High-Tech* and *GURPS Low-Tech*, too.

Zombies isn't *GURPS Undead, Second Edition*, either. Where *Undead* was "all undead, including zombies," *Zombies* is "all zombies, including undead ones." There are a lot of sample undead that border on being something more than zombies, but they're still basically mindless, low-end monsters. And while there are rules for "turning" the undead, digging out of graves, and the like, such things aren't the focus of the book the way they were in *Undead*. There's detailed research here, to be sure, but it gives equal air time to all kinds of zombies – and not all zombies are walking dead.

Finally, *Zombies* isn't pure horror. It strives to be more open-minded. Sources such as *The Evil Dead*, *The Return of the Living Dead*, and *Braindead* are campy; ones like *Fido*, *Shaun of the Dead*, and *Zombieland* contain a fair bit of humor; and a few tales, such as *Dellamorte Dellamore*, aren't scary at all. *Zombies* considers the social ramifications of friendly zombies, zombies as everyday fixtures, and even the possibility of zombie PCs. To make room for this, it leaves horror-only content like extra-detailed rules for Fright Checks and Corruption where they belong: in *GURPS Horror*. It would be trivial to use the two books together to run a horror campaign, but you could just as easily refer to *GURPS Fantasy* and exploit zombies as cheap magical labor.

FROM BAD TO WORSE

One thing that *Zombies* couldn't find room for was a campaign frame, so here you go! This one is bare-bones (*Pyramid* only has so much space, too), but it includes several types of zombies – and lots of plot hooks, lurking in the words of your anonymous narrator. It's set a couple of years into the zombie apocalypse, after society has fallen apart but while memories of the causative events are still fresh in the survivors' minds.

Wanderers

Wanderers are physically weak automatons driven by moldering brains. They begin unlife as cadavers – after the satellite, humans who die with largely intact brains reanimate in (4d - HT) minutes, minimum one minute. These walking dead cannot transmit their condition.

Wanderers aren't vicious or ghoulish – they simply stagger around for four to six weeks before collapsing abruptly. Until then, they seek the bustle of human movement, causing them to mill about in "herds." In the absence of the living or other wanderers, they're attracted to bright lights, and may do dangerous things like crawl out the window of a dim room or stumble toward the headlights of an onrushing car (eggheads call this the "self-euthanizing reflex"). Deaths caused by these creatures are usually the results of the ensuing collisions, though wanderers in hot zones carry disease.

Template: Wanderer

-348 points

Wanderers who've died of communicable disease – possibly *all* wanderers in hot zones – add Pestilent Presence [1].

Attribute Modifiers: ST-1 [-10]; DX-1 [-20]; IQ-4 [-80]; HT-2 [-20].

Secondary Characteristic Modifiers: HP+6 [12]; Per+4 [20]; Basic Speed-0.25 [-5]; Basic Move-2 [-10].

Advantages: Indomitable [15]; Intact Corpse [40]; Single-Minded [5]; Unfazeable [15].

Disadvantages: Cannot Learn [-30]; Hidebound [-5]; Low Empathy [-20]; Mute [-25]; No Sense of Humor [-10]; No Sense of Smell/Taste [-5]; No Unaging [-15]; Numb [-20]; Self-Destruct [-10]; Social Stigma (Minority

Group*) [-10]; Terminally Ill (1 month) [-100]; Vulnerability (Headshots x3) [-45]; Zombie Motivation (Seek people or light, whatever the cost) [-15].

Features: No Mental Skills.

* Since society has broken down, wanderers don't qualify for Dead – and they didn't cause the apocalypse, so they don't rate Monster, either. Survivors mostly have bigger problems, and avoid wanderers as "creepy" or "diseased."

Just the Stats: Wanderer

ST: 9	HP: 15	Speed: 4.00
DX: 9	Will: 6	Move: 2
IQ: 6	Per: 10	
HT: 8	FP: N/A	SM: 0
Dodge: 7	Parry: 7 (Unarmed)	DR: 0

Defensive Slap (9): 1d-3 crushing. Reach C.

Traits: Affected as Dead; Cannot Learn; Doesn't Breathe; Doesn't Eat or Drink; Doesn't Sleep; Fragile (Unnatural); Hidebound; High Pain Threshold; Immunity to Metabolic Hazards; Indomitable; Injury Tolerance (No Blood, Unliving); Low Empathy; Mute; No Sense of Humor; No Sense of Smell/Taste; Numb; Self-Destruct; Single-Minded; Social Stigma (Minority Group); Sterile; Supernatural Features (No Body Heat, No Pulse, Pallor); Temperature Tolerance 10; Terminally Ill (1 month); Unfazeable; Unhealing (Total); Vulnerability (Headshots x3); Zombie Motivation (Seek people or light, whatever the cost).

Notes: Nonaggressive. No mental skills. Some have Pestilent Presence.

How It All Started

Nobody really knows whose satellite it was. The Americans blamed the Chinese, the Chinese blamed the Americans, the Russians blamed them both, and everybody else just issued a statement – though Japan grumbled about the conspicuous absence of a North Korean denial, and North Korea responded by pointing out how many satellites the Japanese had launched. Given what happened next, the tinfoil-hat brigade likes to say it was nobody's bird, but a probe or a weapon chucked at us by space aliens.

And "what happened next" is that corpses started to get up and walk around. In fresh graves, morgues, the bloody killing fields of African ethnic conflict . . . where there were bodies, there were walking dead. All it took was a more-or-less intact brain and enough muscle still on the bone. Fortunately, these *things* – and back then, nobody but B-movie fans and the superstitious bothered with fancy names – just wandered aimlessly. The only danger they posed was to faith and composure, though in some areas they spread disease.

Consensus was that this was a problem to be cleaned up, a process that was handled locally and mostly efficiently. Wealthy countries charged national and regional services with the task. Police, military, and disaster-management personnel – and occasionally firemen, paramedics, and even dogcatchers

– systematically corralled the dead for cremation. Less-wealthy countries opted for shooting or chopping, followed by fire pits and mass graves. Everybody figured out that what we now call *wanderers* weren't the people they once were, and would stay down if the brain was destroyed. While religious folks sometimes objected, practicality won out.

The Q Vaccine

As I said, there was a problem with folks freaking out over the walking dead, even though wanderers didn't attack people, eat flesh, or otherwise act like zombies from bad movies. The whole affair was a vicious blow to a lot of religious beliefs, and even stone-cold atheists found it unpleasant. There were also the practical dangers posed by human-sized obstacles lurching into traffic and leaving their deathbeds to plunge 10 stories onto crowded sidewalks – they seemed attracted to people and light, so this happened a lot. In places with epidemic disease, walking carriers were an even bigger concern.

Cremation was simple enough, but lots of people of faith weren't willing to give up on intact burial. Also, plenty of folks died unexpectedly on the operating table or alone at home – and in conflict zones, fighters got killed when their buddies had bigger problems to deal with, like not getting shot.

Having a body stagger out into traffic, start twitching in the middle of surgery, or stand and reveal a camouflaged position in battle – well, those were problems. And not everybody was convinced that long-term, whatever caused wanderers wouldn't have bad effects on the living. So there was tons of research into finding a solution.

The research eventually identified a bunch of remarkable proteins in wanderer brains. Nobody ever did determine whether these were the *cause* of wandering or an effect of whatever actually caused it, but in the absence of a clear-cut virus or fungus or whatever, that's where the money went. And just a year after the satellite crashed, a small biotech company in Darmstadt, Germany – Darmatech – developed their "Q Vaccine," which quickly wiped out the mystery proteins in lab tests. Darmatech got permission to seek terminally ill volunteers and "immunize" them, to see whether the subjects would return after death.

The results were unexpected. The volunteers didn't become wanderers . . . because they didn't die. Terminal cancer patients got better. In fact, every single test subject got better, regardless of the illness. And they stayed better, too.

At this point, some people claimed that our "space brothers" had fired a "star probe" our way to send along the secret of immortality as a roadmap hidden in wanderer brains. Others were more skeptical, but that didn't matter – after a few Darmatech researchers immunized loved ones against not only undeath but also *death*, word got out. Approval came hastily, the diplomatic alternative to an underground trade in immortality.

A scant two years after the satellite, Q Vaccine was for sale to the wealthy worldwide, always with promise of a price drop next quarter.

Two years, six months after the satellite, Patient Zero showed up. Willi Schreiber was a member of the first test cohort. Like all the original Q Vaccine subjects, he was on the lecture circuit; his story was that he was almost dead from AIDS one day, playing squash the next. In front of 500 witnesses, he keeled over, stood back up when people gathered around to help, and ripped into the crowd. Three hotel security guards managed to grab him, but by then it was clear that others in the audience were freaking out, too.

Similar scenes played out everywhere people had received the Q Vaccine – mostly in wealthier countries, most often in upscale areas. It was like time bombs going off in a thousand places at once. Smart people pointed out that the Q Vaccine was produced from a single, heavily replicated sample, and that maybe there was a "biological countdown" going on the whole time.

Biters, like Schreiber, were a serious problem. They were living people, unlike the wanderers who had been grieved already or forgotten in the mud. There was a lot of reluctance to act, even when they were attacking; some people actually hid raving biters at home. And almost everyone they bit joined them – you had about a minute to figure out who was infected. Anti-wanderer patrols were useless; catch poles and handcuffs were standard, but side arms weren't – and anyway, training focused on herding two-legged cattle, not fighting crazy, flesh-eating apes.

Biters

Biters are fast, aggressive carnivores with little humanity left, made all the more disturbing by the fact that they look like ordinary, uninfected people (even if they *smell* like rotten meat). They *can* eat insects, squirrels, cows, etc., but they prefer man-flesh, the smell of which drives them into a frenzy. Anyone bitten but not killed by a biter must roll vs. HT-6. Failure means becoming a biter in (HT - 3d) minutes, minimum one minute. Victims stay lucid until the change, and as there's no cure, some take their own lives first.

Biters can in theory live a normal human lifespan, relying on superior senses to hunt. However, they aren't so much tougher than uninfected people that they can shrug off the elements. In practice, they rarely outlive any other ill-equipped survivor. Thus, the largest numbers are found in sheltered places with plenty to eat – be that abandoned subway tunnels full of rats or mild wilderness full of deer.

Template: Biter

-40 points

Attribute Modifiers: ST+1 [10]; DX+1 [20]; IQ-2 [-40]; HT+1 [10].

Secondary Characteristic Modifiers: HP-1 [-2]; Per+3 [15]; Basic Speed+0.50 [10]; Basic Move+1 [5].

Advantages: Discriminatory Smell [15]; Hard to Kill 1 [2]; Hard to Subdue 1 [2]; High Pain Threshold [10]; Indomitable [15]; Striking ST 4 [20]; Unfazeable [15].

Disadvantages: Bad Smell [-10]; Berserk (Vicious, +0%) (9) [-15]; Cannot Learn [-30]; Disturbing Voice [-10]; Inhuman [-45]; Social Stigma (Monster) [-15]; Uncontrollable Appetite (Human Flesh) (9) [-22].

Features: Affected as Living; Infectious; Won't Become a Wanderer.

Just the Stats: Biter

ST: 11	HP: 10	Speed: 6.00
DX: 11	Will: 8	Move: 7
IQ: 8	Per: 11	
HT: 11	FP: 11	SM: 0

Dodge: 9 **Parry:** 8 (Unarmed) **DR:** 0

Bite (11): 1d crushing. Reach C. Often All-Out for +4 to hit!

Grapple (11): Reach C. Often All-Out for +4 to hit!

Traits: Affected as Living; Bad Smell; Berserk (Vicious) (9); Bestial; Cannot Learn; Discriminatory Smell (Smell 15); Disturbing Voice; Hard to Kill 1; Hard to Subdue 1; Hidebound; High Pain Threshold; Indomitable; Infectious; Low Empathy; No Sense of Humor; Social Stigma (Monster); Striking ST 4; Uncontrollable Appetite (Human Flesh) (9); Unfazeable.

Notes: Retains skills useful to its survival, but can have no *new* skills. Won't become a wanderer.

The Army

It took only a few days for things to get really bad. When the situation was so chaotic that the scene *did* look like a zombie movie, there was little choice but to call in the military. In oppressive countries, troops machine-gunned, firebombed, and otherwise slaughtered biters. In places with better human-rights records, soldiers merely got the wonderful job of cordoning off biter-infested areas – though everybody knew they had orders to kill strays, and lots of folks had no problem with that.

The soft touch didn't work. Psychos bent on tasting flesh kept popping up inside the barricades – not the least because nobody had yet linked the outbreak to the Q Vaccine, and plenty of high-ranking staff in command centers had had the shot. Some branches even *issued* the shot, thinking it would cure the outbreak! Mobs fought to protect sick loved ones, other mobs tried to put them down, and the military was at a loss to tell biters from rioters. And since most people hadn't saved up enough pennies for the Q Vaccine, anyone killed by a rioter or an overzealous trooper was soon a wanderer, getting in the way and confusing things further. It was one big mess of people, wanderers, and biters, in uniform and out.

That's when several armies set the *hunters* loose. Naturally, the military in powerful nations had followed the Darmatech research with interest. They had their own, parallel programs, and had an inkling that biters were in the offing. Thanks to the usual red tape (excuse me, "security and compartmentalization"), no word of this reached troops on the ground. But the eggheads had anticipated biters and deduced that biters could smell the infection, and decided that it would be good to develop that capability.

The initial effort involved biochip-based "sniffer" devices, which simply didn't work. Then somebody got the bright idea of "rehabilitating" the biters they had on ice – *of course* they had test subjects – and using these guys to hunt down other biters. It's traditional to add a cynical comment about some would-be Frankenstein noticing the biters' speed and strength, and dreaming of super-soldiers, so there you go. Anyway, this little science project worked – sort of. Hunters were assigned to units in China, Russia, the U.K., the U.S.A., and several other places; each version was a bit different, but that was mostly cosmetic.

Hunters were excellent at what they did. They could wade into a crowd and take on biters hand-to-hand with no fear of infection, subduing them without leaving a corpse to turn wanderer and without using a gun that would raise a panic. They were callous, but not crazy. Heck, they even followed orders.

The trouble was that they did what they did one biter at a time; it wasn't fast enough. In the end, they were no more effective than the cordons and machine guns. Before long, much of the developed world was eaten away. Survivors retreated to fortified survival camps besieged by seething biters and separated by vast expanses of wanderers. And *then* people discovered the hard way that the hunters were controlled by drugs that had run out or couldn't be supplied, without which they became biters with brains. That was the end of most of the camps.

To Hell and Beyond

And that's where I live – where everybody lives. We're cautious around big camps, because most of them are full of people who will shoot anything that moves faster than a wanderer, and sometimes the leader is a maniac who believes he can control hunters. In the wilderness, we have to keep a lookout for biters.

Hunters

Hunters are biters without the idiocy and blind rage, formerly controlled by drugs that are now long gone. They still retain some conditioning, but not enough to fight their desire to eat people. In fact, since much of their conditioning had to do with hunting down targets designated by commanding officers who no longer exist – along with flags, nations, and other reminders – it arguably makes them more dangerous.

People infected by hunters become biters, not other hunters (use the rules for biters). Hunters *know* this and sometimes raise hordes of infected to screen their attacks. They also like to hide in herds of "harmless" wanderers. The best that can be said about hunters is that once they die out, there won't be replacements – probably.

Template: Hunter

77 points

Attribute Modifiers: ST+1 [10]; DX+1 [20]; HT+1 [10].

Secondary Characteristic Modifiers: HP-1 [-2]; Per+3 [15]; Basic Speed+0.50 [10]; Basic Move+1 [5].

Advantages: Discriminatory Smell [15]; Hard to Kill 1 [2]; Hard to Subdue 1 [2]; High Pain Threshold [10]; Indomitable [15]; Striking ST 4 [20]; Unfazeable [15].

Disadvantages: Bad Smell [-10]; Disturbing Voice [-10]; Hidebound [-5]; Low Empathy [-20]; No Sense of Humor [-10]; Odious Racial Habit (Eats Humans)* [-15].

Features: Affected as Living; Infectious (Creates Biters); Won't Become a Wanderer.

* Functionally the same as Social Stigma (Monster), but makes the reasons a lot clearer!

Just the Stats: Hunter

ST: 11	HP: 10	Speed: 6.00
DX: 11	Will: 10	Move: 7
IQ: 10	Per: 13	
HT: 11	FP: 11	SM: 0
Dodge: 9	Parry: 8 (Unarmed)	DR: 0

Bite (11): 1d crushing. Reach C. Often All-Out for +4 to hit!

Grapple (11): Reach C. Often All-Out for +4 to hit!

Traits: Affected as Living; Bad Smell; Discriminatory Smell (Smell 17); Disturbing Voice; Hard to Kill 1; Hard to Subdue 1; Hidebound; High Pain Threshold; Indomitable; Infectious; Low Empathy; No Sense of Humor; Odious Racial Habit (Eats Humans); Striking ST 4; Unfazeable.

Notes: Actual soldiers often possess superior basic stats and skills. Those with Tactics, especially, do things like herd wanderers and hide among infected. Won't become a wanderer.

And Beyond

All kinds of *other* zombies could easily show up. Biting wanderers – the result of flawed immunity or a mutated pathogen – might combine a wanderer’s undead toughness (Doesn’t Breathe, Immunity to Metabolic Hazards, Injury Tolerance, Temperature Tolerance, etc.) with a biter’s viciousness (notably Berserk, Striking ST, and Uncontrollable Appetite), and lurch around infecting the living. New-and-improved hunters could be set free from hidden labs or emerge spontaneously in the wild, exhibiting higher ST, DX, and HT, keener senses, and advantages such as Combat Reflexes. And if biters manage to reproduce, any surviving offspring might well be *different*, having never known uninfected life.

Survivors don’t only have to deal with zombies, though. In former developed countries, there are camps defended by survivalists or remnants of the military, inclined to shoot first and ask questions later. Elsewhere, authoritarian regimes are scarier than the monsters. And all over, there are gangs taking advantage of the fact that the rule of law is extinct. That doesn’t even consider the possibility that the tales of secret underground labs are true. Humans might be the worst foes of all.

Then again, in the wilderness far from other humans, survivors must forage and hunt – and they’ll have to compete with biters and hunters for prey. It’s a hard choice.

off looking for them don’t come back. They probably starve, die of disease, or get taken by hunters or biters. There are vague tales of security forces in bio-hazard suits showing up and gunning down these adventurers, but it’s a lot more likely that the holes in their skulls were put there by other survivors who mistook them for hunters or just wanted to steal their gear.

And there’s talk of some biters not being completely immune, and returning as nasty, biting wanderers. Word of hunters with bizarre mutations. Rumors of secret underground labs experimenting on zombies just to see what they can create. Heck, some people claim that biters can eat animals and even reproduce – that they’re “the next step in evolution.” I’ve seen some pretty weird stuff out there, that’s for sure.

People say that if we let the biters starve and freeze, we’ll be able to reclaim the cities in a year or two. That assumes there are enough of us left to do the reclaiming. Folks *say* a lot of things – that’s how we got in this state, after all. What I know for sure is that we should be thankful that the infection isn’t in the water, game, or crops. You can still forage and grow stuff if you’re careful, or scavenge a city or trade with a camp if you dare. So far, the sickness isn’t in what you eat, but in what tries to eat you.

We have to watch for wanderers, too, because they bring along diseases like plain old cholera when they come looking for company. Also, hunters love to hide in wanderer herds; they’re crafty that way.

There’s talk of somehow fleeing to countries that were too poor to get the Q Vaccine or develop hunters, or that were tough enough on biters that they contained the outbreak, but that’s wishful thinking. Those places have become scary dictatorships, if they weren’t already. Your survival odds aren’t much better. The big difference is that your choices are “starvation or execution” instead of “starvation or infection.”

There’s also talk that the corporations and militaries that did all the research holed up in underground bunkers when they realized that everything was going to hell. People who go

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sean “Dr. Kromm” Punch set out to become a particle physicist in 1985, ended up the **GURPS** Line Editor in 1995, and has engineered rules for almost every **GURPS** product since. He developed, edited, or wrote dozens of **GURPS** *Third Edition* projects between 1995 and 2002. In 2004, he produced the **GURPS Basic Set**, *Fourth Edition* with David Pulver. Since then, he has created **GURPS Powers** (with Phil Masters), **GURPS Martial Arts** (with Peter Dell’Orto), **GURPS Zombies**, and the **GURPS Action**, **GURPS Dungeon Fantasy**, and **GURPS Power-Ups** series . . . among other things. Sean has been a gamer since 1979. His non-gaming interests include cinema, mixology, and Argentine tango. He lives in Montréal, Québec with his wife, Bonnie.

GURPS Fourth Edition



CREATURES OF THE NIGHT™

Volumes 1-5 are ready to haunt you.

warehouse23.com



STEVE JACKSON GAMES

RANDOM THOUGHT TABLE

IT'S A *HEROIC* DOOMSWORD NOW!

BY STEVEN MARSH, *PYRAMID* EDITOR

In the original *Star Wars* – or, if you're under 40, *Star Wars: A New Hope Now Get Off My Lawn* – the climactic moment comes when Luke Skywalker pulls off a million-to-one-shot by ~~spending a Force point~~ using the Force. So, here's a thought exercise for you. What if the Death Star weren't easily blown up? What if the heroes needed to initiate a raid aboard the Death Star similar to the Princess-rescue scene earlier in the movie (or perhaps even *during* that earlier scene), which resulted in them seizing control of the battle station?

Ignore for a moment the logistics of how to evict umpteen jillion Stormtroopers and Imperial soldiers; while that may seem insurmountable, Coruscant – the Imperial Center of the Empire – is shown (at least in the Special Editions of *Return of the Jedi*) to be celebrating after the death of the Emperor. So if a planet-wide stronghold of Imperial rule can be overthrown via a fairly symbolic defeat, it should be feasible to stage a coup on the smaller-than-planet-sized Death Star. (*How* it happens isn't important; it wouldn't be the biggest leap in logic in the movie series.)

So, the heroes have control of a weapon of almost unimaginable proportions. What do they *do* with it?

One of the more obvious choices would be “blow it up.” That would certainly be in keeping with the spirit of the endeavor, and it would suit their moral and heroic bent. However, it'd also seem like a colossal waste; the destruction of the original Death Star at the Battle of Yavin was a kill-or-be-killed mission against a planet-destroying device that had to be stopped before it . . . um . . . finished flying around a planet to get to the Rebel moon base. (That's one of those aforementioned leaps in logic.) In comparison, a more leisurely demolition of it would take a lot more deliberate wasting of its potential.

Alternatively, the Rebels could use it as a weapon. It might seem that the Empire would have little choice but to surrender to its might. However, the Empire probably knows those Rebels are too goody-goody to actually blow up a planet, and if you don't do that with the Death Star, what do you have it for? Even if the Rebels merely used it as a mobile platform to stage attacks, the Empire could probably make a fair bit of diplomatic embarrassment out of those holier-than-thou

Rebels using something called a “Death Star” for diplomatic missions. If the Rebels do keep it intact, there's always the possibility it could fall into Imperial hands again.

That meaty prelude brings us to our theme of villainous tools. Namely, what happens when the heroes end up with them? The nature of the adversary's toys – and what the heroes do or don't do with them – can provide food for thought, open up new plot possibilities, and give the players new avenues for roleplaying . . . or perhaps new resources in their own exploits.

IT'S ONLY VILLAINOUS WHEN *THEY* DO IT

The most obvious – perhaps even the default expectation – is that tools are tools, and it's what you do with them where the morality shines. If Slithaar the Sinister is menacing the countryside with his +5 Sword of Awesome . . . well, now it's the *heroes'* +5 Sword of Awesome.

This doesn't need to be a cut-and-dried example of tools being blameless to be an option; horrific games such as *Call of Cthulhu* get a lot of their tension from heroes' need to increase their knowledge by studying unspeakable tomes confiscated from questionable sources, going through the same damning tradeoff between “sanity” and “knowledge” that most go through in doctoral programs . . . only more so.

If the heroes decide to start using the villains' stuff, they might find themselves biting off more than they can chew . . . which can easily lead to one of the other possibilities here.

CONTAIN YOUR EXCITEMENT (AND EVIL ROBOT ARMOR)

Another common occurrence for heroes who end up with adversaries' goodies is to keep them, but not to use them. This can take the form of trophies, a backroom of miscellaneous gear, or whatever. (**Question:** Why does Batman have a giant mechanical dinosaur in his Batcave? **Answer:** Wouldn't you?!)

In a lot of ways, “containment” is a punt of an answer; it avoids most of the potential problems of tinkering with the bad guys’ stuff, and it keeps the heroes’ options open for dealing with future challenges by maintaining the stuff relatively intact – which is convenient for any villains who want to use it. How easy or difficult the villainous tools are to access determines possibilities; keeping the things in a nearby glass case at Benevelus HQ is handier than sticking it in an unlabeled wooden crate in the middle of a desert warehouse, but it’s also the first place the surprisingly treacherous Agent Judas might loot at his sudden-but-inevitable betrayal. Players who enjoy planning often delight in coming up with the exact logistics of organizing and containing confiscated goodies.

Confiscated items are also a cornucopia of potential growth for heroes looking to expand their abilities, whether by combing through arcane tombs, dismantling and inspecting unusual gadgets, or interrogating blood-drinking familiars. Players and the GM looking to justify some new ability or raised competency can do worse than saying, “I learned it by studying our contained loot.”

MAYBE WE COULD REPURPOSE THE FLESH GOLEMS AS BUTLERS

A middle ground between using an item as-is and storing it away is to try to figure out something else to do with it. This is especially useful with gear that has strong utility, but also has aspects that are unsavory or of questionable morality.

Maybe the Rebel Alliance can ignore the whole planet-destroying aspect of its new “Hope Star” and instead just utilize its abilities as a gargantuan hyperspace-capable base of operations. Perhaps the enemy’s Castle of Doom just needs a nice coat of paint and some wooden planks over the bloody pit of horror to become a new base of operations.

Repurposing equipment seems like a best-of-both-worlds solution, but it has its own problems. First off, the villains’ gear wasn’t a be-all solution if the heroes ended up with it. Second, it can be a real problem if the stuff has any corruptive influence, which can be overt or subtle (“Everyone who’s owned the Ring of Plutonium has died of a horrible wasting disease, but we’re pure of heart!”). Third, if the heroes are holding back on using some aspects of the tool, the temptation might always be lurking to tapping into it to its full potential. Finally, evil accoutrements often have critical flaws or exploits – which might explain how the heroes ended up with them in the first place. This in turn could place the heroes in the odd position of needing to work around them. (“We have reason to believe the Imperial forces will be attempting to fire proton torpedoes at the Hope Star’s thermal exhaust port . . .”)

WE NEED TO DEAL WITH THE LASERBOMB – FETCH MY HAMMER!

The most decisive to take care of the villains’ stuff once you’ve alleviated them of that problem (along with their lives)

is to destroy it. Such efforts usually break down into two broad categories:

- Pretty easy.
- An epic pain-in-the-posterior.

Smashing it with a hammer, running it over with the Chiropteramobile, or otherwise transforming it from large pieces into smaller ones are all good options for most standard villainous tools the heroes don’t want to deal with. The biggest challenges are usually hazardous power sources or toxic elements . . . which are also good components for heroes to repurpose for other uses (as noted previously).

On the other end of the spectrum are the royal pains. From a certain point of view, the entirety of the *Lord of the Rings* is cleaning up a mess that wasn’t resolved in *The Hobbit*. (Of course, if the only way to deal with the One Ring is a trip to Mount Doom, then any effort to resolve that hobbit-y plot point would’ve resulted in a side trek roughly the size of the *Lord of the Rings* . . .) Generally speaking, the better it is for the world it’d be for the villain’s thingee to be destroyed, the bigger pain it’ll be to do so. However, such efforts are also suitably epic. Perhaps the coolest thing the GM can do to exploit this possibility is to have an mission against a villain that’s easier than expected, where the whole point is for the heroes to acquire the MacGuffin of Evilocity . . . and the real adventure/mission is to destroy the stupid thing.

Who? Top. Men.

It’s entirely possible for the heroes not to deal with the villains’ goodies, but to “outsource” to another agency (the government, an allied group, the Galactic Police, or whomever). That agency will likely follow one of the courses of action here to resolve the issue.

Of course, the potential downside to not having to deal with such problems themselves is that whatever actions the agency takes might not meet with the approval of the heroes. Thus, the PCs might be nervous when (say) former nemeses show up on the side of the heroes clearly showing signs of having been brainwashed by Dr. Hypnoto’s confiscated mind-control ray . . . especially when the heroes recall that they themselves were able to break the control ray’s effects when subjected to enough mental stress and anguish.

The GM who want to allow heroes to end up with villainous gear has a big challenge, but it can also be a real opportunity for good gaming, either to ramp up the obstacles for the heroes (since they now have cool gear), provide new opportunities for heroic growth, or as a pretext for an even *more* amazing adventure. Even when the villains have been defeated, they still make for good gaming!

ABOUT THE EDITOR

Steven Marsh is a freelance writer and editor. He has contributed to roleplaying game releases from Green Ronin, West End Games, White Wolf, Hogshead Publishing, and others. He has been editing *Pyramid* for over 10 years; during that time, he has won four Origins awards. He lives in Indiana.

ABOUT *GURPS*

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of *GURPS* players. Our address is SJ Games, P.O. Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) any time you write us! We can also be reached by email: info@sjgames.com. Resources include:

New supplements and adventures. *GURPS* continues to grow – see what’s new at gurps.sjgames.com.

Warehouse 23. Our online store offers *GURPS* adventures, play aids, and support in PDF form . . . digital copies of our books, plus exclusive material available only on Warehouse 23! Just head over to warehouse23.com.

Internet. Visit us on the World Wide Web at sjgames.com for errata, updates, Q&A, and much more. To discuss *GURPS* with our staff and your fellow gamers, visit

our forums at forums.sjgames.com. The *Pyramid* web page is pyramid.sjgames.com.

Bibliographies. Many of our books have extensive bibliographies, and we’re putting them online – with links to let you buy the resources that interest you! Go to each book’s web page and look for the “Bibliography” link.

Errata. Everyone makes mistakes, including us – but we do our best to fix our errors. Up-to-date errata pages for all *GURPS* releases, including this book, are available on our website – see above.

Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the *GURPS Basic Set, Fourth Edition*. Page references that begin with B refer to that book, not this one.

STUCK FOR AN ADVENTURE? NO PROBLEM.

**Warehouse 23 sells high-quality
game adventures and supplements
in print and PDF formats.**

- Free downloadable adventures for *GURPS*, *In Nomine*, and *Traveller*!
- Fun gaming accessories – shot glasses, shirts, specialty six-siders, and more!
- PDFs from Atlas Games, Amarillo Design Bureau, Pelgrane Press, Goodman Games, and many others – plus gems from the up-and-comers.
- Original material for *Transhuman Space* and new *GURPS* supplements from Kenneth Hite, Phil Masters, David Pulver, Sean Punch, and William Stoddard!
- Fully searchable files of *GURPS Fourth Edition* supplements.
- Digital editions of out-of-print classics, from *Orcslayer* and the complete run of *ADQ* to *GURPS China* and *GURPS Ice Age*.
- Buy board games and roleplaying PDFs in the same order!
Download digital purchases again whenever you need to.



STEVE JACKSON GAMES
warehouse23.com