

MONGOOSE PUBLISHING PRESENTS



# Signs & Portents

39

Roleplayer

soul and steel

We begin our serialisation of this unreleased WARS supplement

the corruption of ikaya

Fight Giaks and sail the seas in the first part of this epic Lone Wolf adventure

Plus... the final segment of Legend of the Rangers, rune spells for RuneQuest, sanguine monsters for d20, Rico Dredd, and exciting news for Lone Wolf fans!

SGP Roleplayer 39

December 2006

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Well, big news this month! Between working with Lone Wolf Development to get RuneQuest integrated into their rather ace Hero Lab system, and working on developing our own Lone Wolf product line, and the timely arrival on my desk of Corruption of Ikaya, which you can see towards the end of this issue, it's been a month of Kai-flavoured excitement. We all love Magnamund here.

To demonstrate, I present a very brief Lone Wolf adventure of my own devising:

**1**

You are Lone Wolf, last of the Kai. What do you want for dinner? If you choose the chicken and mushroom bake, turn to **4**. If you would rather eat the tasty steak and kidney pie, go to **3**. Otherwise, if you have a MEAL, you may remove it from your action chart and go to **6**.

**2**

The pie was poisoned! However, the potent toxin is no match for your Kai powers and you find it adds a piquant flavour to your meal. Turn to **6**.

**3**

Do you possess the Magnakai Discipline of Nexus? If so, turn to **2**. If not, turn to **5**.

**4**

The chicken and mushroom bake is extremely good, if a little hot. Fortunately, your basic Kai training of Mind Over Matter protects you from food burns. Turn to **6**.

**5**

Suddenly, your stomach starts to cramp. Within minutes, the poison concealed in the delicious ale gravy has spread throughout your body and brought an agonising death. Your adventure is over.

**6**

Yum. You have successfully eaten dinner. Sommerlund celebrates.

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# EYE ON MONGOOSE



Lone Wolf Development, Inc. have announced that they have entered into a licensing agreement with Mongoose Publishing that will allow Lone Wolf to produce *Hero Lab* data files for the *RuneQuest* Roleplaying Game. *RuneQuest* data files are tentatively scheduled to release in Spring 2007, and will be available exclusively via electronic download at [www.wolflair.com](http://www.wolflair.com). *Hero Lab's* state-of-the-art character creation and evolution capabilities are uniquely suited to accommodate the rules and genres of an ever-widening variety of roleplaying games.

"We are thrilled to be able to provide support for one of the most venerable games in roleplaying," said Lone Wolf Development President Rob Bowes. "*Hero Lab* will be a tremendous boon to *RuneQuest* players of every experience level."

Alexander Fennell, co-founder and co-owner of Mongoose Publishing, was equally enthusiastic. "We are excited to be working with Lone Wolf Development on this project. Players of *RuneQuest* will find the tools available to them with this software to be of great benefit."

*About Lone Wolf Development, Inc.* – Lone Wolf Development was founded in 1994 by Rob Bowes as a software consulting firm. In 1998, the company released its first self-published software product, *Army Builder*, which almost immediately became the gold standard of miniatures game software. In 2002, the company unveiled *Card Vault*, which applied *Army Builder's* point-and-click construction technology to collectible card and collectible miniature games. *Hero Lab* will retail at \$29.99 US, and will be available from leading hobby retailers, as well as online at [www.wolflair.com](http://www.wolflair.com), just in time for the holiday season in 2006.

*About Mongoose Publishing* - Based in Swindon, UK, Mongoose Publishing was founded in 2001 and within 6 months became the UK's largest publisher of roleplaying games. Mongoose Publishing has expanded its product range with the award-winning *Starship Troopers* and *A Call to Arms* miniature games. Backed by properties such as *Babylon 5*, *Conan*, *Paranoia*, *Starship Troopers*, and *RuneQuest*, Mongoose Publishing continues to provide gamers with fantastic worlds in which to immerse themselves, and the company has become a recognized force in the world of hobby games.

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# LONE WOLF

In 2007 Mongoose Publishing will be bringing you a massive selection of Lone Wolf products to thrill fans, both old and new:

## Gamebooks

We will be reissuing the entire original Lone Wolf series from books 1 to 28. Fans of the first Lone Wolf book, *Flight From The Dark*, should prepare themselves for a retelling of the original story as Joe Dever is to rewrite his seminal book to mirror the upcoming 2008 computer game release. No longer will you begin the adventure waking from unconsciousness to discover the Kai Monastery in ruins. Now you are there when the Darklords attack, fighting alongside your Kai masters in what will be their last battle, clearing Giak and Drakkarim assault troops from the monastery halls, defending the battlements as wave upon wave of Kraan come sweeping in to attack, fighting your way to the top of the Tower of the Sun to trigger the beacon that will warn Sommerlund that the invasion has begun, and escaping through the secret tunnel in the Grand Master's vault that will take you to the relative safety of the surrounding forest.

The gamebooks will not only contain the original Lone Wolf saga with all new cover and internal artwork, but will also feature a bonus tale in each book, following a different character that Lone Wolf meets in his epic saga. These new stories will allow readers to play as these characters and learn secrets that even Lone Wolf never discovered.

Lone Wolf's most popular companion will also be appearing in gamebook form, as a series of Banedon stories will also be produced in 2007. The first of these tales will be an extension of the adventure featured in the *Magnamund Companion*, as Banedon desperately makes his way from Toran to warn the Kai of the impending invasion. Now Banedon will accompany Lone Wolf during part of his adventure as they evade the agents of the Darklands and make their way to Holmgard.

Not only this, but Joe Dever is also currently working on the last four Lone Wolf gamebooks (29-32) to complete his epic saga. These will be produced in 2007 and will be printed by Mongoose Publishing throughout 2008. Prepare yourselves, for these final adventures will see Lone Wolf and his allies facing their most challenging enemies yet!

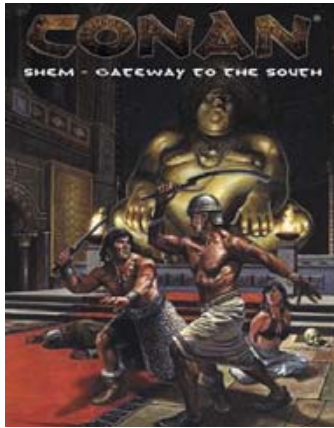
While you will be able to pick these new Lone Wolf books up from your local book store, we will also have them available from our website, and there will be a special treat in store for dedicated fans. Whether you take a subscription out to be sent the gamebooks as soon as they are released, or simply collect them one by one at your pleasure, anyone who orders the complete set from us (over whatever time period) will also be sent their own replica of the Sommerswerd, free of charge. We will have pictures of this magnificent blade next year, before the gamebooks become available.

## Novels

More? Alright then; Mongoose Publishing will also be producing a range of original Lone Wolf novels featuring all new characters. The first two trilogies will begin in 2007 with more to come in 2008. War on a massive scale will be the main feature of the first trilogy as the valiant crusaders of Lencia take on the might of the Drakkarim of Nyras. The second trilogy will see the rise of a great evil that could threaten the safety of all Magnamund...

## Roleplaying Game

And the future of the roleplaying game? Well, we have decided to release a new Lone Wolf RPG alongside the gamebooks, with mechanics based on (though expanded from) the system found in the gamebooks themselves so that readers old and new can experience Lone Wolf adventures with their friends. Our intention here is to a) give Lone Wolf RPG fans a quick and easy to learn system allowing them to tour Magnamund, but mostly for b) a fond hope that we can bring new players into the hobby using the same road that we took all those years ago.

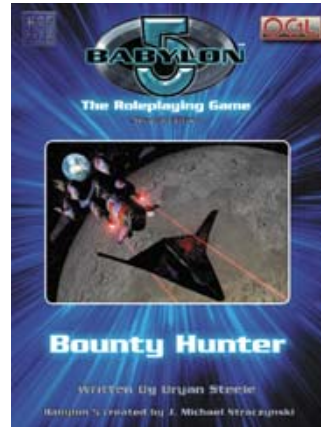


### Conan: Shem - Gateway to the South

Trade and debauchery, caravans and raiders, luxury and aridity, a land of elite warriors and shrewd merchants has intrigued readers for decades, but has never been fully examined. Now, Shem, the Gateway to the South, is finally revealed. The people of the vast meadowlands in their enigmatic zikkurats and the nomad clans of the eastern deserts are studied in great detail in this exhaustively researched volume for Conan the Roleplaying Game.

Find out what being a Shemite means and explore their divided culture. Learn of the mighty asshuri and the military might of this fantastic Hyborian Age land, a land whose sons are highly sought as skilled mercenaries. Explore the zikkurats of the gods and walk through the streets of Akbitana.

Shem is a perfect setting for high adventure in true sword-and-sorcery style. This book gives Players and Games Masters alike the resources to bring the dichotomy of Shem to life.

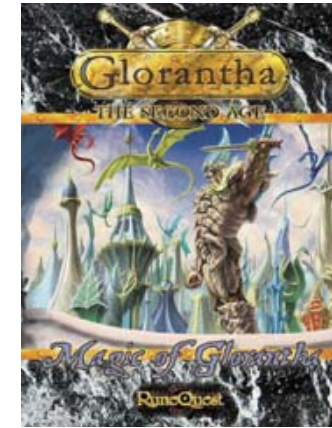


### Babylon 5: Bounty Hunter

Bounty Hunter is a guide to the world of freelance agents trained to bring their targets back from the far reaches of the Babylon 5 galaxy. These brave souls take up contracts from all walks of life to make their living. Corporations and governments alike look to bounty hunters to bring in or eliminate terrorists, revolutionaries, troublemakers and sometimes even actual criminals.

The career of the bounty hunter can be dangerous, even deadly. Depending on the kind of assignments they choose, who is contracting them and where they must go to retrieve the target, their lives can be at risk everywhere they go.

With the information contained within Bounty Hunter, both players and Games Masters should have all the power they need at their fingertips to offer the services of 'personal acquisition' through their own telling of tales and creation of Babylon 5 roleplaying characters. With the right mixture of raw talent, skill and a touch of luck – the next million-credit bounty could be theirs to track, confront and hopefully bring in. Or perhaps it will be the bounty placed upon them.



### Magic of Glorantha

To be a magician in the Imperial Age is to know, without a shadow of doubt, that you command the most powerful magic that can ever be harnessed by mortals. The sorcerer-lords of the God Learners and the Dragonspeakers of the EWF possess power far above that of the other Gloranthan cultures. This is as it should be in this era of empires that threaten the stability of the world itself.

Magic of Glorantha details the spectacular magical and mystical powers of the two greatest empires to ever stride the Gloranthan stage. From the draconic mysticism of the EWF to the heroquesting grandeur of the God Learners, this book covers all the reality-shattering power that eventually brings low an entire world. Including a host of new runic powers for the more mundane Rune Magic and detailed descriptions for some of the greatest and most influential magicians of the Second Age, Magic of Glorantha is invaluable for any Games Master or player wishing to capture the essence of mythic magic in the Second Age.

The stage is set for the death of empires.

# Techno-Mages

By Mark Howe

Techno-Mages are the equivalent of wizards or spellcasters in the *Babylon 5 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition* RPG. While the special abilities Techno-Mages employ may appear to be magic, these powers are actually based on highly advanced technology implanted within and throughout their bodies. The source of this technology is unknown to all but the highest level of mages – those on the Circle and those who are the direct descendants of Wierden (i.e. those whose training can be traced back to the original founder of the Techno-Mage order). Most mages don't bother to question the source of their powers, and the Circle reprimands those that do, for reasons that anyone who has read the Techno-Mage history will understand.

**Starfarers:** The Techno-Mages are one of the few groups who spend a great deal of time among the stars, watching, listening, learning, and occasionally, just once in a while interacting and guiding. Thanks to their technology and 'magic' they are able to scout deep into the void with ease, watching for stirrings among the dead and forgotten regions of space and exploring without significant risk.

As of 2259, with the realisation that the Shadows were once again returning the Techno-Mages decided to hide as opposed to risking their lives. For the next two years they remained secluded away and it is highly unlikely that any will be seen during this period.

**Characteristics:** Techno-Mages are powerful, but at their core they are ordinary beings that can be affected just like anyone else can. If caught by surprise, or if their defences are penetrated, a Techno-Mage can be knocked unconscious or killed just as easily as the next person.

**Background:** Most Techno-Mages are selected at a very young age. Many are children, either legitimately or illegitimately, of a mage. Some are orphans in whom their teachers saw a spark of something promising. A few are given up as tribute to a mage for services rendered. It is not unheard of for a Techno-Mage who seeks an apprentice to agree to provide aid in exchange for a child to raise and train as his 'heir.'

It is almost unheard of for a Techno-Mage to accept anyone who comes to him asking for training. Those who come asking for power usually want it for all the wrong reasons. The Techno-Mage order is well aware of the temptations their abilities provide, and will quickly reject anyone who succumbs to this pressure.

A mage's training begins immediately. From a young age, the apprentice is schooled in techniques of mental and physical discipline, while being taught the seven principles of technomancy: solidarity, secrecy, mystery, magic, science, knowledge, and good. These seven tenets define what it is to be a mage, and are collectively known as the Code. The youth's education and exercises proceed for years as his mind and body are prepared for what is

to come. If the apprentice fails to accept the Code, or his body is deemed too weak to accept the implants, he is quietly released from service and returned to his people. After that, he is forgotten, and other mages are no longer permitted to interact with him.

A mage first begins to experience what it means to have implanted technology once he receives his chrysalis. This item, designed specifically for him, attaches to the back and connects to the spinal cord and brain stem. The chrysalis can be activated and deactivated at will by the apprentice's master, allowing the student to practice without risk of injury to himself or others. Apprentices are not normally allowed to employ their chrysalis without supervision, although this rule is relaxed as a student becomes more and more adept.

As time passes, the master permits the apprentice longer and longer periods on his own, where he develops his own methods for employing the technology. Each mage 'sees' the magic in his mind in a different way, depending on his own personality and aptitudes. Some focus on mathematical and scientific aspects of the technology, while others perceive spells as intricate strokes of art. A mage's methods are unique to himself, and because of this, he cannot teach new spells to others. A mage can see a spell's result and create his own spell to perform the same function, but only using his own unique 'language.'

Once a mage has completed his training, he undertakes a final initiation, called the Becoming, in which his master tests his worthiness to advance to full mage status. A master must be very careful to ensure that his student actually meets all the requirements and is of sound mind, because if the apprentice later proves to be flawed, it is the master who will have to answer to the Circle. Each master tests his student in his own way, ensuring that all seven tenets of technomancy are properly understood and followed.

Once the Becoming is complete, the chrysalis is removed and the complete set of implants are installed. This process takes several days and can be quite painful, but a good student will be prepared for this. Once the installation is complete, the technology never leaves the mage, and he is beyond the direct control of his master. The full-fledged Techno-Mage takes his place with the others of his kind, and sets out to make his way in the Universe.

**Races:** Techno-Mages can be of any humanoid race, although Humans seem to be the most prevalent, perhaps because their bodies are most adaptable to the technology. Any such race must be a vertebrate with a nervous system reasonably similar to that of a Human, Minbari, Drazi, or other humanoid. The technology can adapt to many different types of intelligent creature, but it does have its limits.

**Other Classes:** Because of the intense training required to prepare the body and mind for the rigours of technomancy, a character who begins play as a Techno-Mage must remain with the class exclusively until his Becoming (at least 4<sup>th</sup> level). After this he may explore other options and multiclass into other classes if desired.

When multiclassing a Techno-Mages total number of levels in his 'Other' classes may never exceed his Techno-Mage levels. So for example, a 4<sup>th</sup> level Techno-Mage/2<sup>nd</sup> level agent/2<sup>nd</sup> level soldier *must* 'level up' in the Techno-Mage class, or any Techno-Mage prestige class, before he may again raise any of his other classes.

Techno-Mages may never possess telepathic powers of any sort. Telepathy interferes with the technology for reasons that no Techno-Mage understands. If an individual has telepathic ability, even in the slightest, this will be identified early on in their training and their apprenticeship will end. As such it goes without saying that Techno-Mages may never multi class as telepaths, nor may they take the Latent Telepath feat or any other telepath feat.

**Examples:** Alwyn, Elric, Galen.



## Game Rule Information

Techno-Mages have the following game statistics.

**Abilities:** Unlike any other Base Class, Techno-Mages have attribute requirements, because their bodies and minds must be able to withstand the strain of employing the magic and accepting the implants. All Techno-Mages find a high Wisdom and Constitution useful. In addition, a good Charisma and Intelligence are also of great benefit to a Techno-Mage.

**Special:** As a result of the requirements on mind and body the training requires to burden the strain and accept the implants any character wishing to take this class must have a Wisdom of 13+ and a Constitution of 12+ in order to be able to do so.

**Initial Hit Points:** 6

**Additional Hit Points:** 1

## Class Skills

The Techno-Mages class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Computer Use (Int), Concentration (Con), Intrigue (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (any) (Int), Linguistics (Int), Magery (Int+Wis+Cha), Notice (Wis), Operations (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Subterfuge (Dex) and Technical (any) (Int).

**Skill Points At 1<sup>st</sup> Level:** (6+ Int modifier) x 4.

**Skill Points At Each Additional Level:** 6 + Int modifier.

## Influence

**Initial Influence:** 2d4 Influence with the Techno-Mages.



**Additional Influence:** Each level, Techno-Mage influence and any other two influences increase by +1.

## Class Features

**Starting Credits:** A Techno-Mage begins the game with 1d6 x 50 credits.

**Weapon Proficiency:** Techno-Mages receive no proficiency with any weapons. Their training is focused entirely on the control of their technology, which is preferable to any other sort of combat.

**Spells:** At the start of play, a Techno-Mage knows a number of spells equal to 5 + his Intelligence modifier. Each level thereafter, he learns a number of new spells, based on his Intelligence modifier, plus 1d4 as shown on the class progression chart below. These spells may be selected from those listed, starting on page 45 of the *Techno-Mages Fact Book*. The mage may choose to learn any spells for which he meets the requirements. There are no 'levels' of spells, but many have prerequisites that must be met, most of which are other spells. Once he finishes his apprenticeship a Techno-Mage does not need training to discount new spells – instead, he develops them on his own, as he comes to learn more and more about the technology within his body.

**Power Points:** Each level, a mage earns a number of power points for use when casting spells. Power points are expended when spells are cast, and return slowly over time as the mage rests and meditates. For more information on this new statistic, see the next section.

**Bonus Feat:** At 1<sup>st</sup> level, a Techno-Mage receives one bonus feat. This must be selected from the list of mage feats presented in the *Techno-Mages Fact Book*. The Techno-Mage receives a similar bonus feat again at 4<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> levels. These bonus feats are in addition

to the standard feats all characters receive every third level.

**Chrysalis:** At 1<sup>st</sup> level, a Techno-Mage gains his power from a device called a *chrysalis*. This piece of highly advanced technology attaches to the spinal cord via a specially implanted series of nodes planted amidst the vertebrae and at the base of the skull. Each chrysalis functions only for the mage it is designed for. The mage may not attach or remove his chrysalis, but his master or any other mage may do so as a full round action. Any mage may also deactivate or reactivate a chrysalis by grasping it as a standard action; there is no skill check required to turn it on or off. The chrysalis is a training tool, and as such is designed to be quickly activated or deactivated as the master sees fit.



While wearing the chrysalis, the character may employ any mage abilities without limitation. However, his master or any other mage may monitor his activities at will from any location, so long as the character is within the Techno-Mage FTL network, as described below (i.e. anywhere within known space).

The chrysalis is a visible piece of equipment that hangs down the back. It has a hardness of 10 and 20 hit points. Each hit point of damage it sustains produces a –1 penalty to all Magery skill checks. Repairing a point of damage requires a successful Technical (electronics) checks at DC 20, but this can only be done by a Techno-Mage who has completed his apprenticeship and is now a full fledged mage. A Techno-Mage cannot build a chrysalis – the device can only be provided by mysterious agents of the shadow, who attune it directly to the DNA of the recipient.

**Mage Focus:** At 1<sup>st</sup> level, the apprentice mage must select a mental focus for his art. This is the means by which he will visualise and activate the magic when he wishes to cast a spell. Each individual employs a different sort of focus. A mage could imagine himself mixing chemical formulas, painting works of art, doing mathematics, cooking, singing, or virtually anything else. Galen, for example, visualises himself writing computer programs, while Isabelle imagines she is weaving cloth.

A mage's focus normally involves his voice (chanting, singing, shouting, or merely talking) and physical activity (working his fingers, waving his arms, and the like). In other words, his spells have both verbal and somatic components. If he cannot speak for some reason, or is unable to use his arms/hands, he cannot cast spells. The mage can avoid these limitations by purchasing the Silent Magery and Still Magery feat as described in *the Techno-Mages Fact Book*, although some spells may still require specific words and/or gestures to operate. Such spells will list these requirements in their text.

**Magical Aptitude:** Also at 1<sup>st</sup> level a Techno-Mage must select one of the seven schools of magic in which he has a special aptitude as well as three in which he has little or no ability. The former is referred to as his

*primary aptitude*, while the latter are *weak aptitude* or *weaknesses*. The mage may take a second primary aptitude by purchasing the Mage Intensity feat. He may also eliminate one of the three weaknesses by acquiring the High Aptitude feat. Note that the Healing school is very difficult to make a primary, requiring a special feat called Healer. Most mages are content to leave healing to the masters.

The seven schools of Techno-Magery are as follows:

- **Defence:** The ability to erect and control personal defences, such as shields.
- **Elements:** Control and manipulation of elemental forces such as fire.
- **Conjuration:** The summoning or creation of images and physical objects.
- **Movement:** The movement of oneself, others, and items.
- **Healing:** the ability to heal oneself and others. This is the most difficult school to learn.
- **Enhancement:** Improving senses, abilities, skills, and saving throws.
- **Creation:** the construction of useful technological devices, also called 'techno-magic items' or simply 'magic items.'

Spells in a primary aptitude operate at a bonus of +3 to all Magery checks, cost 1 power point less to cast (which may result in a zero value, making them effectively free), and may benefit in other ways depending on the spell. Weaknesses afford a penalty of -3 to all Magery checks, double all required power points to cast or maintain, and may be further lessened as described in the spell text. Standard aptitudes provide no special bonuses or penalties.

The Healing school is particularly difficult to master. Mages cannot learn this school as a primary aptitude

without employing a special feat. In addition, if they have this school as a weakness, they cannot cast healing spells at all. Galen – who may well be one of the most powerful potential mages in the history of the order – has no aptitude for the healing arts, and is unable to employ even the simplest healing spell. Note that the restrictions against casting healing spells do not apply to the normal use of a mage's organs (see below), which function automatically, without the need for spells.

The Elemental school is broader than the others. Spells of this school operate as described when that school is a mage's weakness or standard aptitude. However, if the mage chooses Elements as a primary school, he must then select a category of elements in which to specialise. He may select from the fire, cold, acid, electricity, or sonic categories. A mage may have only one primary elemental category (e.g. he cannot employ two primary selections – the second gained from the Mage Intensity feat – to choose both fire and cold). All other elemental spells are treated as standard aptitudes. If an elemental spell employs more than one category, its effects will be clearly delineated so that which effects are boosted by the primary category are obvious – a combined fire and acid spell, for example, will score fire and acid damage separately. Basic spell attributes (range, casting cost, etc) are treated as primaries so long as the mage has at least one of the listed categories as an elemental primary.

All mages can employ primary and standard aptitudes without difficulty. Primary aptitudes are easier, cost less to operate, and – depending on feats – may be used in a number of special ways. Weaknesses, on the other hand, may be used only at the lowest level of effectiveness, if at all. A mage must make aptitude selections wisely!

**Organelles:** At 2<sup>nd</sup> level, the apprentice Techno-Mage's blood becomes infused with the nano-technology

devices that provide extra healing and damage resistance benefits. These add the following effects:

- The mage automatically stabilises without the need for Constitution or Medical checks.
- The mage is assumed to always be under constant long-term care by a doctor who always succeeds in his Medical check. The amount of healing received is based on the level of activity taken by the Techno-Mage each day.
- The mage receives a +2 bonus to all saving throws to resist all disease, poison, radiation, and other similar effects. This does not apply to effects that cause hit point damage, such as fire, cold or acid, which are simply healed normally.

At 5<sup>th</sup> level, the bonus to saving throws is increased to +4. At 9<sup>th</sup> level, the Techno-Mage becomes permanently immune to disease. Finally when – or if – the Techno-Mages total Techno-Mage levels equals fourteen then the save bonus increases to +6.

For the purposes of the Organelles class feature, levels in Techno-Mage specific prestige classes (see Signs and Portents Roleplayer issue 40 for details) stack with levels of the Techno-Mage base class.

**FTL Attunement:** Beginning at 3<sup>rd</sup> level, a Techno-Mage becomes able to employ an FTL network created and placed by the Techno-Mages in the distant past. This network allows a mage to use certain long-ranged spells to reach out all the way into deep space. The FTL network is normally used for communication, although some powerful mages employ it for other purposes. The FTL network is limited to only those areas the Techno-Mages have visited, which encompasses virtually all of known space. If a mage moves into a part of the galaxy (or beyond) that has never been surveyed by mages, he

may find himself cut off from the rest of his order, and cannot employ spells using FTL components.

**The Becoming:** At 4<sup>th</sup> level, the apprentice Techno-Mage has learned enough to undergo the final implantation of the technology that turns him into a full-fledged mage. This event occurs during a special ceremony, called the 'Becoming,' that is administered only during one of the tri-annual Convocations. Because the events are held only on fixed occasions, it is entirely possible that a student could advance beyond 4<sup>th</sup> level before experiencing a Becoming. Galen, for example, has 6 character levels as the time of the next Convocation approaches. Regardless of level, a Techno-Mage may not establish a Place of Power before undergoing the becoming.

Once he has become a full mage, the ex-apprentice no longer needs to rely on the chrysalis, although that particular item will always feel like a part of him, and may be employed for other purposes (such as to remotely control his ship). His abilities may not be deactivated or shut off by other mages, although if he acts against their order or violates any of their edicts they may take action as they see fit. A mage who completely fails to live up to the tenets of Techno-Mage society can even be flayed – his implants ripped out in a procedure that causes incredible pain, and almost certain death.

The advancement of a Techno-Mage from apprentice to full mage is not automatic. The character must live up to the seven principles of Techno-Magery: solidarity, secrecy, mystery, magic, science, knowledge, and good. The mage will undergo various tests to ensure he can control the magic, including a final task set forth by his master based on the apprentice's skills and character. His master will be the final arbiter of whether or not a mage is ready to undergo the final change, as it will ultimately fall back on him if the apprentice proves to be a failure.

Should the mage fail the tests at the Becoming, or the Circle deems him unfit to wear the technology, his chrysalis is destroyed and he is cast out, never to employ technomancy again.

Upon his Becoming, the Techno-Mage's body becomes infused with the technology, which provides a number of advantages and features that are always active. These are as follows:

- His spine possesses microfilaments that reach very close to the skin, giving his back the appearance of possessing an intricate, random tattoo in a reddish-brown colour. Those who know of this feature can use it to positively identify any Techno-Mage, unless of course the mage is using a *greater disguise* spell or other means to conceal his true identity.
- His vision is sharper, and his hearing more acute giving him a +4 inherent bonus to all Notice checks pertaining to vision and sound.
- His eyes can also see into the infra-red spectrum. Out to a range of 60 feet, he can detect the presence of heat sources, even in total darkness. The nature of these heat sources cannot be specifically identified, however.
- He possesses other sensors that can detect changes in heart rate and voice stress, giving him a +4 inherent bonus to Sense Motive checks.
- He has a built-in 'messaging system' that allows him to send and receive messages to any other Techno-Mage whom he knows. When he sends a message, it is delivered using a trio of encoded frequencies that are reassembled on the other end, positively identifying the sender. A mage can send and receive messages anywhere within the FTL

network. A mage 'sees' messages as text and can send and receive them as a free action, but must actively concentrate to see if he has actually received a message since his last check – it does not arrive with any kind of alarm or warning. Note that when mages meet, such as during a convocation or a meeting of the Circle, it is considered rude to carry out private message-based conversations while engaged in verbal discussion with others.

Once a character becomes a Techno-Mage, he may depart the presence of his master if he wishes, although the bond between them will always be strong. The character may explore the galaxy, seek out knowledge, settle on a world of his choosing, or do whatever else he desires. He is even free to take another profession through multi-classing, if he so chooses, but the total number of other class levels may never exceed his total number of Techno-Mage levels, as described previously.

**Pinnacle:** Upon graduating to full mage status, a Techno-Mage earns his own personal ship, called a *pinnacle*. The pinnacle serves as his own unique transport shuttle and has a variety of special abilities. If a pinnacle is destroyed, the mage must request a new one from the Kinetic Grimli at a cost of at least one favour and a month's waiting time – and that's with a successful influence check. Alternately if he is a high-level member of the Kinetic Grimli prestige class, he can build one himself. Statistics for the Techno-Mage pinnacle may be found on page 153 of the *Ships of the Galaxy*. Further information on what may be done with a Techno-Mage pinnacle can be found on page 121 of the *Techno-Mages Fact Book*.

**Place of Power:** When a Techno-Mage reaches 8<sup>th</sup> level he may – but is not required to – establish a special site referred to as a *place of power*. This location, which

## The Techno-Mage

| Class Level      | BAB | Fort | Ref | Will | Defence Bonus | No. of Spells | Power Points               | Class Features                                    |
|------------------|-----|------|-----|------|---------------|---------------|----------------------------|---|
| 1 <sup>st</sup>  | +0  | +0   | +0  | +2   | +0            | 5+Int mod     | 10+1d6+Con mod+<br>Cha mod | Bonus Feat, Chrysallis, Mage Focus, Mage Aptitude |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup>  | +1  | +0   | +0  | +3   | +1            | 1d4+Int mod   | 1d4+Cha mod                | Organelles  |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup>  | +1  | +1   | +1  | +3   | +1            | 1d4+Int mod   | 1d4+Cha mod                | FTL Network                                       |
| 4 <sup>th</sup>  | +2  | +1   | +1  | +4   | +2            | 1d4+Int mod   | 1d4+Cha mod                | Bonus Feat, Techno-Magery, Pinnacle               |
| 5 <sup>th</sup>  | +2  | +1   | +1  | +4   | +2            | 1d4+Int mod   | 1d4+3+Cha mod              | Organelles (+4 saves)                             |
| 6 <sup>th</sup>  | +3  | +2   | +2  | +5   | +3            | 1d4+Int mod   | 1d4+Cha mod                | -   |
| 7 <sup>th</sup>  | +3  | +2   | +2  | +5   | +3            | 1d4+Int mod   | 1d4+Cha mod                | Bonus Feat  |
| 8 <sup>th</sup>  | +4  | +2   | +2  | +6   | +4            | 1d4+Int mod   | 1d4+Cha mod                | Place of Power                                    |
| 9 <sup>th</sup>  | +4  | +3   | +3  | +6   | +4            | 1d4+Int mod   | 1d4+Cha mod                | Organelles (Immune to Disease)                    |
| 10 <sup>th</sup> | +5  | +3   | +3  | +7   | +5            | 1d4+Int mod   | 1d4+3+Cha mod              | Bonus Feat  |

requires two months to construct, is equipped with a variety of Techno-Mage gadgets to ensure his privacy. The place can take any form: a circle of stones, a wooded grove, cliff walls over a seashore, a mountain cave, a deep grotto, or any site he wishes. The location must be natural, however – he cannot select the penthouse of a skyscraper, or a fortified castle, although he could select a cave or tunnel beneath a building. The place of power will be immobile, and taps into the natural energies of the planet he has selected as his home – geothermal power, magma vents, hydroelectricity and the like.

So long as he is within his place of power, a Techno-Mage gains the following abilities:

- +2 bonus to all Magery checks.
- +1 bonus power points per level in Techno-Mage or any Techno-Mage prestige class.
- Recovery rate of power points is doubled.
- All healing and subdual damage recovery times are halved.
- He can maintain one more Techno-Mage spell or ability than normal, and does not count

the first one towards the DC of any required Concentration checks.

- The maintenance cost of all spells is reduced by 1 point (minimum 0).

In addition a Techno-Mage with a place of power can receive additional benefits if their total Techno-Mage levels (including Techno-Mage prestige class levels, as with the Organelles feature) are of a certain amount:

If the character has 11 total Techno-Mage levels, the mage may employ the abilities of his place of power even if he is not located directly on the site, but he must still be within 500 yards of that location. If he has 15 Techno-Mage levels, the bonus to Magery checks increases to +4, and the character receives an additional +1 bonus power point per level, and may maintain a further bonus spell or ability than normal. Finally, if the character has a total of 20 Techno-Mage levels, then he may employ his place of power benefits from anywhere on the planet where the site is located.

A Techno-Mage is not required to create a place of power, and doing so does bind the mage to that location. Whenever he is away from his place of power for more than a week, he receives a penalty of –1 to all skill checks, ability checks, and saving throws for each fortnight (2 weeks) he is gone (maximum penalty –10). Furthermore, the mage suffers one hit point of damage per week of absence, and this damage cannot be healed or cured by any means, either medically or through Techno-Magery. The mage must return to his special site for at least a day before any such penalties are lifted. Should the mage completely uproot (by destroying his old place of power), he may not establish a new one until he achieves another level of experience and at least two months have passed – after which he will be quite weak indeed. Should he be unable to do so, he will perish.

A Techno-Mage's pinnacle may be constructed as a place of power, however, should it be destroyed then the Techno-Mage suffers a –2 penalty to all skill checks, ability checks and saving throws each week until it is replaced.

## Techno-Mage Statistics

In addition to the usual character stats – such as hit points, saving throws, and the like – Techno-Mages have two others that must be tracked. These are power points (PPs) and chaos points (CPs).

### Power Points

Unlike telepaths, who use their mental powers at the expense of fatigue and a gradual weakening of their bodies, Techno-Mages draw upon an inner reserve of energy that is collected and stored automatically by their technology. Although high-level mages can seemingly cast spells forever, this is not the case. Over time, if they continue to employ the more demanding powers, they will deplete their energy stores.

The mage's power reserve is represented in the game by *power points (PPs)*. A mage's initial power point total comes not only from his implants, but his body's physical makeup and his own strength of character. Thus, when initially created, a Techno-Mage has a number of power points equal to the following formula:

$$10 + 1d6 + \text{Constitution modifier} + \text{Charisma modifier}$$

As a Techno-Mage increases in skill, he discovers that his personality is of greater importance than his physical body or intellect for purposes of spellcasting. At each additional level, the character receives additional power points equal to his Charisma modifier, with an additional three PPs at levels 5 and 10. Some feats and prestige classes can add more points or increase the rate at which points are gained.

A mage expends power points when he casts spells. If he runs out, he may trade 1 hit point and 1 point of subdual damage for 1 power point at any time, as a free action, so long as this expenditure does not cause him to fall unconscious. When he does this, the mage reaches deep inside himself, drawing from his body's own physical reserves. A mage with the Inner Power feat does not suffer subdual damage when employing this ability, but still takes the single point of real physical damage, which cannot be avoided by any form of damage resistance.

Lost power points return at a rate of 1 point every 10 minutes the mage spends in quiet meditation or while sleeping. If he is unable to rest and meditate, but is still performing no greater than light activity (such as walking or engaging in conversation), he receives 1 point every 30 minutes. If exercising, fighting, or undertaking hard work (including crafting techno-magical items), the rate is 1 point per hour. Acquiring the Power Recharge feat can increase the rate of return noticeably.



Power points return at half the rate for each spell the mage is maintaining, so a meditating mage who is maintaining 1 spell regenerates 1 point every 20 minutes, while a mage maintaining 2 spells while exercising receives 1 point every 4 hours. A mage may not maintain spells while sleeping unless he acquires the Sleep Concentration feat, and even then it is not automatic.

### Chaos Points

Although most Techno-Mages are unaware of the connection their special technology is actually rooted in the seeds of chaos. The original technology was created by the Shadows specifically to sow as much destruction and mayhem as possible. In order to resist this programming, the mages must fight a constant battle against their chaotic nature. They resort to chants or mantras to maintain order in their minds, and when they feel the temptation of destruction, they employ pain-inducing rituals to keep control of themselves.

To represent this, all Techno-Mages must track a statistic referred to as *chaos points (CPs)*. Many of the spells listed in the *Techno-Mages Fact Book* include a *chaos cost* in their statistics list. Whenever a Techno-Mage casts such a spell, the character adds the chaos cost to his running total of accrued chaos points. If the character's CP total ever exceeds his Wisdom score he must make a Will save (DC 10 + the number of chaos points he has in excess of Wisdom) each time he casts a spell of any kind. Failure indicates he goes berserk. While in this state, he casts destructive chaos spells at random on any target he can reach, and when he runs out of opponents, he immediately seeks out others to slay or destroy.

While a Techno-Mage is berserk, all chaos spells cost only half the listed power point cost (minimum 1 point) and cannot be maintained. When necessary, the berserk mage will also automatically convert hit points to power points as much as possible, counting each hit point as 2 power points instead of 1 and not suffering any subdual damage in the process. The berserker will not stop his violent attacks until he drops. He is an NPC under the control of the Games Master, with no control over his own actions. He will even attack friends, allies, and other Techno-Mages unless he succeeds in a Will save at the same DC as the original check (the one made to see if he

becomes berserk). If the mage is still an apprentice, the deactivation of his chrysalis will end the berserk frenzy, but otherwise, the only solution is to wait until he drives himself into unconsciousness.

Accrued chaos points fade at the rate of 1 point for every day spent without casting any spells (of any kind). The mage may employ other abilities – such as skills, organelles for self-healing, magical items, and the like – so long as the ability or magic item does not duplicate a spell effect. The mage may also eliminate chaos points faster by using a technique called *scouring*. This is the ritual application of pain to clear one's thoughts of destructive impulses. Scouring can involve cutting, pummelling, gouging, or any other means to score physical damage, although the most common method is to call down fire on oneself. This is why so many Techno-Mages are bald.

Regardless of the means, scouring trades physical damage for a quick reduction in accrued chaos points. The mage takes 1d6 damage and eliminates 2d6 chaos points from his total. This can be repeated as often as desired to eliminate as many chaos points as the mage deems necessary. Any damage taken cannot be reduced by any kind of DR, and is actual (not subdual) damage. This damage cannot be healed with ordinary first aid or curative magic, but the mage's organelles will eliminate it fairly quickly.

## New Influence:

### Techno-Mages

**Description:** The order of the Techno-Mages is around 1,000 years old and whose origins trace back to an ancient all but forgotten, possibly dead race and the machinations of the very shadows themselves. However

the order we know today began with Wierden, who came to realise the gift of the Shadow technology was in fact no gift at all, and that getting what you want does not always mean getting it the way you want. The Techno-Mages have, over the years, changed the face of the galaxy through their actions, hopefully for the better but not always through the most ideal of methods. The Techno-Mage order is quite small in total and they follow a strict code that dictates how they act and deal with others. The Techno-Mages are secretive and powerful but having learned the lessons of old they are now more content to wait, hide and watch than interfere, living in seclusion or among small communities where they share their wisdom for the betterment of others. With the advent of the Shadow War the Techno-Mages left civilised space and went into hidden seclusion, having no desire to serve the Shadows but being too fearful to fight them. They remained hidden away, watching the war unfold from afar. With the end of the Shadow War the future of the Techno-Mages is a fragile one, now that the source of their implants has gone beyond the rim.

**Obtained By:** Receiving the approval, support or aid of the Techno-Mages, and by respecting their code

**Contacts:** Other Techno-Mages

**Pressures:** None

| Resources  | DC |
|--|----|
| Rumours from known space via the FTL Network   | 10 |
| Access to Resources (transport, supplies, safe havens)   | 12 |
| Gaining aid of a single Techno-Mage; access to Techno-Mage archives  | 15 |
| Requesting a new Pinnacle from the Kinetic Grimli  | 20 |
| Finding a Techno-Mage to Mentor you (must still meet the requirements); changing the Order's opinions on a matter. | 25 |
| Access to Techno-Mage Items (elixirs and magic items)  | 30 |
| Calling a convocation; gaining assistance of many mages  | 40 |

## Additional Changes to the Techno-Mages Fact Book Content for use with Babylon 5 2nd Edition

Here follows a list of all other changes between the 1<sup>st</sup> edition Techno-Mages Fact Book and the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition rule set. Much of this information is simply updated as per the guidelines presented in the Conversion notes within the main *Babylon 5 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition* Rulebook, however some other changes listed are in direct relation to the alterations made to the base class and prestige classes (presented next issue).

### Techno-Mage Skills

**Bluff:** The last sentence of this skill use's description should indicate Subterfuge (Sleight of Hand), as Sleight of Hand became part of that skill.

**Sleight of Hand:** This skill use should actually make reference to Subterfuge (Sleight of Hand), as Sleight of Hand became part of that skill.

### Techno-Mage Feats

**Gravity Mastery:** Gives a +4 bonus to all Acrobatics (Balance) checks made when employing any Movement spell, as Balance became a part of that skill.

### Races

#### Taratimude

**Improved Vision:** this instead provides a +4 racial bonus on Notice checks for the purpose of spotting, but a –2 penalty to Investigate checks that involve vision.

## Techno-Mage Spells

### Spells of Defence

No changes, though remember any reference to DV or Defence Value should now be considered Defence Bonus instead.

### Spells of the Elements

**Greater Destruction:** Now has a prerequisite of at least 20 chaos spells, at least 3 levels of the Destroyer prestige class.

**Total Destruction:** Now has a prerequisite of at least 25 chaos spells, and 5 levels in the Destroyer prestige class.

**Ice Surfaces:** Provides a -10 penalty to Athletics checks for the purposes of climbing as there is no separate climbing skill now.

**Silence:** Provides a +10 bonus to Stealth for the purpose of moving silently, as there is no separate Move Silently skill now. Otherwise this spell works exactly as described.

### Spells of Conjuraton

**Conjure Creature, Small:** For the purposes of spotting a duplicate of a specific creature the check is now a Notice (DC 10 + the amount by which the casters Magery check succeeded), as Spot is no longer a separate skill.

**Disguise:** This spell now provides a +5 circumstance bonus to Intrigue for the purpose of disguise, as Disguise is no longer a separate skill.

**Disguise, Greater:** This spell now provides a +10 circumstance bonus to Intrigue for the purpose of disguise, as Disguise is no longer a separate skill.

### Spells of Movement

**Balance:** This spell provides an enhancement bonus of +4 to all Acrobatics checks for the purpose of balance, as Balance no longer exists as a separate skill.

**Floating Box:** This spell provides a +10 bonus to Acrobatics checks for the purposes of balance, as Balance no longer exists as a separate skill. In all other ways the spell functions as described.

**Floating Sphere:** This spell provides a +5 bonus to Acrobatics checks for the purposes of balance, as Balance no longer exists as a separate skill. In all other ways the spell functions as described.

**Flying Platform, Flying Platform Fast, Flying Platform Large, and Flying Platform Manoeuvrable:** When the platform is in motion it is an Acrobatics check that needs be made as Balance no longer exists as a separate skill.

**Flying Vehicle:** This spell provides a +2 bonus to Acrobatics checks made as a result of the vehicle's movement as Balance no longer exists as a separate skill.

**Gravity Platform:** Anyone standing on it will need to make an Acrobatics check (DC based on the violence of the manoeuvre) to keep from falling prone, as Balance no longer exists as a separate skill.

**Hold in Place:** Creature can make an opposed Grapple check. The option to use the Escape Artist check is no longer relevant as escaping a grapple works differently as explained on page 166 of the *Babylon 5 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition* core book.

**Teleport:** Where relevant it is an Acrobatics check for the purposes of balance that is made, as Balance no longer exists as a separate skill.

**Teleport, Greater:** Where relevant it is an Acrobatics check for the purposes of balance that is made as Balance no longer exists as a separate skill.

**Tread Lightly:** This spell provides a +3 circumstance bonus to Stealth for the purposes of moving silently as the Move Silently skill no longer exists.

**Walk on Walls:** This spell provides a +10 circumstance bonus to Athletics for the purposes of climbing, as Climb no longer exists as a separate skill.

**Walk on Water:** Where relevant it is a +6 circumstance bonus to Stealth for the purposes of moving silently, as Move Silently no longer exists as a separate skill.

### Spells of Healing

No changes.

### Spells of Enhancement

**Acrobat:** This spell provides a +5 enhancement bonus to Acrobatics checks but only for the purposes of tumbling as Tumble no longer exists as a separate skill.

**Alertness:** This spell provides a +2 enhancement bonus to Notice checks, as Listen and Spot no longer exist as separate skills.

**Contortionist:** This spell is no longer relevant in 2<sup>nd</sup> edition as Escape Artist skill no longer exists. Alternatively the +5 bonus can be applied to any Grappling checks for the purpose of escaping grapples.

**Danger Sense:** This spell instead provides the mage with the Alertness feat as the Danger Sense feat no longer exists.

**Leaping:** This spell provides a +5 enhancement bonus to Athletics checks for the purposes of jumping as Jump no longer exists as a separate skill.

**Nimble Fingers** and **Nimbleness, Mass:** this spell provides a +5 enhancement bonus to Subterfuge checks for the purpose of sleight of hand as Sleight of Hand no longer exists as a separate skill.

**Observation:** This spell provides a +5 enhancement bonus to Investigate checks as Search no longer exists as a separate skill.

**Oration** and **Oration, Greater:** Where these spells require a Listen check it is instead a Notice check that needs be made.

**Scan Terrain:** This spell provides a +5 enhancement bonus to Knowledge (specific local) as Survival no longer exists in Babylon 5 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition.

**Streetwise:** This spell provides a +5 enhancement bonus to Intrigue checks for the purpose of gathering information as Gather Information no longer exists as a separate skill.

**Swimming:** This spell provides a +5 enhancement bonus to all Athletics checks for the purpose of swimming, as Swim no longer exists as a separate skill.

**Writing:** This spell provides a +5 enhancement bonus to Subterfuge checks for the purposes of trying to produce fake documents, or Computer Use for the purpose of writing computer programs as the Forgery skill no longer exists in Babylon 5 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition.

### Spells of Creation

No changes.

## Creating New Spells

No changes, the system works as described in 2<sup>nd</sup> edition just as it did in first.

## Techno-Magical Items

The only changes here are where the items provide the specific bonuses of the relevant spells as such a GM should check the difference in spell benefit if any listed above between editions.

## Trinkets

No changes, all the trinkets function as indicated.

## Instruments of Power

Again the main changes with these are where the spells they allow to be used, effects, themselves have changed as such check the changes to spell benefits between editions that are listed above.

**Helm of Senses:** Where it states it provides a +10 enhancement bonus to Listen and Spot checks it instead now provides a +10 bonus to Notice checks, as neither Listen or Spot exist as separate skills anymore.

## The Techno-Mage Pinnacle

The statistics of the pinnacle are now different due to the overhaul of the starship combat system between editions. The statistics provided for the pinnacle here are taken from page 153 of the *Ships of the Galaxy* sourcebook.



Medium Spacecraft

**Defence Value:** 16 (+6 Handling); **Armour:** 25; **Handling:** +6; **Sensors:** +15; **Stealth:** 36; **Stress:** 4; **Features:** Atmospheric Capable, Electromagnetic Armour\*, Gravitic Engine, Flight Computer, Jump Point, Techno-Mage Adjustments\*\*, Targeting Computer (+5)

**Crew:** Techno-Mage (+8 BAB, +15 Training); 1 Pilot, 1 Passenger

**Structural Spaces:** 20 (Cargo 1, Control 3, Crew 1, Engine 13, Weapons 2)

### Fore Arc Weapons

Variable Energy Weapon (Long, Offence 75, 2 weapon spaces)

\* A ship designed with electromagnetic armour gains the Electromagnetic Armour special quality (see *Babylon 5 Roleplaying Game 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*, page 231). This quality operates identically to the EM Shield quality, except that the equipment bonus is increased to +12 and the ship suffers no penalty to when using its own targeting computer or holding a weapons lock. A ship may not benefit both electromagnetic armour and an electromagnetic shield.

\*\* See *The Techno-Mages Fact Book* for details on what sorts of things a Techno-Mage can do with his pinnacle.



## Pinnacle Spells

**Absorption:** this now increases the ships Armour by a variable number as Damage Resistance is no longer used in Ship Combat.

**Burst of Speed:** This spell now allows the ship to issue a single *Close For Battle* or *Pull Back* order in a round, without it counting against the normal number of orders the ship can issue. Such an order may not be issued due to this spell more than once in any 4-round period.

**Burst of Speed, Greater:** This spell works exactly as *Burst of Speed* above but allows a free *Close For Battle* or *Pull Back* order to be issues for free (either, or) once per round for four rounds.

**Damaging Weapon:** This spell increases the offence rating of the ships weapon in increments of +5. When this enhancement is used, the weapons effect appears noticeably larger and more powerful to observers. The amount of offence added to the rating is decided when the weapon is fired (before the results of the attack, or whether or not it hit or missed, is known), increasing the DC of the Magery check by 3 per +5 added and draining 2 points of power per +5 bonus per shot.

**Double Shot:** This spell allows the ship to give one weapon the *Rapid Fire 2* quality for a single use. In all other ways it works exactly as the spell described.

**Lightning Weapon:** This spell allows the weapon to ignore the first 10 points of armour when determining whether damage is caused. In all other ways it works as described.

**Savage Weapon:** This spell works as described.

**Shield:** This spell works as described.

**Sustained Weapon:** This spell now gives the weapon the *Beam 2d10* quality per shot, which if it hits allows the weapon to do the listed dice of armour reduction to the target per shot.

**Wide Angle Shot:** this spell now allows a weapon to cover its arc and one other adjoining arc. So for example if a weapon has a normal arc of Fore, it now covers while under the influence of this spell either Fore & Port, or Fore & Starboard.

**Wide Angle Shot, Greater:** This spell works as described.

## Ship Enhancements

The reduction in XP cost of the ship enhancements can be reduced if the Mage is a member of the kinetic Grimli with the relevant trait.

All the enhancements work as described with the exception of the following ones:

**Improved Armour:** This enhancement increases a ships Armour rating not its Defensive Value.

**Long Ranged Weapon:** This spell increases the ranged category of a ships weapon from Close to Long Range.

**Powerful Engines:** This enhancement is now defunct.

**Precise Weapon:** This permanently enhances the threat range of a ship weapons (20, to 19-20), if the Techno-Mage then employs the *savage weapon* spell, the rating increases again (becoming 17-20).

# RUNE MAGIC

A handful of helpful enchantments, for RuneQuest. By Carl Walmsley

## Trail Find

Casting Time 2, Duration 60, Magnitude 1, Ranged  
Runes: *Earth*

*As the target's boots sink into the earth, an unusually clear imprint is left behind. Even as he climbs up onto a barren, rocky slope a clear track remains, marking the path he has taken.*

This spell makes any trail left by the target far easier to follow. One round after a print or mark is made, it either deepens or becomes in some other way more distinct. Any attempts to locate such tracks receive a +20% modifier.

It is possible that the target of the spell will notice that his tracks are unusually clear. To do so he must make a successful Tracking test, followed by a successful Perception test. If the target subsequently tries to conceal his tracks, he should make an opposed skill test with his pursuer. The pursuer continues to receive the +20% bonus for the duration of the spell.

## Echolocation

Casting Time 2, Duration 5, Magnitude 1, Progressive  
Runes: *Air*

*The caster emits a high-pitched squeak, his ears detecting the reverberations as they rebound off unseen obstacles and recesses.*

This spell duplicates the abilities of a bat's sonar. For the duration of the spell, the caster is able to 'see' in darkness (even magical darkness) and receives a +20% bonus on all Perception tests to detect physical objects within the range of the effect.

For every point of magnitude of this spell, the sonar extends 10 metres in all directions.

Use of an Echolocation 'squeak' cannot be heard by most creatures.

## Enshroud

Casting Time: 1, Duration 1, Magnitude 1,  
Progressive  
Runes: *Shadow*

*The target object grows dim, seeming to retreat into a gloominess that was not previously there.*

This spell makes an object strangely difficult to notice; it is as though it simply blends in to its surrounding environment and is overlooked.

For every point of Magnitude, the spell may conceal up to one cubic metre of object. However, a single casting of the spell may only ever conceal a single item, regardless of its size.

Whenever an enshrouded object might be discovered, the GM should secretly make a Perception test for any creatures present with a -20% penalty. If the test is failed, the GM should not mention the object at all. If the test is successful, the object is discovered as normal. The GM should be careful not to do anything that will arouse suspicion about the object or make it stand out in any way: this would obviously negate the purpose of the spell.

This spell may only be cast on inanimate matter.

## Surge

Casting Time: 1, Instant, Magnitude 3, Ranged, Resist (Resilience)

Runes: *Water*

*The still surface of the lake erupts suddenly as a violent spout of water crashes against the side of a boat.*

This spell creates a sudden stream of water that can damage targets and capsize small boats. In order for the spell to take effect, the target must be in contact with a body of water that is at least 10 cubic metres in volume.

If the spell is used to target a creature, there must be a clear line of sight both from the caster to the target and from the water to the target. If a creature is struck by the effects of a surge spell, it suffers 1D6 damage to a random location and must succeed at a Resilience Test or fall prone.

If the spell targets a boat, the vessel loses 1D6 Structure points. If the vessel has a Hull rating of 2 or less, the pilot must also succeed at a Boating test or the craft capsizes.

## Forest Cloak

Casting Time: 2, Duration 5, Magnitude 2, Touch

Runes: *Plant*

*Touching the trunk of a nearby tree, the target's skin seems to shift and warp, taking on the craggy appearance of moss-covered bark.*

This spell allows the target to take on the appearance of the surrounding trees and vegetation, making him far more difficult to spot.

Once the spell is cast, the enchanted creature needs simply to touch and remain in contact with a piece of living vegetation, and his outward appearance will change to match it. For the duration of the spell, the target can continue to alter his appearance – each round if he so chooses – simply by touching a new plant.

Whilst positioned close to the vegetation he is mimicking, the target of the spell receives a 30% bonus on all Stealth tests. If the target moves slowly (no faster than walking pace) through an area of vegetation, he may 'trail' a hand, moving it from one plant to another so that his forms shifts constantly to blend in with the environment.

This spell will not work in urban areas, inside buildings or in other locations where there is no vegetation.



## Lethargy

Casting Time: 2, Instant, Magnitude 2, Ranged, Resist (Resilience)

Runes: *Man* or *Beast*

*The target staggers and yawns, the strength and vitality draining from his limbs.*

This spell drains the target creature's energy, causing it to lose two levels of fatigue. This spell will have no effect on creatures that do not require rest, such as undead or spirits.

Possession of the Man rune is required for this spell to be effective against humanoids and the Beast rune is needed for it to be effective against natural creatures. Other creatures (such as magical beasts like dragons) are not affected by the spell.

## Impede

Casting Time: 2, Duration 1, Magnitude 1, Ranged, Progressive, Resist (Resilience)

Runes: *Stasis*

*The target's movements slow visibly as the spell takes effect. Suddenly, it is as though he is moving not through air but through water!*

This spell hinders the target creature's movements, making it react far more slowly to what is going on around it. For every point of Magnitude of the spell, the target creature reduces its strike rank by 1 and suffers a -5% penalty to all Reactions.

A Magnitude 3 version of this spell, for example, would inflict a -3 penalty on Strike Rank and a -15% penalty on all Reactions.

# BLOODY BEASTS

Add a little sanguine excitement to your d20 games or splash gore up the walls with these blood-drenched creatures from Joshua Cole.

From the magical power flowing within a sorcerer's veins, to the priceless genetic code locked within a single drop of rare blood, to the unholy might unleashed by a ritual sacrifice, fantasy and science fiction abound with sanguine scenes and tales of gore. This visceral violence gels with the sword and sorcery tone of the world's most popular roleplaying game.

Moreover, the six monsters described herein could not be happier about it.

These are not undead creatures, nor are they necessarily evil. But each has an intrinsic connection to the latent powers of blood... and an inclination toward *bloodshed*.

Whether they are encountered as the deadly guardians of a dark god's crimson altar, the products of a mad scientist's sanguinary artifice or as natural features of a blood-spattered sword and sorcery epic, bloody beasts are sure to give Player Characters a fright!

These six horrors hail from varied backgrounds and belong to different creature types. Only their shared connection to the primal power and mystery of blood brings them together under one heading. As such, Games Masters will generally find uses for only one or two of these creatures in a given adventure. On the other hand, rare indeed is the campaign that will not have a use for at least some of them.

Because three of these creatures (the crimson crab, sanguinite and thirsty fog) can cause constitution drain, which is permanent without the use of restorative magic from *Core Rulebook I*, they should be used sparingly in a low-magic or no-magic campaign. At the very least, their CR should be treated as one higher than listed below.

Of course, using them in such a campaign makes them all the more frightening to players!

## Crimson Crab

|                             | Medium Magical Beast                               |
|-----------------------------|--|
| <b>Hit Dice:</b>            | 6d10+18 (51 hp)                                    |
| <b>Initiative:</b>          | +1 (+1 Dex)  |
| <b>Speed:</b>               | 30 ft, climb 30 ft.                                |
| <b>Armour Class:</b>        | 21 (+1 Dex, +10 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 20 |
| <b>Base Attack/Grapple:</b> | +6/+13   |
| <b>Attack:</b>              | Claw +14 melee (1d8+10)                            |
| <b>Space/Reach:</b>         | 5 ft/5 ft  |
| <b>Special Attacks:</b>     | Blood drain, improved grab                         |
| <b>Special Qualities:</b>   | -  |
| <b>Saves:</b>               | Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +4                           |
| <b>Abilities:</b>           | Str 24, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 1, Wis 11, Cha 6       |
| <b>Skills:</b>              | Climb +15, Listen +5, Move Silently +5             |
| <b>Feats:</b>               | Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Claw)       |
| <b>Environment:</b>         | Warm marsh and underground                         |
| <b>Organisation:</b>        | Solitary, pair or cluster (3-4)                    |
| <b>Challenge Rating:</b>    | 5  |
| <b>Treasure:</b>            | None   |
| <b>Alignment:</b>           | Always neutral                                     |
| <b>Advancement:</b>         | 7-12 HD (Medium), 13-18 HD (Large)                 |

A vicious mutant sometimes created by evil wizards and priests to serve as a guardian, the crimson crab is an oversized crustacean ever thirsting for the blood of humanoids. A crimson crab resembles a giant, exaggerated fisher crab with a single huge claw and a shrivelled vestigial one. Its tough shell seems to glow a lurid, pulsing red that intensifies after it has fed.

The first crimson crabs were born from a ritual similar to an *animal growth* spell, in which ordinary fisher crabs were bathed in sacrificial gore and permanently increased to unholy size. However, the creatures now breed true and sometimes appear in the wild.

## Combat

Crimson crabs employ simple tactics. Motivated by hunger and bloodlust, they prefer to attack creatures that appear

physically weak, but usually settle for the nearest target. A crimson crab attacks by snatching up its victim in its huge claw and pulling the unfortunate creature to its vampiric fangs. After the violence of its initial attack, the crimson crab typically holds its victim delicately in its claw, so as not to waste any precious blood.

**Blood Drain (Ex):** A crimson crab can suck blood from a living victim with its fangs by making a successful grapple check. If it pins the foe, it drains blood, dealing 1d4 points of Constitution drain each round the pin is maintained. On each such successful attack, the crimson crab gains 5 temporary hit points.

**Improved Grab (Ex):** To use this ability, a crimson crab must hit an opponent of its own size category or smaller with its claw attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can begin draining blood on the following round.

**Skills:** Crimson crabs have a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks. A crimson crab can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened.



## Demon, Pot Stirrer

| <b>Small Outsider (Chaotic, Evil, Extraplanar)</b> |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Hit Dice:</b>                                   | 5d8+10 (33 hp)   |
| <b>Initiative:</b>                                 | +4 (+4 Dex)  |
| <b>Speed:</b>                                      | 10 ft, fly 80 ft (perfect)   |
| <b>Armour Class:</b>                               | 23 (+1 size, +4 Dex, +8 natural), touch 15, flat-footed 19   |
| <b>Base Attack/Grapple:</b>                        | +5/+2  |
| <b>Attack:</b>                                     | Pot slam +10 melee (1d4+1 plus 2d6 acid)   |
| <b>Full Attack:</b>                                | Pot slam +10 melee (1d4+1 plus 2d6 acid) and 2 claws +5 melee (1d3)  |
| <b>Space/Reach:</b>                                | 5 ft/5 ft  |
| <b>Special Attacks:</b>                            | Acid splash, spell-like abilities  |
| <b>Special Qualities:</b>                          | Damage reduction 10/cold iron or good, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to acid, electricity and poison, resistance to cold 10 and fire 10, spell resistance 15   |
| <b>Saves:</b>                                      | Fort +7, Ref +9, Will +8   |
| <b>Abilities:</b>                                  | Str 13, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 17, Wis 16, Cha 15   |
| <b>Skills:</b>                                     | Bluff +10, Diplomacy +12, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +11, Knowledge (religion) +11, Knowledge (the planes) +11, Search +11, Sense Motive +13, Sleight of Hand +12, Tumble +12 |
| <b>Feats:</b>                                      | Negotiator, Weapon Finesse   |
| <b>Environment:</b>                                | A chaotic evil-aligned plane   |
| <b>Organisation:</b>                               | Solitary or pair   |
| <b>Challenge Rating:</b>                           | 7  |
| <b>Treasure:</b>                                   | Standard   |
| <b>Alignment:</b>                                  | Always chaotic evil  |
| <b>Advancement:</b>                                | 6-15 HD (Small)  |

The pot stirrer is a small red demon, similar in appearance to a distended imp, eternally perched atop a flying cauldron of bubbling blood. The long, fleshy tail it uses to stir the gory contents of its pot also anchors it to the base of the pot.

Pot stirrers wander the planes, offering aid and calling down curses in equal measure. They often appear on the material plane to collect information and to find likely creatures to stir into their pots. Knowledgeable and wise about the ways of the planes,

the pot stirrer sometimes acts as a guide to travellers, but it always exacts a heavy toll from its charges – whenever possible, by adding them to its pot!

## Combat

Pot stirrers prefer to frustrate their opponents by dodging and weaving about in the air rather than engaging in combat directly. A pot stirrer uses its glib tongue and spell-like abilities to separate its foes, and then swoops in to splash a single creature until it is sufficiently liquefied to be added to the stirrer's pot.

**Acid Splash (Ex):** Any creature standing within 5 feet of a pot stirrer when it makes a slam attack, other than the target, must make a Reflex save (DC 18) or suffer 1d6 points of acid damage from the resulting splash of superheated blood.

**Spell-like Abilities (Sp):** At will - *hypnotic pattern* (DC 14), *major image* (DC 15), *mirror image*, *misdirection*; 3/day - *invisibility*, *persistent image* (DC 17); 1/day – *legend lore*; Caster level 8<sup>th</sup>. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

## Red-Oiled

|                             | Large Construct   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| <b>Hit Dice:</b>            | 12d10+30 (96 hp)  |
| <b>Initiative:</b>          | -1 (-1 Dex)   |
| <b>Speed:</b>               | 30 ft, cannot run   |
| <b>Armour Class:</b>        | 14 (-1 size, -1 Dex, +6 natural), touch 8, flat-footed 14             |
| <b>Base Attack/Grapple:</b> | +8/+18  |
| <b>Attack:</b>              | Slam +13 melee (1d10+6)<br>or tentacle rake +13 melee (1d6 Con)       |
| <b>Full Attack:</b>         | 2 slams +13 melee (1d10+6)<br>and 4 tentacle rakes +8 melee (1d6 Con) |
| <b>Space/Reach:</b>         | 10 ft/10 ft   |
| <b>Special Attacks:</b>     | Blood drain   |
| <b>Special Qualities:</b>   | Damage reduction 5/adamantine, spell immunity                         |
| <b>Saves:</b>               | Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +5  |
| <b>Abilities:</b>           | Str 22, Dex 8, Con –, Int –, Wis 12, Cha 1                            |
| <b>Environment:</b>         | Any   |
| <b>Organisation:</b>        | Solitary or gang (2-4)  |
| <b>Challenge Rating:</b>    | 9   |
| <b>Treasure:</b>            | None  |
| <b>Alignment:</b>           | Always neutral  |
| <b>Advancement:</b>         | 13-24 HD (Large), 25-36 HD (Huge)                                     |



Whatever mad artificer first built a red-oiled did the world no favours. This clunky construct of wood, tubes, metal and glass resembles a golem, but anyone subjected to its attacks soon learns to differentiate it from conventional constructs.

Red-oiled are sometimes used as guardians, sometimes as assassins, sometimes as terror weapons, and sometimes, perhaps most horribly of all, as sample collectors, attacking unsuspecting travellers to drain their blood for use in some blasphemous ritual or unspeakable experiment.

## Combat

A red-oiled is not as physically powerful as most constructs, and does not rely chiefly on its slam attacks to damage opponents. Although its slams remain a threat, the four tentacle-like, syringe-tipped tubes writhing on its back present a far greater danger. A red-oiled attacks without rhyme or reason, but also without fear.

**Blood Drain (Ex):** A creature struck by a red-oiled's tentacle rake attack suffers 1d6 points of Constitution damage as its blood is sucked into the attached tube. Non-living creatures, or creatures without blood, are not affected by this attack.

**Immunity to Magic (Ex):** A red-oiled is immune to any spell or spell-like ability that allows spell resistance. In addition, certain spells and effects function differently against the creature, as noted below.

A magical attack that deals fire damage slows a red-oiled (as the *slow* spell) for 3 rounds, with no saving throw.

A magical attack that deals electricity damage breaks any *slow* effect on the red-oiled and heals 1 point of damage for each 3 points of damage the attack would otherwise deal. If the amount of healing would cause the red-oiled to exceed its full normal hit points, it gains any excess as temporary hit points. For example, a red-oiled hit by a *lightning bolt* for 18 points of damage instead regains 6 hit points. A red-oiled gets no saving throw against fire damage.

## Construction

A red-oiled's body is manufactured from what appears to be the contents of an alchemists laboratory given a bizarre form of life, including rare woods and alchemical glass, filled with blood hailing from hundreds of different species. The body requires 2,500 pounds of rare woods and specially made glass, and 50 gallons of blood. This costs at least 15,000 gp. Manufacturing the body requires a Craft (armoursmithing) check (DC 20), mixing the blood requires a Craft (alchemy) check (DC 20). CL 16<sup>th</sup>; Craft Construct, *black tentacles*, *blight*, *limited wish*, *polymorph any object*, caster must be 16<sup>th</sup> level; Price 150,000 gp; Cost 80,000 gp + 5,600 XP



## Sanguinite

|                             | Large Monstrous Humanoid                                   |
|-----------------------------|--|
| <b>Hit Dice:</b>            | 8d8+16 (52 hp)   |
| <b>Initiative:</b>          | +1 (+1 Dex)  |
| <b>Speed:</b>               | 50 ft  |
| <b>Armour Class:</b>        | 15 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +5 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 14 |
| <b>Base Attack/Grapple:</b> | +8/+20   |
| <b>Attack:</b>              | Claw +11 melee (1d8+4)                                     |
| <b>Full Attack:</b>         | 2 claws +11 melee (1d8+4)                                  |
| <b>Space/Reach:</b>         | 10 ft/10 ft  |
| <b>Special Attacks:</b>     | Blood drain  |
| <b>Special Qualities:</b>   | Darkvision 60 ft   |
| <b>Saves:</b>               | Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +7                                   |
| <b>Abilities:</b>           | Str 19, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 9               |
| <b>Skills:</b>              | Balance +7, Listen +6, Spot +6, Survival +12, Tumble +7    |
| <b>Feats:</b>               | Great Fortitude, Improved Grapple, Run                     |
| <b>Environment:</b>         | Any land or underground                                    |
| <b>Organisation:</b>        | Solitary, pair or pack (7-16)                              |
| <b>Challenge Rating:</b>    | 6  |
| <b>Treasure:</b>            | Standard   |
| <b>Alignment:</b>           | Often neutral evil   |
| <b>Advancement:</b>         | By character class   |

Sanguinites, sometimes (erroneously) called vampire trolls, are tall, lanky nocturnal humanoids that derive nourishment from the blood of other creatures. A sanguinite does bear a superficial resemblance to a vampire in both its habits and its appearance, but it does not possess the undead bloodsucker's powers or suffer from its weaknesses.

Sanguinites live a nomadic lifestyle, travelling in small packs like wolves. Although capable of manufacturing and using weapons and armour, they prefer to rely on their powerful claws and great speed to bring down their prey.

Sanguinites can live indefinitely off the blood of animals, and most bands subsist on this diet. However, all sanguinities consider the blood of intelligent creatures a particular delicacy, and seek it out when it becomes available.

## Combat

Sanguinites attack in packs, coordinating their efforts to bring down the weak and sick among their foes. Their preference for grappling attacks, and their skill at such attacks, allows them to isolate and trap all but the strongest opponents. Often, the strongest sanguinities will hold down an opposing front line while their lighter, faster comrades grab presumably weaker foes in the rear.

**Blood Drain (Ex):** A sanguinite can suck blood from a living victim with its fangs by making a successful grapple check. If it pins the foe, it drains blood, dealing 1d4 points of Constitution drain each round. On each successful drain attack, the sanguinite gains 5 temporary hit points.

## Thirsty Fog

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
|                             | <b>Colossal Ooze</b>                           |
| <b>Hit Dice:</b>            | 14d10+98 (175 hp)                              |
| <b>Initiative:</b>          | -5 (-5 Dex)                                    |
| <b>Speed:</b>               | Fly 30 ft (clumsy)                             |
| <b>Armour Class:</b>        | -3 (-8 size, -5 Dex), touch -3, flat-footed -3 |
| <b>Base Attack/Grapple:</b> | +10/+31  |
| <b>Attack:</b>              | Tentacle rake +7 (1d2+5)                       |
| <b>Full Attack:</b>         | 7 tentacle rakes +7 melee (1d2+5)              |
| <b>Space/Reach:</b>         | 60 ft/30 ft                                    |
| <b>Special:</b>             | Blood drain, improved grab, tentacles          |
| <b>Attacks:</b>             |  |
| <b>Special:</b>             | Gaseous body                                   |
| <b>Qualities:</b>           |  |
| <b>Saves:</b>               | Fort +16, Ref +0, Will +4                      |
| <b>Abilities:</b>           | Str 20, Dex 1, Con 25, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1    |
| <b>Skills:</b>              | Hide +10                                       |
| <b>Feats:</b>               | Hover  |
| <b>Environment:</b>         | Temperate forests and marshes                  |
| <b>Organisation:</b>        | Solitary                                       |
| <b>Challenge:</b>           | 8  |
| <b>Rating:</b>              |  |
| <b>Treasure:</b>            | None   |
| <b>Alignment:</b>           | Always neutral                                 |
| <b>Advancement:</b>         | 15-42 HD                                       |

Even the boldest sages prefer not to speculate on the origins of the thirsty fog. This strange, airborne ooze drifts through isolated marshlands and over the sites of terrible battles, consuming the blood of any living creature that approaches it. All but indistinguishable from a normal fog bank, the thirsty fog is betrayed only by a hint of red and the consistency of its tendrils.

The thirsty fog exists only to consume. Mindless, voracious and to all intents and purposes uncontrollable, it is rarely employed even by the most twisted evil creatures. Other monsters do sometimes take advantage of a thirsty fog's presence to guard an approach to their lairs, but this is risky – a single strong wind will carry the fog to them.

## Combat

A thirsty fog attacks anything in range, forming thick tendrils of its gaseous body to lash opponents with. Its only interest is in grappling and consuming its prey, and it has no concept of tactics or even of its own safety. Its grappling attacks deal little damage, but are very difficult for most creatures to escape from.

**Blood Drain (Ex):** A thirsty fog can suck blood from a living victim with its tendrils by making a successful grapple check. If it pins the foe, it drains blood, dealing 1d4 points of Constitution drain each round. On each successful drain attack, the thirsty fog gains 5 temporary hit points.

**Improved Grab (Ex):** To use this ability, a thirsty fog must hit an opponent of Gargantuan size or smaller with a tentacle rake attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can begin draining blood on the following round.

**Tentacles (Ex):** A thirsty fog forms tentacles from its body. As such, the larger and more coherent a fog is, the more tentacles it can manifest. A thirsty fog has a number of tentacle rake attacks equal to one-half its racial Hit Dice, rounded down. Tentacles have an Armour Class of 8 and 10 hit points each, although severed tentacles regenerate immediately.

**Gaseous Body (Ex):** A thirsty fog's body is only solid where it has manifested tentacles. It can freely pass through and even occupy squares containing other creatures, and suffers no damage from non-magical weapons. Magical weapons, including ghost-touch weapons, have a 50% miss chance against a thirsty fog.

**Skills:** A thirsty fog gains a +30 racial bonus on Hide checks when concealed within a natural fog bank, and is always considered to be moving silently.



## Walker In Red

|                      | Medium Aberration  |
|----------------------|--|
| <b>Hit Dice:</b>     | 9d8+30 (70 hp)   |
| <b>Initiative:</b>   | +2 (Dex)   |
| <b>Speed:</b>        | 30 ft  |
| <b>Armour Class:</b> | 17 (+2 Dex, +5 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 15  |
| <b>Base Attack/</b>  | +6/+8  |
| <b>Grapple:</b>      |  |
| <b>Attack:</b>       | Dagger +8 melee (1d4+2/19-20)  |
| <b>Full Attack:</b>  | Dagger +8/+3 melee (1d4+2/19-20)   |
| <b>Space/Reach:</b>  | 5 ft/5 ft  |
| <b>Special</b>       | Absorb bloodline, alter self, spells   |
| <b>Attacks:</b>      |  |
| <b>Special</b>       | Damage reduction 10/magic  |
| <b>Qualities:</b>    |  |
| <b>Saves:</b>        | Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +10  |
| <b>Abilities:</b>    | Str 14, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 24, Wis 18, Cha 19   |
| <b>Skills:</b>       | Bluff +16, Concentration +15, Diplomacy +20, Disguise +16 (+18 acting), Intimidate +18, Knowledge (arcana) +19, Sense Motive +16, Spellcraft +21 (+23 with scrolls), Use Magic Device +16 (+18 with scrolls) |
| <b>Feats:</b>        | Augment Summoning, Empower Spell, Spell Focus (conjuration), Toughness   |
| <b>Environment:</b>  | Any land or underground  |
| <b>Organisation:</b> | Solitary   |
| <b>Challenge</b>     | 10   |
| <b>Rating:</b>       |  |
| <b>Treasure:</b>     | Double standard  |
| <b>Alignment:</b>    | Usually chaotic evil   |
| <b>Advancement:</b>  | 10-18 HD (Medium)  |

The walker in red is an abomination of terrible aspect and unspeakable sorcerous power. Casual inspection reveals a humanoid form with pleasant, if somewhat bland, features. Its only distinguishing qualities are its unusually ruddy skin and bloodshot eyes, which give it an appearance similar to that of a heavy drinker.

However, this outer shell is merely a disguise. The walker in red has no internal organs to speak of. Beneath its skin lies a sea of murdered sorcerers' blood, the source of its powers and the focus of its existence.

A walker in red preys on spontaneous arcane spellcasters to expand its breadth of magical knowledge, killing without mercy or compassion, and seems to regard all other beings as merely sources of blood to consume.

## Combat

Although significantly stronger and faster than a typical human, the walker in red prefers to avoid physical combat. It relies on its spellcasting abilities to eliminate opponents. The walker in red favours summoning and battlefield control spells rather than those that deal direct damage, as it does not wish to damage the bodies of any spellcasters it encounters.

**Absorb Bloodline (Su):** A walker in red 'feeds' by wholly consuming the sorcerous blood of a spontaneous arcane spellcaster. To use this ability, the walker must possess the body of a spontaneous caster, such as a sorcerer or a creature with innate spellcasting ability, with a caster level equal to or higher than that of the walker.

This body must be helpless, but it also must be in good condition. If the creature is either alive and somehow restrained or would be a valid target for a *raise dead* spell cast by a cleric of the walker's level, it is a valid target for the this ability.

Absorbing a bloodline takes 1 hour, during which the walker in red must concentrate completely, doing nothing else. Attacking the walker ruins the process and renders the body unsuitable for either absorption or a *raise dead* spell.

The walker in red immediately gains an additional racial Hit Dice upon absorbing a bloodline. In addition, the target's form becomes available for the walker's *alter self* ability.

When a walker in red with 18 Hit Dice uses this ability, it splits into two identical 9 Hit Dice walkers, which share the memory (but not the spellcasting ability or *alter self* forms) of their 'parent.'

When the walker has finished absorbing a bloodline, the target cannot be *raised* or *resurrected* – only a *wish* or *miracle* spell can restore the body to life.

**Alter Self (Sp):** A walker in red can change its appearance to match that of a creature it has absorbed with its absorb bloodline ability. This is identical to the *alter self* spell as cast by an 8<sup>th</sup> level sorcerer, except that the duration is permanent. The walker in red returns to its natural form upon death.

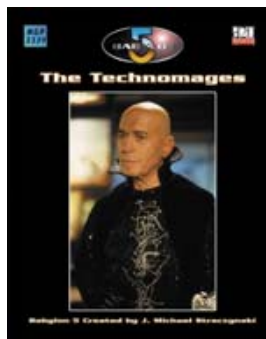
**Spellcasting:** A walker in red casts spells as a sorcerer of a level equal to its Hit Dice. The sample spells below are for a walker in red of 9 HD.

*Typical Sorcerer Spells Known (6/17/17/15; save DC 14 + spell level):* 0<sup>th</sup>– *acid splash, detect magic, flare, light, mage hand, ghost sound, ray of frost, resistance*; 1<sup>st</sup>–*burning hands, charm person, shield, sleep, summon monster I*; 2<sup>nd</sup>–*invisibility, mirror image, scorching ray, summon monster II*; 3<sup>rd</sup>–*flame arrows, stinking cloud, summon monster III*; 4<sup>th</sup>–*fire shield, summon monster IV*.

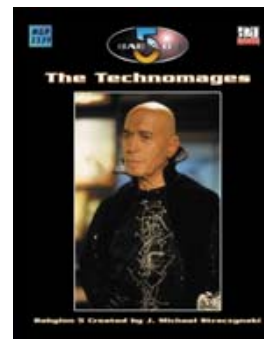
# Monty's Offer of the Month

## Wizards in Space

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# High and Mighty - the Miri'zha

By Christopher Blackmoor

2nd Ed Conversion by  
Bryan Steele

## The High Council from Legend of the Rangers

### Introduction

Searching for signs of the return of the Shadows could not be done without some form of organisation. Nothing is known of the ruling body of the Rangers outside of that same organisation, save that it is lead by an individual with the honorific Entil'zha. This is exactly how the Anla'shok wishes it to be; what opponents and enemies do not know cannot be turned to their advantage.

The structure of the High Council (sometimes incorrectly called the Rangers' Council) mirrors that of the Grey Council, and it operates in a similarly mysterious fashion. There are more eligible members than there are seats on the High Council, also known by its official title of Miri'zha, which loosely translates as 'governors of the future'. This title reflects the duty of the Miri'zha to command their tenure of the Anla'shok with wisdom and responsibility.

For details of the Rangers' history, including the Shal'rhi Act and the differing Ages of the Anla'shok, see the 'Anla'shok History' chapter of *The Rangers* sourcebook.

### Membership of the High Council

There are more than twenty individuals in the upper echelons of the Anla'shok, and they all have the theoretical right to sit on the High Council at some point. There have to be nine members in any Council meeting, out of respect for the Grey Council and the structures laid down by Valen. Of course, with the chequered history of trust between the Grey Council and the Rangers over their thousand years of existence the Anla'shok could be forgiven for discarding any ties with the Grey Council, but to do so would not be Minbari.

Sindell is the unofficial head of the High Council, and his calm yet firm voice has helped guide the Anla'shok through their transition from the dictates of Valen to the needs of Sheridan and DeLenn for an intergalactic law enforcement arm.

### A History of Assembly

The High Council was one of the constructs Valen left behind, placing the most experienced members of the order in charge of the organisation that had waged war

on behalf of the forces of light, outside of restriction. It was in a way similar to the Grey Council, a structure that would exist after he had gone.

The next few centuries offered differing fortunes for the High Council. During the Era of the Inward Eye, they perhaps overstepped their mark. They fought the Shal'rhi Act, failing to stop the legal challenge to their authority. This led them to ignore the Act, which in the end did them a greater disservice, further isolating them from the Minbari they were pledged to serve.

It was the decision of the High Council to bring the wreck of the Shadow vessel back to Minbar, with tragic results. They believed that this proof would convince the Grey Council of the righteousness of the Anla'shok's cause. The High Council was wrong, and the resulting chaos was little more than a disaster that almost doomed the Anla'shok for all time.

The High Council ceased to truly exist when the Anla'shok 'officially' left Minbar during what became the Era of Lost Hope. Over time, the membership of those Anla'shok who had remained in Tuzanor would

diminish to such a level that there was little point in the High Council existing, even if there was the will to recreate it. The Rangers of that dark period had an individual nominated as Ranger One, which was enough. Some of the Rangers even blamed the High Council for leading the Anla'shok so poorly in the years following the time of Valen.

Entil'zha Delenn reactivated the Council in 2261, to assist her in the running of the Anla'shok while she was busy with matters concerning her caste and her people as a whole. Under the prior tenure of Jeffrey Sinclair, the resurrection of the High Council was sometimes mentioned, but the former commander of Babylon 5 needed to be the focus of the Ranger's efforts against the Shadows, readying him for his great destiny.

## Meetings, Open and Closed

The High Council meets once per standard month to discuss the threats facing the Anla'shok and the Minbari Federation. In later years this was expanded to include humanity and the Interstellar Alliance. These are classed as 'open meetings', and during these notes are taken to pass onto informed parties, such as the heads of the Interstellar Alliance and current head of the Rangers. This is required should any governmental agencies or third parties inquire into the actions of the Anla'shok as a whole. In some way the Rangers are accountable to the Interstellar Alliance, and even though the actual contents of these notes are never given directly to these inquirers, the fact that the notes exist and must be taken means that part of the secrecy under which the Anla'shok traditionally operated is now gone.

In addition the Grey Council expects, and indeed has the right, to know what is being discussed. In order to prevent the previous tensions between the Grey Council and the Anla'shok, the notes of these open meetings are passed onto the Grey Council.



However, there are times when the Anla'shok must act outside the remit of the ISA. This may be to undertake internal tasks, such as the disciplining of Rangers who have contravened the aims and goals of the Anla'shok. It may also be a military campaign against an alien aggressor, conducted in such secrecy that the deeds done will never be spoken of. No outsiders are informed of the results of these meetings – the head of the Anla'shok, be they Ranger One or Entil'zha, understands that this is an internal matter even if it includes military action. The President of the Interstellar Alliance is not told about these situations, merely that operations are being

conducted in the dark. Sheridan disliked not knowing, but understood the need for secrecy, having worked alongside some of the Rangers during his fight against the Shadows and President Clark.

## Processes and Protocols

With Minbari roots, it is unsurprising that the High Council has a process for every conceivable interaction. That said, the High Council allows for exceptions outside of the defined rules – with the very mandate of the Rangers to go outside of restrictive processes, the Rangers are in no way hamstrung by 'red tape'. One such



example was the special dispensation given to G'Kar in 2265, although Sindell did not expect the Narn to involve himself in a matter of discipline regarding a Ranger accused of retreating from a combat situation.

The decision of the High Council is normally accepted without question, and the will of that body can only be overridden by the express wishes of the Entil'zha. This was deemed necessary by Valen, as there were times when his particular insight served them well during the previous Shadow War. To date, no decision has been overridden, but the potential is there.

When not in session, the members of the High Council dress in their normal attire as members of the Anla'shok. When a meeting is in session however, the High Council adorn robes similar to that of the Grey Council.

In a meeting, there are no restrictions on which Council members may. The unofficial rule is that only one may speak at one time, with the theoretical aim being that the speaking member is relaying the wish of the Council. Where there are matters of severe import or the administering of discipline, it is common that only one member will speak; the actual debate will have happened previously, 'behind the scenes'.

## The Administration of Discipline

Like any organisation, the Anla'shok has rules and regulations with penalties for those who break those regulations.

The common punishment for a Ranger betraying the direct wishes of a senior officer is a mandatory period of reflection in Tuzanor or some other Anla'shok facility. This also includes a Ranger who has betrayed the code of the Anla'shok, although this is only a temporary measure until the High Council can define a more appropriate punishment. After the defined period is up, the senior officer may decide whether more reflection time is needed, or the Ranger is to return to active duty.

For more serious crimes, the punishment varies. A Ranger may find himself stripped of command, or permanently assigned to lesser duties back on Minbar or any one of the other training facilities. The Ranger may find himself unable to progress in rank or privilege for the rest of his days within the Anla'shok.

Finally, the most extreme punishment is for a Ranger to be exiled from the order. Such a punishment is permanent and can never be revoked under any circumstances. The most notable exile from the order was Lennier, the former aide to Delenn during her time on Babylon 5. It should be stated that this punishment was decided *in absentia*, with the former Ranger nowhere to be found to answer for his crime of leaving President Sheridan to die. In fairness, Lennier redeemed himself during the timeframe of the Telepath Crisis, although his salvation cost him his life.

There exist rumours of darker punishments, but the official line is still that Minbari do not kill Minbari. By implication, that includes humans as well, although

permanent imprisonment is not outside the bounds of possibility, especially for those ex-Rangers who know too much about the secrets of the order.

## Personalities on the High Council

### Forces of Will

A position on the High Council is not a permanent one, as there are too many high-ranking members of the Anla'shok. To hold such a position is one of great power, but also bears the expectation of servitude to the cause of the Anla'shok. Decisions that can change the future of whole worlds or systems sometimes fall on the High Council, and thus the most serious and focused minds are required for governance.

The following personalities frequently occupy positions on the High Council; this reflects their considerable wisdom as well as years of experience in service to the Anla'shok, whether directly or indirectly. These individuals were in session when David Martel and his associates were judged on their conduct in the 'Enfli affair', where they disobeyed the dictates of combat and retreated from a situation against the edicts of the High Council and by implication the Ranger's Code.

### Sindell

A Minbari well into his eighties, Sindell is a sprightly figure with a keen intellect and sharp wit. His service to the Anla'shok passed into its fortieth year when the

If a copy of the *Minbari Federation Fact Book* is to be used, then Sindell has the relevant combat style as benefits a Wind Swords clan member of the warrior caste, as detailed in that book.

Interstellar Alliance was formed, and it would be fair to say that Sindell has seen more change in the Anla'shok than many other Minbari previously.

A member of the Wind Swords, Sindell was ordered by his caste to leave the Anla'shok in 2259 when the human, Jeffrey Sinclair, took over as Ranger One. The dictates of the warrior caste were clear and unambiguous – the decision that Sinclair had made to open the ranks of the Anla'shok up to non-warrior caste and *humans* had been one step too far. Equally as bad was that a human was now occupying the role that had once been held by Valen. The caste leaders were displeased, and thus as a symbol of defiance all warrior caste members were ordered to leave the Anla'shok.

Most of the Rangers handed in their pikes and pins, and only 35 elected to defy their caste and remain with the Anla'shok. Sindell was one of these, and knew in his heart that there would be no opportunity to change his decision later on. He felt the loyalty to the Anla'shok to be greater than to his caste; Sindell did not reveal that there was something about Jeffrey Sinclair that inspired him to believe that the human was different, and that the change coming needed someone who could think outside of typical constraints. Valen had been like this, the legends had said.

Sindell found out after the departure of Babylon 4 for the past why Sinclair had seemed so different – he was no human, he was more than that; to Sindell, he was *better* than that. Jeffrey Sinclair had become Valen, and used his knowledge and experience to fight the Shadows in a war that created the organisation that in a thousand years he would take charge of as a younger man. This knowledge troubled Sindell for a time, as it would for those few Rangers who learned the truth by virtue of their trustworthiness or rank, but the rightness of the cause of the Anla'shok won through. Despite being a



human, trading in the freedom of choice for a life of servitude was more typical of a Minbari attitude than many in the caste of his birth.

If Sindell found that hard, his conviction would be in for an additional challenge one year later when the ranks of the Rangers were opened up to any sentient who qualified. He knew that he had to comply with the wishes of Sheridan and Delenn, but did not have to like or approve of it. This belief would of course never cause him to betray his orders, or the ultimate goals of the Anla'shok. In reality, it would mask itself in a desire to push the more overtly Minbari facets of Ranger training and dogma on new recruits – some humans had proved themselves worthy, but no Minbari souls were shared with any other race in the galaxy, a fact which he held close to his heart.

## Sindell

**Minbari Officer (Fleet) 6/Ranger 10**

**Hit** 36

**Points:**

**Initiative:** +6 (+2 racial, +4 Improved Initiative)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 22 (+11 class, +1 Dodge)

**Attacks:** +17/+12/+7/+2 close combat or +16/+11/+6/+1 ranged

**Special** Discipline of the Ranger, Fearless, Garb of Honour, Places

**Qualities:** Unseen, The Application of Terror, Denn'bok 1d10/1d10, Die for the One, Standing on the Bridge 2/day, Live for the One, Heart of Izil'zha

**Saves:** Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +13

**Abilities:** Str 13, Dex 11, Con 15, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 15

**Skills:** Athletics +10, Bluff +13, Computer Use +12, Concentration +10, Diplomacy +17, Intimidate +12, Intrigue +15, Investigate +12, Knowledge (Galactic Lore) +4, Medical +3, Notice +16, Operations (Piloting) +7, Operations (Systems) +8, Pilot +4, Sense Motive +10, Stealth +20, Subterfuge +8, Technical (Electronics) +16

**Feats:** Alertness, Data Access, Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Denn'bok), Fluency (Minbari, Human, Narn), Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Martial Arts, Persuasive, Skill Focus (Computer Use), Skill Focus (Diplomacy), Skill Focus (Investigate), Spacecraft Proficiency, Stealthy, Weapon Focus (denn'bok), Veteran Commander

## Turval

**Minbari Officer (Ground) 7/Ranger 10**

**Hit** 38

**Points:**

**Initiative:** +7 (+1 Dex, +2 racial, +4 Improved Initiative)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 23 (+12 class, +1 Dex)

**Attacks:** +17/+12/+7/+2 close combat or +18/+13/+8/+3 ranged

**Special** Rallying Call 1/day, Way of Command, Discipline of the

**Qualities:** Ranger, Fearless, Garb of Honour, Places Unseen, The Application of Terror, Denn'bok 1d10/1d10, Die for the One, Standing on the Bridge 2/day, Live for the One, Heart of Izil'zha

**Saves:** Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +12

**Abilities:** Str 11, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 16, Cha 14

**Skills:** Appraise +12, Athletics +8, Bluff +3, Computer Use +8, Concentration +16, Diplomacy +20, Intimidate +12, Intrigue +12, Investigate +12, Knowledge (Galactic Lore) +5, Knowledge (History) +3, Medical +8, Notice +21, Operations (Systems) +5, Pilot +6, Sense Motive +21, Stealth +10, Subterfuge +10, Technical (Engineering) +8, Technical (Mechanical) +8

**Feats:** Alertness, Endurance, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Denn'bok), Fluency (Minbari, Human), Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reload, Martial Arts, Natural Leader, Negotiator, Nerves of Steel, Skill Focus (Concentration), Skill Focus (Notice), Surface Vehicle Proficiency, Weapon Proficiency (rifle), Weapon Proficiency (heavy weapons), Veteran GROPOS

## Sech Turval

One of the Anla'shok's most patient tutors, Turval of the Moon Shields clan has served the Anla'shok faithfully for ninety years. This is partly due to the fact that Turval declared his loyalty to the warrior caste by choice rather than by birth, and without doing this he would not have been eligible to join.

Turval served the Anla'shok since the age of forty-five, coming into the service around the same time as his dear friend, Lenonn. Prior to this, he had served his clan

loyally as a ground soldier, leading a unit of fellow clan members, and he was renowned as a capable leader.

After his transfer into the Rangers, Turval served the Anla'shok well, and was overjoyed when Lenonn was promoted to the position of Ranger One. The warrior caste had come to accept the presence of the Rangers on Minbar and more specifically Tuzanor, but this was on the unspoken understanding that they kept out of the way of the warrior caste, and did not dare to meddle in their affairs.

Saddened when Lenonn died during the Earth-Minbari war, Turval knew the reasons why the Anla'shok had attempted to broker peace between the warring sides. Not knowing whether to blame renegade human elements or the warrior caste for the murder of his close friend, Turval spent a good portion of the war assisting humanity where possible, as his friend had requested prior to going to the meeting with Doctor Franklin, G'Kar of the Narn Regime and Captain John Sheridan. It would be viewed as treason, but the Anla'shok had fared under worse conditions, as the studious Turval well knew.

Since the arrival of Jeffrey Sinclair on Minbar, Turval was involved in the training of many of the new Human recruits, including Marcus Cole. The elderly Minbari was particularly saddened when the lovable rogue died, giving his life so that another could live. Turval knew that if Marcus could have dealt with his guilt at living whilst his brother William had died, the human would have become a leading light in the Anla'shok.

In the time following the appointment of Jeffrey Sinclair, Turval was able to restore his links to the caste of his birth, something that other Minbari often comment upon. For Durhan, this takes place in the form of gentle teasing. However, Turval still acknowledges some of his warrior caste training, being ready to administer short, sharp shocks to trainees not paying proper attention in class. To him, meditation is the central activity from which a warrior can extend himself properly.

### Sech Durhan

While not officially a Ranger, Durhan has a place on the High Council granted to him in recognition for the contribution he has made to the Anla'shok over the years. He trained some of the most proficient members of the Anla'shok in mastering the Denn'bok, as well as deserving or gifted members of the warrior caste like Neroon. Part of his remit also covered the construction of those weapons, his right as the recognised master of such a weapon.

Although Sech Turval joined the warrior caste early in life, Sech Turval does not benefit from the combat styles as detailed in the first edition *Minbari Federation Fact Book*. This reflects that Sech Turval was born into a different caste. In all other respects he can be treated as a member of the Moon Shields clan.



The rank of F'hursna was granted to Durhan eighteen years before the acceptance of non-Minbari trainees into the Anla'shok. This acknowledgement by his clan and caste did not affect Durhan either way – it was a reward for his devotion and expertise with the ancient weapon, but to Durhan the true reward was mastery of the weapon itself. Shortly after his rank was acknowledged, the newly promoted F'hursna Sech Durhan trained a rising star in the warrior caste, a young Minbari named Neroon who proved to be a highly capable student.

Durhan originally opposed the training of human Rangers in the fighting pike – he did not believe that humans would be worthy to be trained in the Denn'bok. He had a chance to prove his theory against the newly promoted Ranger One, Jeffrey Sinclair. Whilst the fight could have been over in seconds had Durhan desired it to be so, he found that Sinclair fought with grit and passion, and found his opinion of humans altered. The agreed course of action between them was that human Rangers, like Minbari Rangers, would be trained in the fighting pike and sanctioned to own one, if they proved themselves worthy.

If a copy of the *Minbari Federation Fact Book* is to be used, then Sech Durhan has the relevant combat style as benefits a Star Riders clan member of the warrior caste, as detailed in that book.

Durhan is notoriously picky with whom he chooses to train. Just the fact that Durhan was involved in the training of a warrior would be knowledge enough to make an opponent consider the ramifications of their actions. For many years Durhan trained his skills to perfection with the Denn'bok – there is no living Minbari more capable with the Minbari fighting pike despite Durhan's age.

### Matthew Fiedel

One of the longest serving human Rangers, Matthew Fiedel has the honour of serving the Anla'shok during the Shadow War as well as into its altered incarnation in the times of the Interstellar Alliance. He was one of the first batch of Ranger trainees educated on Minbar, learning his craft alongside William Cole, the brother of Marcus. Whether he approves or not, Matthew Fiedel's name will be carved in Ranger history, for it was he who travelled to Babylon 5 to deliver a pre-recorded message to Michael Garibaldi and Ambassador Delenn, from an old friend.





## Durhan

**Minbari Soldier 10/Ranger 10**

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| <b>Hit Points:</b> | 61   |
| <b>Initiative:</b> | +6 (+2 racial, +4 Improved Initiative)   |
| <b>Speed:</b>      | 30 ft  |
| <b>DV:</b>         | 23 (+12 class, +1 Dodge)   |
| <b>Attacks:</b>    | +24/+19/+14/+9 close combat or +21/+16/+11/+6 ranged   |
| <b>Special</b>     | Co-ordinated Unit +3, Discipline of the Ranger, Fearless,  |
| <b>Qualities:</b>  | Garb of Honour, Places Unseen, The Application of Terror, Denn'bok 1d10/1d10, Die for the One, Standing on the Bridge 2/day, Live for the One, Heart of Izil'zha   |
| <b>Saves:</b>      | Fort +16, Ref +11, Will +8   |
| <b>Abilities:</b>  | Str 19, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 12   |
| <b>Skills:</b>     | Acrobatics +14, Athletics +24, Bluff +6, Concentration +12, Intimidate +16, Medical +5, Notice +18, Operations (Systems) +7, Pilot +5, Sense Motive +5, Stealth +15, Subterfuge +7, Technical (Mechanical)   |
| <b>Feats:</b>      | Alertness, Brawling, Denn'bok Mastery, Dodge, Endurance, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Denn'bok), Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Martial Arts, Sixth Sense, Toughness (x3), Weapon Focus (Denn'bok), Weapon Focus (Fist Spars), Weapon Specialisation (Denn'bok) |

## Matthew Fiedel

**Human Officer (Fleet) 5/Ranger 8**

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| <b>Hit Points:</b> | 31  |
| <b>Initiative:</b> | +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)   |
| <b>Speed:</b>      | 30 ft   |
| <b>DV:</b>         | 23 (+10 class, +2 Dex, +1 Dodge)  |
| <b>Attacks:</b>    | +14/+9/+4 close combat or +15/+10/+5 ranged   |
| <b>Special</b>     | Rallying Call 1/day, Discipline of the Ranger, Fearless, Garb of  |
| <b>Qualities:</b>  | Honour, Places Unseen, The Application of Terror, Denn'bok 1d10/1d10, Die for the One, Standing on the Bridge 1/day, Live for the One   |
| <b>Saves:</b>      | Fort +8, Ref +9, Will +12   |
| <b>Abilities:</b>  | Str 13, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 12  |
| <b>Skills:</b>     | Athletics +6, Bluff +5, Computer Use +6, Concentration +6, Diplomacy +13, Intrigue +16, Intimidate +11 Investigate +8, Knowledge (Babylon 5) +3, Notice +16, Operations (Systems) +6, Pilot +10, Sense Motive +11, Stealth +16, Subterfuge +10, Technical (Electronics) +9, Technical (Engineering) +4, Technical (Mechanical) +3 |
| <b>Feats:</b>      | Alertness, Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Denn'bok), Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Investigator, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Martial Arts, Natural Leader, Nerves of Steel, Skill Focus (Intrigue), Spacecraft Proficiency  |

Of average height, average build and nondescript facial features and haircut, Matthew was the perfect choice at the spearhead of human involvement in the Rangers. He could blend into any situation and then extract himself, leaving others with little to create an identifying description of him. Even his voice had little in the way of regional dialects or manners of speaking to give anything away. As a former crewman with the Belt Alliance, Matthew had the combination of space-travel experience, discretion and the impulse to intercede when he felt it right that made him perfect recruiting material for the Rangers.

Matthew has some family back on Mars, and was privately glad when that world finally managed to throw off the Earther yoke that had restrained it for so long. His family did not know of his new career until Sheridan's declaration of the new Interstellar Alliance; his kin keep his importance within the Anla'shok quiet, to protect their son as much as possible. Matthew's elderly mother is especially keen to ensure that her son is kept safe by the guarded responses of his family.

A character such as Matthew Fiedel, or even Sech Durhan or Sech Turval, can make an excellent choice for the Contact feat in Ranger-related games of Babylon 5. Perhaps the Ranger-in-training came to the attention of such an important figure by simply being in the right place at the right time, or expressing unusual courtesy or manners. Perhaps the High Council member sees something of worth or importance in a young trainee, some promise that can be fulfilled at a later date.

It is also possible for Human or Minbari characters with Interstellar Alliance connections and ranks in the Diplomat base class to have such an individual as a Contact, but that individual's loyalty to the Anla'shok will always override any other concern. This should also be down to the permission of the Games Master – the Player should not expect that a single Babcom call can or will bring the fury of the Anla'shok down on their enemies.

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If you want to write new rules for a game, with new uses for skills and maybe some new feats, then be our guest. We cannot promise that we will like what you have done, but you will get constructive criticism in return, and not just a terse one-line rebuff.

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It is a painful fact that whatever you write, it will get edited. That is why editors exist, after all. Even this passage will have been edited. If you can get over this hurdle you are well on your way to attaining the mentality needed to be a writer. It will help if you can handle criticism as well. Take it from us – writing is a tough business. Just ask any author doing the rounds looking for a friendly publisher.

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# Mega-City One's Most Wanted

## Rico Dredd

By Matt Sharp

**Class/Level:** Street Judge 9

**Hit Points:** 87

**Initiative:** +2 (+2 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**Defence Value:** 20 (+10 Reflex)

**Damage Reduction:** 0

**Attacks:** +12/+7 melee, +11/+6 ranged

**Damage:** By weapon

**Special Qualities:** Augmented Respiratory System

**Saves:** Fort +12, Ref +10, Will +6

**Abilities:** Str 17, Dex 15, Con 18, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 8

**Skills:** Balance +6, Bluff +10, Climb +7, Computer Use +7, Intimidate +11, Jump +7, Knowledge (law) +5, Ride +10, Search +7, Sense Motive +6, Spot +8, Streetwise +4 and Technical +5

**Feats:** Bloodline (Fargo)\*\*, Great Fortitude, Lightning Reflexes, Menacing Presence, Nerves of Steel, Point Blank Shot, Quick Draw, Rapid Aim, Rapid Shot

**Possessions:** Walther Mitsubishi LPK I Laser Pistol (4d6/14)

**History File:** Cloned from the gene stock of Chief Judge Fargo, the 'Father of Justice', Rico Dredd was Joe Dredd's identical sibling. Both were 'born' from a cloning tank in 2066, although Rico emerged twelve minutes before Joe – because of this, Joe always knew him affectionately as 'Big Rico', and he was 'Little Joe'. Sharing an identical DNA structure made the duo far more than mere brothers – it was as though they were a single person in two bodies. The pair quickly became the star pupils of the Academy of Law.

Unfortunately, disaster struck when the pair embarked on their Hotdog Run into the Cursed Earth. Battling a pair of savage mutants in a ruined building, Joe became trapped when the roof collapsed. Dedicated as ever, Rico rushed to his aid but the already weakened floor collapsed underneath him, hurling him head first into a deep pit. Rico suffered a fractured skull and a broken arm, but the pit contained over a

**Augmented Respiratory System:** Judges convicted of murder or abusing their authority suffer a terrible punishment. No mere terrestrial prison could hold an individual with all the training and resources of a judge, so a new, harsh type of punishment facility was required. A remote penal colony was established on the barren moon of Titan, the largest satellite of the planet Saturn, where the convicts are put to work at menial tasks such as rock breaking. But this is only part of the punishment. The thin atmosphere of Titan is not breathable by ordinary humans, making a bulky environment suit necessary. The convict judges, however, are cybernetically modified to survive in the airless environment. Their mouth and nose is sealed and their body 'adapted' to survive unaided on the barren world. No effort is made to make these augmentations cosmetically pleasing, and the renegade judges become horrific in appearance, their faces twisted into a macabre mockery of a human. The mouth is locked closed; ears and nose are sealed with clumsy-looking mechanical components, grafted directly into the renegade judge's skin. A speaker is mounted directly into the throat and connected with the vocal chords, which transforms the former lawman's voice into an electronic bark. Once adapted, the convict is able to survive indefinitely in a vacuum, no longer affected by the terrible cold or lack of air. A character with an augmented respiratory system is unaffected by inhaled gasses or the effects of exposure to vacuum and gains a +4 racial bonus to his Constitution score, but their horrific appearance and obvious status as a renegade reduces their Charisma score by –6 points. (These modifications are taken into account in his profile.)

\*\* Rico Dredd's status as a renegade judge means that he gains no benefit from the 'Aura of Justice' ability that is part of his Fargo Bloodline.

million rads of radiation. It took well over ten minutes for the remains of the Hotdog Run to recover Rico from the pit, and they returned to the Mega-City.

Rico quickly recovered, but seemed changed. Formerly stern but even-handed, Rico now became highly competitive, even vicious, in any contest. He seemed to become obsessed in 'beating' Joe in all areas, even if he had to stoop to underhand methods. Joe quickly learned that he could no longer rely on his brother's friendship and the formerly inseparable pair slowly drifted apart.

Both brothers passed their Final Assessment Tests in 2079 and became judges of Mega-City One. While Joe slowly began to build a reputation as a harsh but reasonably fair lawman, Rico seemed to go off the rails. A review board determined that he was returning an exceptionally high body count; there were complaints of assault, stories of perps being beaten up – even tortured – in Rico's custody. Even his lifestyle seemed decadent – at the time, judges were assigned apartments among the normal citizens, in order to forge stronger public relations. Joe had taken a basement apartment in Rowdy Yates Con-Apt, a humble abode that fitted well with his image, but Rico had selected a luxhab apartment in the exclusive Oldtown district, where he seemed to be living the highlife, despite possessing no legitimate sources of income.

Even the Council of Five were becoming concerned by Rico's behaviour. Joe was sent to speak with his duplicate, but found that Rico seemed to have abandoned the ethics of the Justice Department altogether – even going so far as to take a mistress. Worried by his brother's increasingly erratic behaviour, Joe decided to shadow his next patrol. This proved to be a tour of one vice operation after another – everywhere Rico visited, he would collect thousands of credits in protection money, lining his own pockets with the misery of the citizens. Perhaps aware that Joe was following him, Rico went even further than normal – his last visit, to the McMahon Copiers Company, ended in murder when the unfortunate owner could not pay the cash that Rico demanded. Convinced beyond reason that Joe would help him in his career of crime, Rico tried to persuade Joe that they could cover up the murder and they could share the proceeds of his criminal career. Fortunately, Joe proved to be a dedicated follower of the Law and apprehended Rico, even though he knew the dreadful fate reserved for renegade judges.

Rico was dispatched to the barren moon of Titan, to spend the next 20 years toiling on the desolate, airless rock. His mouth and nose were sealed up and a brutally functional artificial breathing apparatus grafted onto his face, allowing him to survive on the cold satellite without a bulky environment suit. Rico became a mockery of the human form, his face rendered unrecognisable and even his voice changed to an emotionless, robotic monotone. For many years, the Mega-City all but forgot that there had once been another 'Judge Dredd' on the streets. Rico did make one, brief, return during the years of his incarceration – even if it was only on the pages of a trashy newszine. A journalist, Fabienne Brown, had been given permission to write a series on the

penal colony of Titan. One of the disgraced judges she interviewed was Rico Dredd – despite his now horrific appearance, the renegade successfully seduced the naive reporter. Nine months later, back on Earth, Rico's daughter Vienna was born.

However, Rico was kept ignorant of his offspring and continued to serve his sentence. Finally, in 2099, Rico's sentence was complete and he was released. However, the former judge was far from rehabilitated. Despite his apparent model behaviour, which allowed him to return to Mega-City One with the bare minimum of supervision, Rico was nothing but a seething mass of hatred – an angry, bitter shadow of a man with only one desire on his mind – revenge on the man, his own *clone*, who had condemned him to 20 years of hell.

Few people took much notice of the sinister, hooded figure that made his way from the arrival terminal of Kennedy Space-Port on that fateful September day. Pausing only to leave a brief message to his duplicate, Rico vanished into the underworld. During the long years of Rico's incarceration, Joe Dredd had become one of the most famous judges in Mega-City One – his deeds were legendary, not least of which was the almost single handed defeat of a terrible robot rebellion. But Dredd had always known that – one day – Rico would return, and one way or another their twin fates would be decided.

Rico wasted no time in forcing a confrontation. He made his way to Joe's apartment in the basement of Rowdy Yates Con-Apt, knowing that it would not be long before his brother returned. He was able to sabotage the air conditioning system, removing most of the air from the apartment and reducing the temperature to way below freezing – almost exactly like the atmosphere of Titan. Joe returned home. Even though he was expecting an ambush, he was not prepared for the adjusted environment, although he was able to snap down his helmet-mounted respirator just in time to avoid suffocation. The pair – once so alike, almost identical, but now so different – spend a few moments discussing old times before Rico decided that the time was right for his revenge. He wanted to prove once and for all that he was the superior clone. He replaced Joe's Lawgiver back in his boot-holster and demanded that he draw, convinced that he would easily beat his brother in any face to face confrontation.

Unfortunately for Rico, he was wrong. Joe was able to outdraw Rico, moving like lightning he was able to put a bullet through his brother's heart before his hand was even halfway towards his holstered blaster. Maybe 20 years on Titan had slowed Rico's reactions a fraction, maybe he had become unused to the higher gravity of Earth, or perhaps he was just out of practice – 'Little Joe' proved to be the faster after all. However, Dredd could never shake the feeling that, deep down in his subconscious, Rico was appalled by the criminal that he had become and had wanted to die. But the truth died with him.

# WARS: Armour

Part 1 of the unreleased supplement, *Soul and Steel*. Written by Greg Lynch

## Armour & Dual Damage

Armour in the *WARS Roleplaying Game* is designed not to make it more difficult to hit the wearer, but to make it more difficult to hurt the wearer. All armour functions as Damage Reduction, eliminating some or all of the incoming damage from any attack.

All damage in *WARS* is classified as either energy damage or impact damage, with each type of armour protecting differently against each classification, as indicated in each armour's statistics.

**Energy Damage:** Energy damage encompasses damage from plasma, lasers, electricity, cold and fire, among others. This includes everything from a Spassky Quickfire to a F.L.I.C. to a kizen's attacks with the Electrical Control tree.

**Impact Damage:** Impact damage is the kind of damage delivered by blades, bullets, fists and claws. Anything relying on concussive or kinetic force to inflict damage falls into this category, which could be anything from a knife to an archaic rifle to a Clanton grab grenade.

In some cases, however, a weapon or attack may inflict both kinds of damage (or two sources of the same type of damage) with a single attack. Items created through the Kizen Infusion tree<sup>1</sup> are an excellent example of this. To determine the effects of such an attack, the first consideration is the damage of the delivery device

(usually an impact-based weapon), which counts as the primary damage. If the primary damage inflicted by the delivery weapon is sufficient to overcome the Damage Reduction of the target's armour, the secondary damage, as well as any damage 'left over' from the primary damage, is applied directly to the target's hit points, without being diluted or dispersed by the target's Damage Reduction. However, if the primary damage is not sufficient to overwhelm the armour's Damage Reduction, the armour counts against both primary and secondary damage separately. Usually, dual damage results from an impact weapon (dealing primary damage) with a secondary energy damage. However, even if both the primary and secondary damages are of the same classification (usually energy, like a *kizen infused* plasma weapon), the above holds true – the primary damage of the delivery device must surpass the armour's Damage Reduction in order for the secondary damage to be applied directly to the target's hit points. Even when the primary and secondary damages are of the same type, they are always considered separately in overcoming the Damage Reduction of the target's armour – they are never combined.

In some very rare cases, a weapon may even have three or more damage sources, though this is usually found

<sup>1</sup>See future issues of *Signs and Portents* for more details about the Kizen Infusion tree of kizen powers.

only in the most powerful kizen-infused items. No matter how many damage sources a single attack has, however, the primary damage of the delivery weapon most overcome the target's Damage Reduction by itself for the secondary and tertiary (and so forth) damage sources to bypass Damage Reduction completely.

## Layered Armour and Dual Damage

The effects of dual damage on layered armour can be slightly more complex, but works on the same principle as dual damage against a normally-armoured person.

To determine the effects of layered armour on dual damage, the layers of armour must be considered separately. If the primary damage does not penetrate the outer layer of armour, the secondary damage is applied to that layer. If the secondary damage does penetrate the outer layer, it then must bypass the inner layer to cause harm to the target. However, if the primary damage bypasses the outer layer of armour, but is stopped by the inner layer, the secondary damage of the attack must only contend with the Damage Reduction of the inner layer of armour.

## Armour Integrity

Armour is, quite bluntly, designed to take a beating. It is intended to absorb massive amounts of punishment without any loss of functionality. In the *WARS Roleplaying Game*, it is assumed that armour will continue to 'work' no matter how much damage rains down on it.

## Dual Damage in Action

*Jonas 'Plumber' Berensky had not expected things to happen this way. In retrospect, he realised he should have known the money was too good for the job; he should have known there would be at least one nasty surprise. He had forged his reputation as a freelance assassin working the Belt for the past decade, and he had never missed a mark before – but he was afraid he was about to break his streak and end his life all at the same time. Two things he definitely did not want to do.*

*Facing him in the cluttered, abandoned tunnel in some forgotten part of Vesta Station were the two marks. He had expected to find them each alone and unprepared, not together and ready for a fight; and he had certainly not expected them to be armed like they were. A pair of Gongen warriors with the look of experience, one held a katana that crackled with electrical energy, the other a Gongen plasma bolter with a plume of smoke trailing from the barrel. The three of them stared wordlessly at one another for a moment before Jonas swore under his breath and whipped out his Spassky Quickfire.*

Jonas wins initiative and starts the fight off with a spray of energy bolts from his Quickfire against one of the Gongen, inflicting some damage but coming nowhere close to dropping his foe. The first of the Gongen to act is the one armed with the plasma bolter, which has the Fire Control kizen power kindle weapon infused into it. The Gongen fires twice, only succeeding with one attack. The plasma bolt, leaving a trail of smoke and sparks in its wake, sizzles through the air and impacts on Jonas' chest. Jonas is wearing CGC scout armour, which provides him an energy DR of 6. The primary damage of the plasma bolter is 1d10 energy damage. The Gongen rolls five points of damage against Jonas, not enough to penetrate his armour. The plasma bolter's secondary damage (from kindle weapon) is 1d6, which is not enough to penetrate the Damage Reduction of Jonas' armour.

Feeling a little better after shrugging off the attack from the strange plasma bolter (he has never seen a kizen infused weapon before), Jonas turns to meet the attack of the katana-wielding Gongen. The Gongen charges to meet him and connects with his blade. The katana has the Electrical Control kizen power charged weapon infused into it. The katana's base damage is 1d10 impact damage. The Gongen rolls 10 points of damage against Jonas, which is easily enough to bypass the impact Damage Reduction rating of Jonas' CGC scout armour. Jonas takes five points of damage from the primary damage of the katana, as well as 1d6 energy damage from the charged weapon. Since the katana's primary damage was enough to pierce Jonas' Damage Reduction, the weapon's secondary damage (in this case four points) would be applied directly to his hit points, resulting in a total damage of nine points from the attack.

Following up on the example above, of Jonas 'Plumber' Berensky and his unfortunate encounter on Vesta Station, assume Jonas is actually wearing a flexiplas vest underneath his CGC scout armour. The Gongen who hit him before strikes at Jonas again with his katana and inflicts 7 points of impact damage as the primary damage of the attack. This is enough to bypass the impact DR of the CGC scout armour, but the remainder of the primary damage is absorbed by the flexiplas vest Jonas is wearing underneath. Since the weapon's primary damage penetrated the outer layer of armour but not the inner, the weapon's secondary damage ignores the outer layer of CGC scout armour, but must still overcome the inner layer of the flexiplas vest before Jonas is wounded. The secondary damage of the katana is 1d6 electrical (the die roll comes up a 5), which is compared to the energy DR rating of the flexiplas vest. A flexiplas vest has an energy DR rating of 3, meaning that two points of the weapon's secondary damage slip through and inflict a minor wound on Jonas.

Most armour is designed with only one purpose in mind – to protect its wearer from incoming damage. However, some armours have additional features that are not quite so resilient as the armour itself. The most common of these, and usually the most fragile, is an environmental or pressure seal.

An environmental or pressure seal is designed to protect the armour's wearer from things that can be just as deadly as an enemy's weapon, such as airborne toxins, diseases or hostile atmospheres. It also maintains a constant pressure within the armour, protecting the wearer against the vacuum of space or the depths of an ocean, as well as airborne hazards.

Obviously, any attack that punctures armour creates a brief hole in the armour's seal. For extremely tiny holes, the armour is able to seal them almost instantly, utilising a variety of means depending on the manufacturer of the armour. Larger holes, on the other hand, usually cannot be automatically sealed by the armour, potentially creating immediate and serious problems for the wearer. In order to create a hole in the armour that cannot be immediately resealed, an incoming attack must inflict double the armour's Damage Reduction rating. Thus, if a suit of Gongen battle armour is hit with an incoming energy attack that inflicts 14 or more points of damage, a hole is torn in the armour's environmental seal. An incoming impact attack must inflict 18 or more hit points of damage to create such a hole in Gongen battle armour.

When the environmental seal is breached, the protective barrier between the armour's wearer and the hostile environment outside (if any) begins to lose effectiveness. How quickly it becomes utterly ineffective depends upon how bad the initial breach is. The following chart indicates how quickly a sealed suit of armour will lose all benefits of the seal, depending upon the damage

inflicted. The 'Time to Full Exposure' column indicates the amount of time the wearer of the armour has before the breach in the seal allows his oxygen to escape or allows contaminants inside.

| Damage Inflicted        | Size of Breach | Time to Full Exposure |
|-------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| 2 x armour's DR         | Tiny           | 1d3 minutes           |
| 3 x armour's DR         | Small          | 2d10 rounds           |
| 4 x armour's DR         | Medium         | 1d10 rounds           |
| 5 x armour's DR         | Large          | 1d4 rounds            |
| 6 x armour's DR or more | Huge           | Immediate             |

### Multiple Breaches

In the case of multiple breaches in a sealed suit of armour, the following rules apply. The Games Master should determine the size of the largest breach in the armour and increase the severity of the breach by one category for every additional breach. For example, two medium breaches in a sealed suit of armour equal one large breach, while three tiny breaches equal a single medium breach.

When multiple breaches occur over the course of several rounds of combat, any time elapsed from the initial breach is also counted against the time to full exposure from subsequent breaches. For example, if a sealed suit suffers a tiny breach in the first round of combat, then suffers a small breach four rounds later, the two will combine to create the equivalent of a medium breach. A medium breach normally grants 1d10 rounds before full exposure, but in this case, the armour has already been leaking for four rounds. Thus, with the addition of this new damage, the armour will lose all environmental containment in 1d10 - 4 rounds.

## Alternate Rule

### Armour Deterioration

Whenever armour is subjected to damage equal to five times its Damage Reduction score or greater, its pertinent Damage Reduction is decreased by one. For example, if a plas suit is struck by an energy-based attack doing 25 points of damage or more, its energy Damage Reduction rating would be decreased by one, making the plas suit a 4/4 suit of armour.

Obviously, armour like a leather jacket will not stand up for very long against laser rifles, shotguns and katanas under these rules, but then, Player Characters would be well advised to seek out something a little sturdier than the skin of a cow if they wish to survive and thrive in the Solar System of WARS.

Armour that has been damaged in this way may be repaired so long as the Damage Reduction of the armour (either energy or impact) has not been reduced to zero. Repairing a damaged suit of armour requires a Repair skill check roll (DC ranges from 10 to 25 depending upon the nature of the armour and is assigned by the Games Master).

The cost of repairing damaged armour is equal to 10 percent of the armour's original cost for every point of Damage Reduction that is to be restored.



## Armour Table

| Armour                                  | Type              | Energy DR/<br>Impact DR | Max<br>Dex | Skill<br>Penalty | Speed     | Weight             | Faction                   | Cost          |
|---|-------------------|-------------------------|------------|------------------|-----------|--------------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| Leather jacket*                         | Light             | 1/1                     | +8         | 0                | Normal    | 3 kg               | Earther, Gongen, Maverick | 50 creds      |
| Leather and metal*                      | Light             | ½                       | +7         | -1               | Normal    | 5 kg               | Maverick                  | 75 creds      |
| Armoured coat                           | Light             | 2/2                     | +7         | 0                | Normal    | 4 kg               | Earther, Gongen, Maverick | 100 creds     |
| Flexiplas vest*                         | Light             | 4/2                     | +6         | -1               | Normal    | 4 kg               | Earther, Maverick         | 120 creds     |
| CGC Strike Gel Suit                     | Light             | 5/2                     | +8         | -1               | Normal    | 3 kg               | Earther                   | 400 creds     |
| Gongen <i>Kaze</i> light assault armour | Light             | 4/3                     | +6         | -1               | Normal    | 3 kg               | Gongen                    | 325 creds     |
| Shi Shimmerweave armour                 | Light             | 5/5                     | +6         | -1               | Normal    | 4 kg               | Shi                       | 800 creds     |
| Hardplas vest*                          | Medium            | 4/4                     | +5         | -1               | Normal    | 5 kg               | Earther, Maverick         | 200 creds     |
| Cog vampire armour                      | Medium            | 5/4                     | +4         | -2               | Normal    | 6 kg               | Maverick                  | 350 creds     |
| Plas suit*                              | Medium            | 5/4                     | +4         | -2               | -2 metres | 7 kg               | Gongen, Maverick          | 250 creds     |
| Gongen light armour*                    | Medium            | 5/5                     | +4         | -1               | -2 metres | 6 kg               | Gongen                    | 400 creds     |
| CGC scout armour*                       | Medium            | 6/5                     | +3         | -2               | -2 metres | 8 kg               | Earther                   | 500 creds     |
| Shi assault sheath                      | Medium            | 8/8                     | +3         | -2               | -2 metres | 9 kg               | Shi                       | 950 creds     |
| Quay attack carapace                    | Heavy             | 7/7                     | +1         | -2               | -4 metres | 27 kg              | Quay                      | 425 creds     |
| Gongen <i>Assai</i> strike armour       | Heavy             | 7/8                     | +1         | -4               | -4 metres | 18 kg              | Gongen                    | 2,750 creds   |
| Gongen battle armour*                   | Heavy             | 7/9                     | +2         | -3               | -4 metres | 10 kg              | Gongen                    | 700 creds     |
| CGC trooper armour*                     | Heavy             | 8/10                    | +1         | -4               | -4 metres | 12 kg              | Earther                   | 900 creds     |
| Welles Gorget armour                    | Heavy             | 7/8                     | +0         | -4               | -4 metres | 15 kg              | Earther                   | 4,500 creds   |
| Shi Talish Class Heavy Armour           | Heavy             | 10/9                    | +1         | -4               | -4 metres | 23.5 kg            | Shi                       | 3,750 creds   |
| CGC elite armour*                       | Heavy             | 10/10                   | +0         | -5               | -4 metres | 30 kg <sup>1</sup> | Earther                   | 1,200 creds   |
| TW-3 'Thor' powered armour              | Heavy,<br>Powered | 12/10                   | +0         | -4 (see text)    | Normal    | 95 kg <sup>2</sup> | Earther                   | 15,000 creds+ |

\*Complete statistics for this armour can be found in the *WARS Roleplaying Game* core rulebook

<sup>1</sup> Despite the weight of the armour, micromotors inside it enable the wearer to move as if it were much lighter.

<sup>2</sup> This suit features a power assist system, allowing the wearer to operate it as if it were an extension of his own body, ignoring the suit's weight when determining encumbrance.

## Armoured Coat

Long a favourite of those who prefer style rather than substance, the armoured coat is a long coat, like a overcoat or duster, falling to just below the knees of its wearer. Formed of two layers of synthetic leather, the coat does offer enhanced protection compared to the leather jacket. The length of the coat is useful for concealing weapons and other large objects, granting the wearer a +2 bonus to hide such items.

The armoured coat is worn throughout the Solar System as a stylish means of protection, from Maverick gangs on the Rim to Earther corporate executives who want a little extra protection as they go about their daily activities. The listed cost for this item is for a functional but simple black coat. More stylish or intricately designed armoured coats sell for as much as 800 creds. Cost: 100 creds.

## CGC Strike Gel Suit

The CGC strike gel suit is a lightweight, unobtrusive armour used by Earther agents throughout the Solar System. Lighter and more effective than a flexiplas vest, it is also commonly used by anyone who can manage to get hold of such an item.

The gel suit is a centimeter-thick bodysuit that covers the entire body except the head. It is formed of a spongy, gelatinous substance that looks and feels like a SCUBA suit, but is comfortable enough to wear under clothing. Noticing that someone is wearing a CGC strike gel suit under a normal set of clothing requires a Perception skill check (DC 20). Cost: 400 creds.

## Cog Vampire Armour

The brainchild of a Cog mechanic and part-time raider named Dean 'Rigger' Richards who despaired over the

tremendous amount of energy gone to waste in any given firefight, the design for this armour has been copied and recopied over the years, and is among the most common armours found among members of the Cogs. In addition to its respectable protective qualities, the armour is actually capable of capturing some of the incoming energy from an energy-based attack (plasma, laser and so forth) and transferring it into a recharging unit built into the armour itself. This recharging unit can accommodate the power cells used in energy weapons from all three human factions (the Cogs are working on adapting the armour to accommodate power cells from Quay and Shi weapons). For every 10 points of energy damage absorbed by the armour, enough energy is transferred into the recharging unit to restore one 'shot' to any power cell plugged in to the recharger. Many Cogs prefer to simply run a power conduit from the recharging unit to whatever weapon they are using, drawing on the incoming energy from enemy fire to supplement their own ammunition. This modification is available for an additional 50 creds. Cost: 350 creds.

'Waste not, want not, fire your gun  
a hell of a lot.'  
-Dean 'Rigger' Richards, Maverick

## Gongen Assai Strike Armour

This armour is modeled to emulate the appearance of armour from Japan's feudal period, though it is of course updated to include the most advanced composites and a communications suite with a range of 50 km. It is pressure sealed, allowing the wearer to operate in environments that would be fatal to an unprotected human without concern for poisons, liquids or any other contaminants seeping into the suit. The Assai strike armour is sturdy enough to keep its wearer safe from environmental harm in pressures ranging from the vacuum of space to the crushing weight of one kilometre

beneath an Earth ocean. The suit has radiation shielding throughout, keeping its wearer safe from trivial and light exposure levels (see *Battlefront*).

The most distinctive feature of the assai strike armour, however, is on its back. The armour features an integrated assault jetpack (see future issues of S&P for more information on Gongen jetpacks) with an independent, enhanced fuel system that effectively doubles the jetpack's operating time. Cost: 2,750 creds.



## Gongen Kaze

### Light Assault Armour

Despite its name, this armour is most often used by Gongen troops on a covert mission or by special forces attempting to sneak into an enemy base, rather than by regular Gongen troops assaulting a position. Consisting of thin ceramic plates over a pliable, ablative suit, the Kaze light assault armour can be worn beneath clothing, requiring a Perception skill check (DC 15) to spot. Cost: 325 creds.

## Quay Attack Carapace

The unusual body shape of the Quay makes it difficult for them to wear any kind of armour, and their impressive natural defences often make any armour superfluous. However, when the Quay are going to engage in heavy assault operations against heavily armoured, heavily armed or entrenched targets, sometimes even the protection nature gave them is not enough. For these instances, the Quay have created the attack carapace, a strange-looking armour that consists of multiple segments covering the Quay's chest, back, crotch and upper legs. It is an evolution of protective garments designed for the most hazardous duty assignments on Tangkau, and looks almost like an insectoid exoskeleton. It is very rarely found on the open market in the Solar System, simply because it is utterly useless to anyone who is not a Quay and only has any value as a curiosity. Cost: 425 creds.



## Shi Shimmerweave Armour

The standard armour of most Shi, this strange material looks, feels and wears almost like cloth. It is a densely constructed polymer impregnated with millions of nanobots specifically tailored to this armour. Upon detection of an impact, the nanobots instantly stiffen the polymer around the source of the impact to the rigidity of steel, thus granting the wearer an impressive damage reduction against impact damage. The unique construction of the armour also scatters incoming energy damage. Shimmerweave armour takes its name from its singular appearance. At first glance, it seems to be utterly black, but a closer look reveals colours deep within it, which have been likened to the appearance of oil on water.

Shimmerweave armour can be worn by humans, though it is a tight fit for most of them. Attempts to modify the armour always end in failure, as the nanobots immediately begin 'repairing' any alterations made. Cost: 800 cred.

## Shi Assault Sheath

Much heavier than shimmerweave, the assault sheath is the preferred garb of Shi special assault and tactical forces. Its rigid, incredibly dense polymer construction provides impressive protection against even the most determined Quay attacks, and combined with the nanobots coursing through the Shi's body, makes the soldier all but unstoppable. Note that unlike the shimmerweave armour, which will stretch and contort enough to cover a human torso, the assault sheath is a rigid and unyielding armour that cannot be worn by non-Shi. It is usually a blend of white and iridescent blue in colour. Cost: 950 creds.



## Shi Talish Class Heavy Armour

This is the heaviest class of Shi armour in production, worn by front line heavy assault troops. It is pressure sealed, allowing the wearer to operate in environments that would be fatal to an unprotected Shi without concern for poisons, liquids or any other contaminants seeping into the suit. The Shi Talish Class Heavy Armour is sturdy enough to keep its wearer safe from environmental harm in pressures ranging from the vacuum of space to one kilometre beneath an Earth ocean. The suit has radiation shielding throughout, keeping its wearer safe from trivial, light and moderate exposure levels (see *Battlefront*).

In addition to the impressive protection offered by the armour itself, the Shi Talish Class Heavy Armour contains two integrated weapons systems. Mounted beneath each arm is a stripped-down version of the assault carbine (coming in a future issue of S&P. Use the

stats for a Gongen plasma rifle for now). Fired by the mental command of the wearer, these are intended as secondary weapons for the armour's wearer, and suffer a -2 attack penalty because of their awkward placement. Cost: 3,750 creds.

### TW-3 'Thor' Powered Armour

Gibson Consortium, the makers of the TW-3 'Thor' powered armour, are a relatively new supplier of military hardware to the CGC, having long been confined to a less than illustrious role in the CAC. However, with the introduction of the Thor powered armour, their stock is skyrocketing.

Barely out of the prototype stage, this armour has thus far seen only limited deployment by the Earther forces. It is an enormous piece of equipment, so much so the wearer is considered to be size Large when he has it on. In this armour, the CGC soldier towers three metres high, enclosed and protected within something that is as much machine as it is armour.



Created to allow human soldiers to stand toe to toe against a Quay warrior, the Thor powered armour provides the wearer with a number of benefits. The Thor armour confers on the wearer a +6 bonus to Strength, a +1 bonus to all Initiative rolls and the ability to make an unarmed attack against an opponent without provoking a free attack. In addition, as the Thor powered armour was created to enable to wearer to wrestle a Quay in the *kundanaka*, it is formed of a unique blend of carbon fibre and heat tolerant synthetics, granting the wearer fire resistance 6, in addition to the energy damage reduction provided by the suit's sturdy construction.

The Thor powered armour is pressure sealed, allowing the wearer to operate in environments that would be fatal to an unprotected human without concern for poisons, liquids or any other contaminants seeping into the suit. The Thor powered armour is sturdy enough to keep its wearer safe from environmental harm in pressures ranging from the vacuum of space to up to one kilometre beneath an Earth ocean. The suit has radiation shielding throughout, keeping its wearer safe from trivial, light and moderate exposure levels (see *Battlefront*).

This all adds up to a soldier who is almost as dangerous as a tank on the battlefield, but it does not come without cost. The Thor powered armour relies on a battery as its energy source, allowing it a total of four hours of operable time each day. It must then be recharged over the course of a full 24 hours before the suit can be used again. Additionally, while inside the Thor armour, the wearer suffers skill penalties of -4 on Perception and -10 on Stealth (including a -4 Stealth penalty for being Large size).

The Thor armour has a listed cost of 15,000 creds, but in reality it is whatever the market will bear. Only a very few of these suits have slipped out of Earther hands to

reach the open market. Those interested in purchasing a suit of Thor powered armour would be well advised to remember that the charging unit for the suit's batteries must be purchased separately (list price 500 creds). Further, each suit must be adjusted to fit the user, a process that requires a Repair skill check (DC 25) and an associated cost of 500 creds. Cost: 15,000 creds.

### Welles Gorget Armour

Though it offers less protection than other heavy armours, the Welles gorget armour has one feature that sets it apart. Mounted on the armour's chest is an integrated Welles gorget disruptor cannon. The suit includes an expanded power system for the disruptor, allowing the wearer to fire the cannon 30 times before the power cells in the suit need to be recharged. Unfortunately, the armour itself is not terribly well designed, and there are rumours that Welles is taking the entire thing back to the drawing board in an attempt to make the armour less unwieldy and cumbersome. Cost: 4,500 creds.



# The Corruption of Ikaya

## Part I

An epic Lone Wolf adventure by Mark Gedak

### Chapter I — Preparation for Epic Adventure

Icy claws rake through you as you pull your coat tight against the cold wind that rips through the Kirlundin Straits. Thankfully the bitter storm that has plagued you since leaving port has lessened even as the flow of small icebergs has increased. The Sommlending tradeship Valtariol smoothly parts the frigid water with ease as it takes its last shipment of supplies to Ljuk. Soon the winter pack ice will seal the land of Kalte off from rest of Magnamund.

The Captain's words still echo through your mind as you contemplate the task ahead of you. "Once the Valtariol docks in Ljuk you've got five weeks 'til we leave port. Be on the boat or we leave without you. I don't care what your mission is; I'll not risk losing my boat to the pack ice. What the ice catches, she keeps..." The thud of a small ice chunk off the hull brings your mind back to the present. It must be nerves, you think. Besides, how hard could it be to locate one missing Kai Lord?

*The Corruption of Ikaya* is a *Lone Wolf* adventure designed for 4-6 characters of 3<sup>rd</sup> level. Although the module is designed for 3<sup>rd</sup> level characters, encounters in this adventure have been written to include notes on scaling the challenges to both lower and higher level parties as well as suggestions for including material from *The Darklands* and *Magic of Magnamund*.

Player characters surviving through the successful completion of this adventure should be granted a level of experience for completing the story arc. This follows

the story variation approach of awarding experience that is explained on page 171 of the *Lone Wolf* main rulebook. If you wish to award experience according to encounters, all monsters are presented with a CR and all other challenges with a suitable experience point reward.

Text written in a box is meant to provide narrative that can be read aloud to the players or paraphrased to suit one's own tastes and needs. All encounters in this adventure are developed to provide options for both

lower and higher level parties. When the party reaches an encounter select the option that is the closest match for your characters' abilities.

#### Organisation

The adventure is divided into six chapters. The first chapter includes this introduction and an initial encounter to get the adventure going. The next chapter details the heroes' arrival at the small town of Kelfin and the presentation of their mission. The third chapter deals with the characters' voyage across the Kaltersee. The Port

of Ljuk is the centerpiece of the fourth chapter as the heroes begin to realise the true scope of their mission. In chapter five the characters trek north through the frozen waste and experience the many hazards that Kalte has to offer. This is the journey they must make to the Fortress of Ikaya. In the sixth chapter they infiltrate the Fortress of Ikaya to save the missing Kai lord and cleanse Ikaya of its corruption.

### Adventure Background

Previously an Acolyte of the Kai named Greysadow has accompanied members of the Sommlending merchant house Kilithanin on a diplomatic and trade mission north across the Kaltersee to the icy wastes of Kalte. They were trying to establish diplomatic and trade ties with the Ice Barbarians in hopes of ending their raids on Ljuk, being able to acquire a constant supply of rare earth minerals, and to allow members of the Kai to study the magic contained in the Fortress of Ikaya. The Acolyte and the merchant house representatives should have been back weeks ago. Have they been trapped by an early expansion of the glacier around Kalte? Did they become lost in the terrible frozen wastes? Or has something more sinister happened?

### What has come before?

The Kai Lords are not the only force that is interested in the ancient magic of the Shianti that is locked within the Fortress of Ikaya. Gnaag, the Darklord of Tyranny, has dispatched an envoy in the form of the Nadziranim named Malitki and a sizable force of Ice Giak warriors. Although much of the Ice Giak force was killed in the trek to the Fortress of Ikaya, the Nadziranim – disguised as a merchant – was able to obtain an audience with the Ice Barbarian Brumalmarc called Kzu'tooa.

Malitki pleaded with Kzu'tooa to consider an extremely beneficial trade pact and offered him a great orange gem as a gift. Intrigued, the Brumalmarc agreed to meet with Malitki in private. Seizing upon the opportunity, Malitki used the orange gem, a powerful magical item known as the *Soulgem*, to imprison the Brumalmarc and then assumed his form with his ability to change shape. The *Soulgem* aided Malitki in making his disguise perfect. Once the impersonation was complete he ordered the Ice Giaks killed and told the Ice Barbarians that he had already killed the merchant, taken the gem as a prize, and disposed of the merchant's body.

Once loose ends were tied up Malitki began a campaign to bring war to the northern wastes and increased the raids of the Ice Barbarians on the Kalte towns. This campaign allows Malitki to not only destroy the delicate peace that exists between the Ice Barbarians and the Kingdom of Sommerlund but also removes the vast majority of Ice Barbarians from their home. While the majority of the Ice Barbarian raiders are away, Malitki searches the Fortress for the *Doomstone of Ikaya* or other ancient magic that Gnaag could use to bring about his ascension to the Midnight Throne.

Recently a raiding party has returned with an unexpected captive, a Kai Lord, and supplies stamped with the merchant house Kilithanin's seal. Malitki used a *Dark Whisperer* to tell Gnaag about the prisoner, and the Darklord has ordered Malitki to hold the Kai until help arrives to bring him from Kalte to the Darklands to be interrogated. As the adventure begins Malitki is still searching for the ancient magic of the Shianti and Greysadow rests in the prison of the ice barbarians in the Fortress of Ikaya.

#### New Magical Item: Soulgem

A Soulgem is a bright orange gem that is used to trap the soul of a creature. Once a creature is trapped it falls into a deathlike coma that can only be reversed by the destruction of the gem or the release of the soul by the Soulgem's owner. While a soul is imprisoned the wielder of the gem has full access to the imprisoned creature's thoughts, emotions, and memories. This intimate knowledge provides the wielder with a +20 Disguise bonus to impersonate the trapped creature. To imprison a soul the wielder must use a standard action to activate the Soulgem and the target must be within 60 ft. and can clearly see the gem. The target is allowed to make a Will save (DC 22) to negate the effects. If a victim makes the save they are immune to the effects of the gem for 24 hours. The Soulgem can only hold one soul at any time, but a soul can be released from the Soulgem as a free action. It has a Hardness of 8 and 20 Endurance.

#### New Magical Item: Dark Whisperer

A Dark Whisperer is a magical stone crafted in the depths of the Darklands. Each Dark Whisperer is keyed to a specific Darklord and can be used by Darkspawn acting far from the Darklands to communicate with their masters. The item itself looks like a palm-sized, oval piece of onyx with a whirlpool of dim purple light rotating within. A Darkspawn with a Dark Whisperer may use a standard action to enter a trance and beg for the attention of the Darklord the Whisperer is keyed to. If the Darklord chooses to acknowledge them, they may converse normally through the medium of the stone. Either party may end the conversation with a free action.

## The Adventure Begins: Trouble on the Road

The road north from Tyso to the fishing village of Kelfin is an easy path edged by tall trees whose leaves have just begun to turn to autumn colours. The whole trip has only taken a couple of days. Now with only a few hours of travel remaining, you wonder why this community was chosen as your rendezvous in the first place.

The message you received from the agent of the Brotherhood of the Crystal Star was quite clear in its request, if somewhat lacking in details: a number of brave souls are needed for an important mission that may prove to be gravely important to the security of Sommerlund and the North. Interested parties who were willing to work for the cause of good or for reasonable compensation were advised to make their way to Kelfin as soon as possible.

It is at this point of reflection that you realise the land has become quiet. The wind has stilled, the sound of the water in the Kirlundin Straits is muted and even the birds that nest in the forest's edge have stopped their songs.

The heroes are being watched by a number of Forest Giaks who have been sent by the Darklord Gnaag to watch for travellers on the road who may be allies to the Kai, the Brotherhood of the Crystal Star, or the Sommerlund Knights of the Realm. Gnaag has correctly guessed that members of the Kilithanin merchant house and the Kai Lords will seek allies to search for

their missing members. The Giaks have been given written instructions in the Dark Tongue to kill any who bear the trappings of the Brothers, the Kai, or the Knights – which encompasses anyone wearing heavy armour, anyone wearing a green cloak, and anyone who 'looks like a wizard', so there is little chance of the Player Characters avoiding this encounter by accident. The Giaks will hide in the woods by the road until appropriate targets are within charging range and then spring from the tree line to attack.



### Forest Giaks (3)

**Medium Humanoid  
(Darkspawn, Evil)**

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <b>Endurance Dice:</b>   | 1d8+2 (6 Endurance)  |
| <b>Initiative:</b>       | +1   |
| <b>Speed:</b>            | 30 ft  |
| <b>Armour Class:</b>     | 12 (+1 Dex. +1 armour)   |
| <b>Attack:</b>           | Sword +4 melee (1d8+4, 19-20/x2)   |
| <b>Space/Reach:</b>      | 5 ft/5 ft  |
| <b>Saves:</b>            | Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +1   |
| <b>Abilities:</b>        | Str 18, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 8  |
| <b>Skills:</b>           | Athletics +8, Climb +8, Knowledge (Nature) +6, Perception +2, Stealth +4, Survival +6  |
| <b>Challenge Rating:</b> | 1  |
| <b>Allegiance:</b>       | Evil   |
| <b>Equipment:</b>        | Ragged leather armour, sword, dagger, 1d4 sp each. One of the Giaks also carries a note detailing their instructions; it is signed with a fly-shaped sigil, identifiable as the symbol of Gnaag with a Knowledge (The Darklands) check at DC 25. |

**Easier:** Reduce the number of Forest Giaks to two.

**Harder:** Increase the number of Forest Giaks to five.

## Chapter 2 – The Danger in Kelfin

You crest one final hill and can look down upon the quaint village. The sound of the sea has grown progressively louder in the last hour and now the call of the ostrels pierce through the calm air. The fishing village of Kelfin is too small to appear on most maps of Sommerlund but it is still home to a small shipyard, a temple of Ishir, a local tavern and an obscure little office of the Kiliathanin merchant house. The docks are filled with sailors tending to their nets and gear and children play in the streets.

### Summary

The heroes arrive in the small port of Kelfin after being attacked by Giaks on the road. Upon arrival the heroes will need to seek out their contact of fall victim to more of the Darklord Gnaag's schemes. They have the opportunity to interact with a number of Non-Player Characters who can become embroiled in their quest. They may get to purchase supplies, if their last mission has left them with few resources. Lastly, they will meet the captain of the ship that will take them to Ljuk and make a bad first impression with the ships' resident pessimist.

The town is home to 480 people who make their living from the sea. It is an out of the way place far from any bustle or excitement. The community as a whole has an allegiance of Balance with leanings towards Good when gently reminded of their duties and responsibilities.

### Information: Rumours for the Heroes

Each of these rumours is available to the PC before they arrive at Kelfin with a successful Gather Information or Knowledge (geography) check.

#### DC 10

† Due to the rocky soil and salty sea water that seeps into the groundwater, there is no large scale agriculture

in the area. Local gardens provide produce when the season is right and fish from the Kaltersee is the primary diet. (True)

† Kelfin used to have a great shipyard but as ships grew larger the lack of a good timber source in the area killed the industry. (True)

#### DC 15

† The guard captain on the merchant tradeship *Valtariol* looks like a man but is really a Darkspawn in disguise. (False)

† Because Kelfin is so dependent on the sea, Ishir is held in great regard there. (True)

#### DC 20

† The port of Kelfin sees little commercial use because the northern Kaltersee is plagued by the Xargath, which is a great beast known to capsize ships and devour whole crews. (True)

† There is a representative of the Kai Lords in town and talk of armies marshalling near the border with the Darklands. (False, but a common rumour)

### Location: The Temple of Ishir

This white marble structure graces the centre of Kelfin with its presence. The curvature of the walls and embellishments attest to the fact that this is the temple of the moon goddess Ishir. The building is circular in design with seven entrances and three tiers of marble steps. Its ceiling is open to the sky. A simple crescent-shaped altar stands at the centre of the temple and is arranged so that worshippers arranged in a semicircle on reed mats on the floor have no trouble hearing the word of Ishir. On a slate placard outside the temple's main entrance the Priestess of Ishir, Josephine (Ish3)<sup>1</sup> writes the time of the tides, moonrise, and the phases of the moon.

Josephine is an honest and trustworthy supporter of Good that feels she is destined for some greater purpose. She will gladly offer any information she has or will support true heroes with her local influence should they need it. In the mid-afternoon through to late at night she can be found at her temple; because of the late night services she sleeps late in a simple three-room house she has in town.

<sup>1</sup>For more information about the Priest of Ishir class, see Signs and Portents Roleplayer Issue 35.



### Location: Kilithanin Merchant House

This large 40 foot by 80 foot structure houses the administrative needs of the Kilithanin merchant house and an attached warehouse allows for the special storage of some items. The main floor is divided into 3 main chambers: an outer office for interaction with the public and receiving and processing orders, a file room where all the records are held, and an accounts office. The second floor is the living quarters of the current manager of the Kelfin Office, Theol Jurstin (Exp 4). Attached to the building is a three storey warehouse that is 60 feet square. When heroes first arrive at the merchant house go to the Agent of the Star event.

Theol Jurstin is a bean counter and a bigot who expects



that whatever reason the Agent of the Star, Stephen, has for coming to Kelfin it will end up costing the company a great deal. He can not understand why the Kilithanin merchant house thought that they could negotiate some sort of deal with the savage Ice Barbarians. If he had his way not a copper pawn would be wasted in trying to recover those that went north. Fortunately for the people of Sommerlund Theol does not get to make important decisions. Theol's dispositions will automatically be unfriendly toward outsiders. He will also try to make sure the rescue party take only what is absolutely needed on their mission.

### Location: The North Wind Tavern

The North Wind is a well maintained and clean establishment that bustles with activity throughout the day. The Kilithanin merchant house has a standing contract with the North Wind owners to provide meals for the House's staff. The owners Nathan (Exp2) and Illyana (Exp3) have prospered under this arrangement. They are friendly, cheerful and welcoming of all newcomers. Food and drink is available at 90% the listed price in the *Lone Wolf* main book (page123) with almost all meals heavily featuring fish or seafood.

### Location: Boarding Houses

The four boarding houses are all the property of the Kilithanin merchant house and provide each employee with living space as part of their salary. Each of these narrow three storey structures can house 60 employees. The boarding houses are currently home to 200 employees of the merchant house. Over half of this number comprises the crew of the *Valtariol* and its guard contingent.

### Location: Shipyards

The shipyards of Kelfin might have once been proud structures but as the demand for larger ships increased this simple shipyard could not compete with the shipyards of Port Bax or Ryme. No ships have been built in the town of Kelfin in the last 60 years. Some of the shipyard is used as storage by the Kilithanin House and the north warehouse has some unexpected occupants. (See Ambush)

### Location: The Docks

The docks of Kelfin are home to 26 fishing boats and the tradeship *Valtariol*. During the day a handful of fishermen can be found loading or fixing gear so that

it will be ready for the next tide. Most of the fishing is done in the very early morning and by noon the fish is being salted for storage or shipment. The fishermen of Kelfin are initially indifferent to people who do not work or live on the open seas.

### Plot Event: Asking Directions

Once the heroes arrive in Kelfin their presence will be quickly noted by the local population and the news of the arrival of strangers will spread quickly. If the heroes do not try to find the agent of the Order of the Star within 24 hours of arrival, they will be approached by a representative of the Darklord Gnaag instead. (See Ambush)

If the heroes actively seek out the agent upon arrival in town, a Gather Information check (DC 15, 7 sp) will tell the players that the Kilithanin merchant house received an out of town visitor early last week and have closed their doors to normal business since then. If the check fails tell them that a number of strangers including a Kai Lord arrived late a few nights ago and have taken up residence in an old warehouse by the western pier. (See Ambush)

If a Kai Lord, Brother of the Crystal Star, Knight of the Realm or other defender of Sommerlund identifies themselves they will receive a +2 circumstance bonus to their Gather Information checks. If characters are non-human or have Southern heritage they will receive a -2 circumstance penalty to the Gather Information check.

### Plot Event: Agent of the Star

When the heroes first arrive at the merchant house they will find a sign on the door that reads, 'Closed. Meetings by Appointment Only' written in Northspeak. If they try the door they will find it locked. If they knock they

will hear the sound of shuffling inside and eventually Theol will partially open the door to inquire what they want.

The door opens slightly and a pudgy, middle-aged head pokes out of the building.

'Hey, what's with the pounding on the door? Can't you read the sign? We're closed,' says the man as he sweeps back the few remaining strands of greasy brown hair that fall in front of his eyes.

Theol should be treated as unfriendly for this initial encounter. Theol knows he must cooperate with Franklin from the Order of the Star but Theol doesn't like it. The heroes will need to meet with Franklin in order to continue their mission but that does not mean that Theol will show them right in. He has been told by Franklin to expect a number of travellers who are brave souls and champions of good. Theol will need to be convinced that the strangers knocking at his door are indeed these champions. It is left to the Games Master's discretion what will convince Theol that the strangers are indeed the champions they claim to be. Evidence of rank within an organisation devoted to Good or evidence that dark forces are at work in regards to the missing people should convince Theol. If the heroes have previously befriended Josephine she will be able to convince Theol of their virtue as he trusts her judgement.

Once Theol has been convinced of the heroes' intentions and identities he will open the door and let them in before quickly locking it again. If there are any foreigners in the party, Theol will remind them to keep their hands to themselves and direct all the heroes behind the front desk and up to the second floor where they can meet with Franklin.

Upon reaching the top of the stairs, you are greeted by the sight of a very comfortable den. It has a number of couches and chairs surrounding a large oaken table. A man in his early thirties wearing a simple blue tunic, black breeches, and a thick belt rests comfortably in the corner. His wavy black hair partially conceals his emerald eyes until he rises to greet you.

'I hope that we are well met this day,' he begins formally, 'My name is Stephen Jarn and it was I who sent you a summons. If you sit I can relate what has happened and what my Order would like you to do. The flask on the table is filled with Wanlo spirits from Kalte. Please help yourself.' Stephen returns to his seat and waits for you to find a comfortable spot before continuing.

'Almost six weeks ago a diplomatic party comprised of members from the Kilithanin merchant house and a representative of the Kai Lords left Anskaven for Ljuk in southern Kalte. It was hoped that a small envoy with appropriate tribute could open trade with the Ice Barbarians of Kalte and bring greater stability to Northern Magnamund. The Crystal Star Brotherhood, Drodarian Dwarves, and Knights of the Realm all contributed funding and support for the success of the mission. The Dwarves and Knights sought rare minerals said to be located deep within the caverns of Kalte and many Brothers of the Crystal Star thought that a trade partnership might allow members of the Brotherhood to travel to Ikaya to study its wonders. Hopes were running high that the mission would be a complete success.'

'The party should have been back over two weeks ago. We have had no contact with any of the members of the diplomatic party since they left Anskaven. Although the party has probably been delayed by inclement weather, some of the organisers feel that it would be prudent to send a small team north to investigate. If you are willing to undertake the task of finding the missing diplomatic party, the organisers and the Kilithanin merchant house have provided supplies for your travel north as well as a sum of 100 gold crowns each to cover personal expenses that we may not have considered. Do you have any questions?'

*Hopefully, Stephen won't be greeting your Player Characters like this...*



The text assumes that the heroes will be motivated by duty to either the Crystal Brotherhood or Kai Lords. If your party does not contain members that would be so motivated then other motivations need to be considered. Some options include:

**Social Responsibility** – If the heroes are generally of good allegiance and have come to the aid of Sommerlund in the past it may be possible to appeal to their sense of patriotism and social responsibility, since the fate of the north may rest on what they discover.

**Family Commitments** – One of the heroes may have an outstanding debt with the Kilithanin merchant house and this mission will absolve them of that burden. A member of a hero's family could be among those counted as missing as well.

**Paid Service** – If the party only places value in the gold crowns and silver plates of this world then it may be reasonable to offer to pay the heroes a sum equal to 100 gc per level of experience for the return of the missing people. The heroes may try to negotiate a better price by making an opposed Diplomacy check with Franklin. The heroes can increase the fee by 5% (5 gc per character level) per the number points they won the check with, to a maximum of +50%.

The heroes may have any number of questions for Stephen. Some possible questions and his responses are listed here.

*How do we know you represent the interests of the Crystal Brotherhood?*

‘I can understand your need for caution in these times,’ Stephen says. He reaches into the neck of his blue shirt and retrieves a star-shaped pendent on a silver chain. ‘This is my Star Talisman, given to me by the Crystal Brotherhood upon my acceptance into the Order of the Star. If that is not enough proof, I can answer any questions you have about the Brotherhood or the Order to prove my allegiance.’

*How many people are missing?*

‘The diplomatic party consisted of two senior officials, Sameul and Viktor, from the Kilithanin merchant house and an Acolyte of the Kai called Greysadow.’

*Do you know if the ship made landfall?*

‘We cannot say for sure, but I suggest your first task should be to travel to the Port of Ljuk to determine that for yourselves.’

*What was the missing ship's name? Who captained it?*

‘They traveled north to Kalte on the exploration ship *Diligence*; it was captained by Jakob Telve, a veteran of the Sommerlund Navy.’

*What can you tell me about the barbarians?*

‘The Ice Barbarians of Kalte are a reclusive people made up of four tribes, the Hoptooka, Dourasdaal, Lejtoljak, and Karpachaz. Kzu'tooa is the current chieftain of

the Ice Barbarian nation. The Ice Barbarians' only known settlement is the Shianti fortress of Ikaya in northern Kalte near the Uncharted Void. Most of the Ice Barbarians are nomads who hunt and trap Baknars, Kalkoths and Kalte Mammoths, and trade the animal parts for civilised things. There is an uneasy peace in Kalte as the Ice Barbarians have found it beneficial to trade with the people of Ljuk. Still, they are incredibly territorial and will kill anyone they find outside of walls of Ljuk.’

*What has been prepared for our trip? What equipment are we given?*

‘We have a large tradeship, the *Valtariol*, at the docks right now. It is preparing to take a final load of supplies north to Ljuk before winter pack ice seals it off from the rest of the world. We will load a sledge and a four member Kanu Dog team for each of you, should you need to travel to Ikaya. Packed on your sledge will be enough food for a month on the ice, a winter blanket, firewood, a miner's pick, a collapsible shovel, a tent, a climber's kit, a cold winter outfit including mittens and a potion of Laumspur. We will also provide you with a letter of introduction to the Kilithanin merchant house representative in Ljuk who can provide you with guides if you need to travel to Ikaya as well as a map of Kalte.’

### **Event: Personal Supplies?**

From the warehouses of the Kilithanin merchant house, Theol will be able to sell the party any weapons, armour, adventuring gear, special substances and items, or tool and skill kits with no individual item worth more than 200 gc. Magical items or potions will not be on sale for any price. Theol will charge the heroes an additional 20% above the listed cost in the *Lone Wolf* book. With a successful Diplomacy check (DC 15) he will reduce his price to +10% and with a check of DC 20 he will sell at the list price.

## Event: Ambush

'Brothers and sisters of the realm I am so glad that you have arrived,' a thin man draped in the emerald cloak of the Kai greets you. 'I cannot express my gratitude enough at your expediency in coming to Kelfin. Even as we speak the forces of the Darklands gather. In fact just this morn I was told of a merchant whose caravan was destroyed by a pack of Giak warriors astride Doomwolves...'

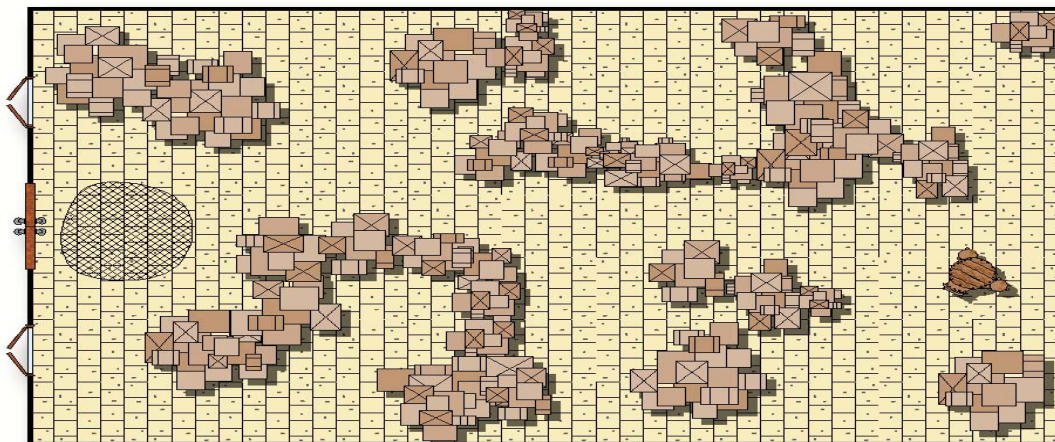
'But come, there are many eyes and ears out here on the street and mayhap they do not all have the best interests of Sommerlund in their hearts. I've leased room in an old warehouse attached to the shipyard. We can discuss our important matters there. My name is Whiteheart.'

This is all an elaborate lie. The person speaking is not a Kai Lord but a Drakkarim warrior named Raskaleon. He was sent by Gnaag to prevent anyone from being sent to investigate the missing diplomats. Raskaleon is alert for the arrival of newcomers as he has overheard that an important member from the Kai is staying at the Kilithanin merchant house. He has heard wrong, of course, but that is the price of listening to rumours. He has constructed this identity to trick any newcomers into following him into an ambush. Anyone attempting to use Sense Motive against his story will suffer a -2 circumstance penalty as Raskaleon has included enough details to make his tale true.

If the heroes refuse to go with him or challenge his story he will try to appeal to their sense of duty and honour. Raskaleon will try his best to get the heroes to the shipyard but will concede if the heroes seem adamant that they will not go there; he has other agents in place

to deal with them anyway. Raskaleon will attempt to leave if threatened but will defend himself if attacked. If the heroes decide to go with him to the shipyard continue with the boxed text below.

The warehouse Whiteheart has taken you to is in poor repair with the paint of years past flaking away like sunburned skin. The spare shutters that once served as windows have been boarded up against the elements. 'I'll admit,' Whiteheart begins, 'it's not much to look at but it keeps the rain off me while I'm in town.' He opens the door into the dim interior of the warehouse. 'I'll grab an oil lamp from the back, I'll be right back' he says as he disappears into the gloom. The warehouse is stacked with long forgotten crates and showers of dust particles sparkling in the little light that penetrates the roof.



### Raskaleon, 2nd-Level Dark Warrior

|                           | Medium Humanoid  |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Endurance Dice:</b>    | 2d10+4 (15 Endurance)  |
| <b>Initiative:</b>        | +2   |
| <b>Speed:</b>             | 30 ft  |
| <b>Armour Class:</b>      | 14 (+2 Dex. +2 armour)   |
| <b>Attack:</b>            | Broadsword +7 melee (1d10+6, 19-20/x2)   |
| <b>Space/Reach:</b>       | 5 ft/5 ft  |
| <b>Special Attacks:</b>   | Weapon of Choice (Broadsword)  |
| <b>Special Qualities:</b> | Darke Division (Infantry)  |
| <b>Saves:</b>             | Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +0   |
| <b>Abilities:</b>         | Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 10   |
| <b>Skills:</b>            | Bluff +2, Disguise +2, Survival +2   |
| <b>Challenge Rating:</b>  | 2  |
| <b>Allegiance:</b>        | Evil   |
| <b>Equipment:</b>         | Mastercrafted broadsword, dagger, leather armour, 2 Alether berries, green 'Kai Lord' cloak, deck of tarotca cards, 16 gc. |

### Forest Giaks (2)

See statistics above.

**Easier:** Reduce the number of Forest Giaks to one.

**Harder:** Increase the number of Forest Giaks to four or increase Raskaleon's Dark Warrior level to 3rd.

**Darklands:** Arm the Forest Giaks with hooks, change Raskaleon's weapon of choice to the dark axe and equip him with a dark axe and a buckler.

If any of the heroes state that they want to look around allow them to make a Perception check (DC 18). If successful tell the heroes that they think they might have seen movement above them. If they fail have them notice a rat that darts between a couple of crates to the left.

When the heroes enter the warehouse the Forest Giaks will attempt to drop a weighted net on them. The net covers an area indicated on the map of the warehouse. It requires no attack roll to hit but characters are allowed a Reflex save (DC 18) to dodge out of the way. Heroes who made their Perception check earlier gain a +2 circumstance bonus to this attempt. Those that fail their save are entangled as described on page 112 of the *Lone Wolf* main book in the description of the net.

Once the trap has been sprung, Raskaleon calls for his Forest Giak minions to come forth and help subdue the heroes. Raskaleon needs to know what the forces of Good know about what is really going on and will attempt to take at least one hero alive for interrogation and eventual transport to the Darklands as a slave.

### Location: The *Valtariol*

The *Valtariol* is a large tradeship that weighs 400 tons. In good weather it can travel 48 miles a day by sail or could be rowed by a crew of 40 rowers at a speed of two miles per day. This ship is ungainly with a large hull that can hold up to 399 tons of cargo. The loss of a tradeship of this size could bring ruin to a merchant house of Sommerlund if lost at sea. As such the Kilithanin house employs 15 guards (Shb1) and Franklin, the guard captain (Shb3) to protect it from piracy and misadventure.

The voyage to Ljuk is roughly 600 miles and will take thirteen days. During that time the *Valtariol* will be the characters' home.

The *Valtariol* will be prepped to embark on the day following the heroes' conversation with Stephen. The crew of the *Valtariol* is mostly seasoned sailors (80) with a number of new crew members (19) including two saboteurs – not that those two will make their true calling known until the ship has been at sea some time. Captain Forshberil has only recently come to command the *Valtariol*. He was promoted to this ship after he destroyed a Giak shipyard on the edge of the Darklands.

**New Crewman (19), Com1:** CR 1/2; Medium humanoid; ED 1d4 (2 Endurance); Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10, ff10; BCS +0; Atk Dagger +1 melee (1d4+1); Full Atk Dagger +1 melee (1d4+1); SA none; SQ common role (Profession (sailor)); SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 10; Dex 11; Con 10; Int 11; Wis 11; Cha 10.

**Skills:** Acrobatics +2, Climb +2, Escape Artist +2, Profession (sailor) +2.

**Allegiance:** Balanced

**Possessions:** Simple outfit, mastercrafted dagger.

**Seaman (80), Com1/Exp1:** CR 1; Medium humanoid; ED 1d4+1d6+2 (8 Endurance); Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12, ff 12; BCS +0; Atk Sap +1 melee (1d6+1); Full Atk Sap +1 melee (1d6+1); SA none; SQ common role (Profession (sailor)), specialty (Profession (sailor)); SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +2; Str 12; Dex 11; Con 12; Int 11; Wis 11; Cha 10.

**Skills:** Acrobatics +3, Athletics +2, Climb +2, Craft (hull) +1, Craft (armoursmithing) +1, Escape Artist +2, Profession (sailor) +6.

**Allegiance:** Balanced

**Possessions:** Sailor's outfit, leather armour, mastercrafted sap, dagger

**Captain, Exp 4:** CR 3; Medium Humanoid; ED 3d6+6 (16 Endurance); Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14, ff 13; BCS +2; Atk Rapier +5 melee (1d6+3/18-20); Full Atk Rapier +5 melee (1d6+5); SA none; SQ specialty (Acrobatics, Knowledge (geography), Profession (sailor), Survival), skill advancement (Knowledge (warfare)); SV Fort +3,

## Valtariol Statistics

**Structure Dice:** 6d8 (24 sp)

**Hardness:** 5

**Manoeuvrability:** -2

**Seaworthiness:** +2

**Speed:** 20-ft. (tactical)

**Turn Rate:** 260-ft.

**AC:** 10

**Fittings:** Crow's Nest, Figurehead, Galley, Pumps

**Crew:** 100 (including rowers)

**Passengers:** up to 300

**Cargo:** 399 tonnes

### Ship Statistics in Brief

**Structure Dice and Structure Points:** Structure Dice and Points replace the mechanic of Endurance Dice and Endurance as it applies to physical structures like buildings and vehicles. 1 sp = 10 Endurance. An attack must do at least 10 Endurance points before a single point of structure is lost.

**Hardness:** Represents the amount of damage that should be subtracted from attacks before Structure Points are lost. Acid attacks do not ignore the hardness of wooden structures, but sonic attacks will and fire attacks will deal normal damage against wooden objects.

**Manoeuvrability:** A bonus applied to the captain's initiative to determine when in battle the captain can take actions with the ship.

**Seaworthiness:** A bonus to resist heeling over due to failed manoeuvre or strong winds.

**Turn Rate:** The distance that must be travelled to make a 45 degree turn.

**Crow's Nest:** The crow's nest increases the maximum perception distance of a crew in the nest to 10, 500 ft. on a clear day, 3,000 ft. in light fog or heavy rain, 4,500 ft. in light rain or mist, 1,050 ft. at night. (Instead of 7,000 ft., 2,000 ft., 3,000 ft. and 700 ft. respectively)

**Figureheads:** These decorative fixtures are thought to ward against bad luck at sea. The fact that the Valtariol has a figurehead counts as one good omen, although if it is defaced or destroyed, this becomes a bad omen. (See Dark Omens, below.)

**Galley:** The area of the ship where the food is prepared for passengers and crew.

**Pumps:** Mechanical pumps that can be used to rid the ship of floodwater from bad weather or structural failure.

Ref +2, Will +6; Str 13, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 12

**Skills:** Acrobatics +6, Athletics +6, Climb +6, Craft (armoursmithing) +7, Diplomacy +5, Escape Artist +6, Gather Information +8, Knowledge (geography) +10, Knowledge (warfare) +9, Profession (sailor) +10, Survival +10

**Allegiance:** Balanced

**Possessions:** Captain outfit, mastercrafted leather armour, superior rapier, dagger, sextant, spyglass.

Due to the Captain's study of historical naval battles he gains a +2 synergy bonus to all Profession (sailor) checks during sea battles.

**Guards (15), Shb1:** Medium Humanoid; ED 1d6 (3 Endurance); Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13, ff 11; BCS +0; Atk Falchion +0 melee (2d4 /18-20); Full Atk Falchion +0 melee (2d4 /18-20); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ uncanny dodge; SV Fort +0, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 11, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 8, Wis 13, Cha 12

**Skills:** Acrobatics +6, Athletics +4, Escape Artist +6, Perception +5, Profession (sailor) +5, Sleight of Hand +6, Use Magical Item +5

**Allegiance:** Balanced

**Possessions:** Padded armour, falchion, dagger, explorer outfit.

**Franklin, Shb3:** CR 3; Medium Humanoid; ED 3d6 (13 Endurance); Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, ff 16; BCS +2; Atk Falchion +6 melee (2d4+4, 18-20/x2); Full Atk Falchion +6 melee (2d4+4, 18-20/x2); S/R 5 ft./5 ft.; SA Sneak attack +1d6; SQ: Buccaneer's flair (uncanny dodge), infamy, sailor's lore (superstition); SV Fort +1, Ref +6, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 13

**Skills:** Acrobatics +6, Appraise +4, Athletics +6, Climb +4, Escape Artist +4, Intimidate +7, Profession (sailor) +6, Sleight of Hand +4, Stealth +6

**Allegiance:** Balanced

**Possessions:** Superior falchion, mastercrafted leather armour, dagger, lucky rabbits foot, a pendant from his mother (golden heart on gold chain), navigator's kit, sap, explorer's outfit and 2 bang sticks.

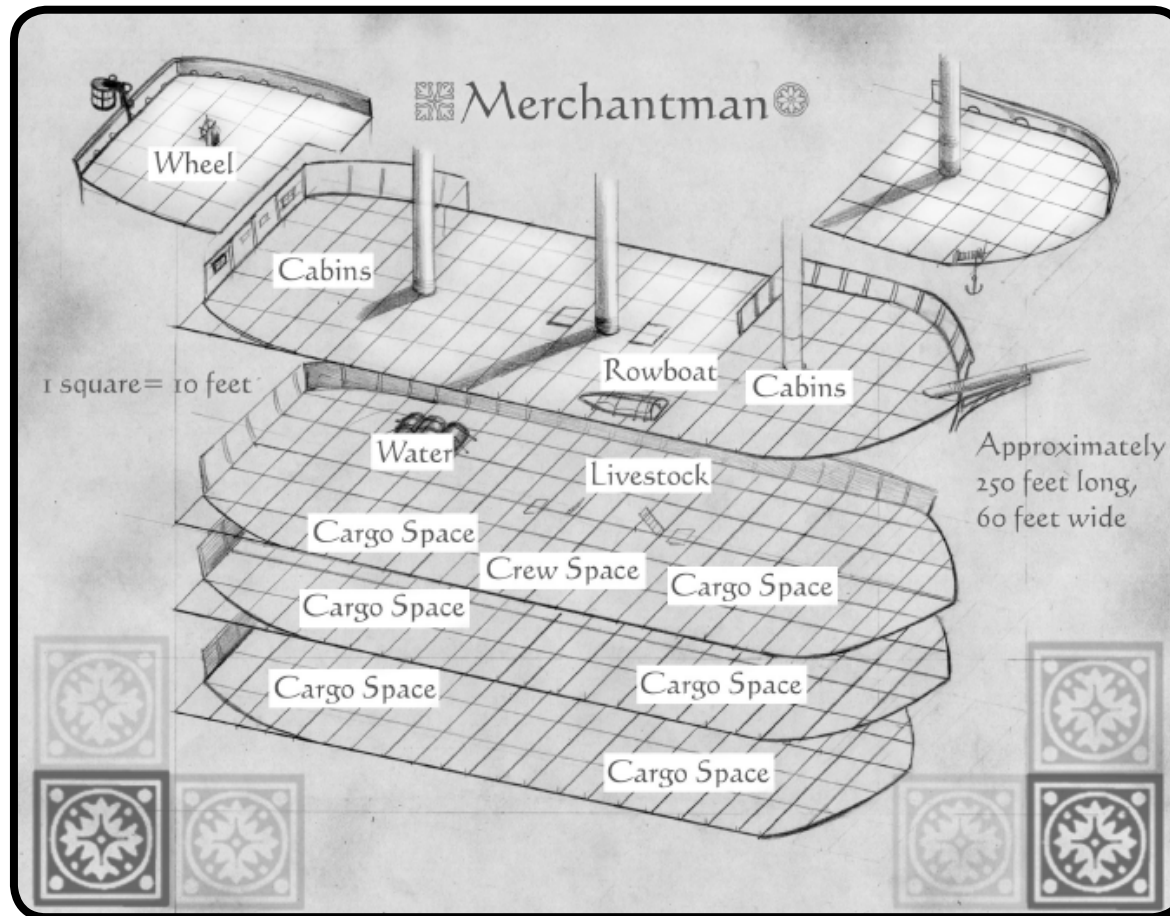
## Plot Event: Setting Sail - Dark Omens

Finally with all the preparation finished and the cargo for the port of Ljuk loaded the *Valtariol* is ready to set sail. As you step onto the gangplank you find the way blocked. At the top of the gangplank stands a man in his early thirties, roughly six feet of lean muscle who stares at you in shock with deep azure eyes.

'Do you realise what you've done?' the man calls down. 'Don't you know...?'

Sailing is a very dangerous profession and as such many sailors and buccaneers have become very superstitious about the sea. Shadaki Buccaneers are particularly superstitious and Franklin, who guards the gangplank, is probably one of the most superstitious. Before the heroes step foot on the *Valtariol* he will tell them exactly why they have doomed the whole plan. Some possible bad luck behaviours that could be blamed on the heroes are listed below. Should the heroes commit any other heresy while at sea Franklin will again condemn them.

- † Seeing someone with red hair when going aboard the ship to begin a journey.
- † Stepping onto a vessel left foot first.
- † Throwing stones into the sea.
- † Flowers are unlucky onboard a ship.
- † Looking back once the ship has left port.
- † Letting a dog get near the fishing tackle.
- † Sighting a ostrel at sea.
- † Killing a galling.
- † Cutting hair or nails at sea.
- † Bringing a dwarf on board.
- † Bringing a priest on board.
- † Bringing a woman on board.



The following are a list of behaviours that are said to be good luck. Franklin's mood will improve if any of the following happen and he will be sure to tell the heroes when their luck has improved.

- † Stealing a piece of wood and mortising it into the keel.
- † Placing a silver coin under the masthead.
- † Pouring wine on the deck at the start of the voyage.

- † Having a naked woman on board.
- † Having a black cat on board.
- † Seeing a dolphin at sea.
- † Killing a sea-scavenger.

It is important note to the number of good and bad omens the heroes experience while on the *Valtariol* as it will affect the morale of the Shadaki buccaneers.

## Franklin

At the edge of thirty Franklin stands roughly six feet tall and is made of 160 lbs. of lean muscle mass. His skin is deeply tanned, his black hair is pulled back by a leather strap into a ponytail, he has a small scar above his left eye from a bar fight, and his deep azure eyes are pools of sadness. Like many Shadaki buccaneers, Franklin grew up in an orphanage. The only evidence he has that he even had parents is in the form of a heart shaped locket that he had when he was found on the doorstep of the orphanage. When he turned 12 he escaped the tortures of institutional care and survival by begin and picking the pockets of strangers. In his late teens he was press ganged into service on a fast frigate. Over the course of years his skills in seamanship and piracy sharpened and he was recognized for his work and prompted to first mate.

When the captain decided it was time to retire and marry, there was great dissent among the crew, not because of the marriage but of how the marriage was going to happen. The captain's bride a fine young redhead from a prominent Sommerlunding house wanted to be married on the ship by an actual priest. Well any sailor can tell you that women, redheads and priests all spell disaster for a pirate ship, but after much debate away from the captain Franklin convinced the men that they could get through it. At the wedding, disaster struck as all for told as the fast frigate was seized by Sommerlunding Privateers and most of the crew including the captain and his new bride were killed. The remainder of the crew was imprisoned pending execution for piracy. While in prison, Franklin was approached by an emissary from the Kilithanin Merchant House and offered a way to commute his sentence. If Franklin agreed to sign on the Valtariol as a guard captain and could convince the remaining members of the crew join him for a period of five years, their sentence would be commuted. Now twenty-six, Franklin agreed to the offer. He has been with the Valtariol for three years. Much of the bravado and panache he had in his late teens has fled from the tedium of his new life.

### Using Franklin:

- Franklin is extremely sensitive to the hand that fate is dealing him. He will promptly scold any heroes have bring back luck to his remaining crew.
- If the heroes have brought more bad luck to the ship than good, encounters with him will always begin on unfriendly terms.
- Franklin will always be watching the heroes or supervising the work they do on the ship, as he recognises that every single person is essential to the success of any voyage. This distracts him from the other crew members and saboteurs.
- If he is treated with respect he will treat the heroes with respect as well and try to educate them about the lore of the sea.
- The battle with the Giak raiders will finalise the tone of the relationship that he has with the players. (If the battle goes well, they will be comrades in arms but if too many of his guards are lost, they will be bitter enemies)
- Franklin cannot leave the ship due to his contract.

'Come, come,' a voice calls from further on deck, 'there is no reason to spook our guests. Franklin have your men stored their gear and made ready for the trip?'

'Of course,' Franklin replies with a sardonic smile, 'we were born ready.'

'Well, go and check that the cargo has been well secured then.' The captain pauses a moment to let the buccaneer depart before continuing, 'Welcome aboard the Valtariol, one of the sturdiest ships in the Kilithanin Fleet. Don't mind Franklin. He's our resident prophet of doom, but he's handy in a fight should we be attacked. It should take roughly two weeks to get to Ljuk and you be expected to help with general upkeep of the ship during the voyage. I should warn you though that once the Valtariol docks in Ljuk you've only got five weeks 'til we leave port. Be on the boat or we leave without you. I don't care what your mission is; I'll not risk losing my boat to the pack ice. You can store your gear in the cabins at the bow. Now hurry; we want to sail while the wind is building.'

The captain can answer any questions they have about the voyage. He can explain the hazards that could befall them on the trip, he knows of the sea creatures that plague the ocean, and of pirates that sail the seas. Ultimately he is a romantic and even the most dreadful of his tales are tinged with a sense of epic wonder.

If nautical adventures intrigue you, you should know that many of the rules in this section and the next have been adapted and simplified from the Classic Play Book of the Sea.



# Chapter 2 – Across the Kaltersee

## Summary

The heroes travel across the Kaltersee on their way to the port of Ljuk. On the way they must deal with a multitude of naval hazards.

## Travelling by Sea

The journey from Kelfin to Ljuk will take 13 days. The Player Characters will have a number of encounters en route, detailed below, and the Games Master should feel free to add, remove or change them as he sees fit.

## Day 2: Adrift

A personal fishing ship floats freely on the waves, its sail torn and blood splashed across the lower quarters. The ship flies the flag of Sommerlund.

The ship was attacked by a hungry wave hunter. This large shark-like beast leaped from the water at the captain of the small vessel and decapitated him with its bite. As the wave hunter leapt over the boat its fin tore

the mainsail. If heroes investigate the ship they will find the deck sticky with blood and the headless body of the fisherman slumped in his fishing chair with rod still in hand. A DC 17 Knowledge (Nature) check could reveal that a wave hunter may have been responsible for the decapitation. A check of DC 22 will reveal that a wave hunter will often emit a piercing shriek before leaping over ship hoping that it will cause the beings on the ship to look up. Below deck are the ship's navigational charts, the ship's log, 17 gc, a novel by Eod Vejre, a locket with red hair in it, and a number of other personal effects.

## Weather Table: Roll once every 12 hours

| d100  | Weather Complications  |
|-------|--|
| 01-65 | Normal weather.  |
| 66-70 | Fog. Moisture clouds form as a result of the difference in temperature between water and air. Heavy fog banks obscure all sight, including darkvision, beyond 5 feet. Creatures within 5 feet have concealment. Encounter distance is 1/10 normal.   |
| 71-85 | Light Rain. Perception checks and ranged combat rolls suffer a -2 penalty, unprotected flames have a 30% chance of being extinguished. Encounter distance is 1/2 normal.   |
| 86-90 | Heavy Rain. Perception checks and ranged combat rolls suffer a -4 penalty, unprotected flames have a 50% chance of being extinguished. Encounter distance is 1/4 normal.   |
| 91-00 | Sleet. Essentially frozen rain, falling sleet reduces visibility ranges by half. It also gives a -4 penalty to ranged weapon attacks and Perception checks, it extinguishes unprotected flames and causes protected flames to dance wildly (and still have a 75% of being extinguished). Once fallen, sleet ices up the ground. A character can walk within or through the area at half normal speed with a DC 10 Acrobatics check. Failure means they can't move in that round, while failure by 5 or more means they fall. Encounter distance is 1/4 normal. |

## Day 2, Later: When Animals Attack

The wave hunter that killed the fisherman is still in the area. It swims close to the bulk of the ship and emits a piercing shriek, hoping to cause people to look over the edge of the vessel so it can grab them with a leaping attack. The wave hunter charges cannot jump far enough to leap over the tradeship, so it contents itself with eating those foolish enough to look over the railing. Anyone hit by the wave hunter's attack while looking over the railing must succeed on a DC 15 Reflex save or be knocked overboard.

See next page for the wave hunter's statistics.

## Day 3: Dwarf Ship

The flags of the Kingdoms of Bor and Sommerlund can be seen on the horizon long before the Drodarian ship fully comes into view, its steel reinforced hull gleaming in the sunlight. They fly the ensign and courtesy flags traditional of a merchant ship.

## Wave Hunter

|                           | Large Magical Beast (Aquatic, Water)                     |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Endurance Dice:</b>    | 7d10+21 (61 Endurance)                                   |
| <b>Initiative:</b>        | +1   |
| <b>Speed:</b>             | Swim 60 ft   |
| <b>Armour Class:</b>      | 20 (+1 Dex, +9 natural)                                  |
| <b>Attack:</b>            | Bite +11 melee (1d8+5)                                   |
| <b>Full Attack:</b>       | 2 bites +11 melee (1d8+5) and tail slap +6 melee (1d4+2) |
| <b>Space/Reach:</b>       | 10 ft/5 ft   |
| <b>Special Attacks:</b>   | Rive   |
| <b>Special Qualities:</b> | Blindsight 90 ft, fast healing 3, scent                  |
| <b>Saves:</b>             | Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +3                                 |
| <b>Abilities:</b>         | Str 21, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 2             |
| <b>Skills:</b>            | Athletics +6*, Stealth +7, Survival +4                   |
| <b>Challenge Rating:</b>  | 5  |
| <b>Allegiance:</b>        | It's Own Stomach   |

*Rive (Ex):* Once a Wave Hunter bites hold of a victim it may thrash with incredible speed and ferocity, causing immense damage to the bitten creature. As a special full attack action, the Wave Hunter may make a single bite attack on an enemy. Should the creature be hit by this attack, it is considered to be gripped by the Wave Hunter's powerful maw. On the Wave Hunter's next turn it will rive, inflicting piercing and bludgeoning damage equal to its Strength score upon the target. The Wave Hunter will continue to rive until the bitten creature is either dead or escapes. Escaping from a Wave Hunter's maw is a full-round action with an Escape Artist or Strength check DC of 21. Whilst bitten or being rived by a Wave Hunter, creatures are considered to be entangled. Obviously, a Wave Hunter may only bite or rive one creature at a time.

\*A Wave Hunter has a +8 bonus on any Athletics check when swimming. It can always choose to take 10 on an Athletics check involving swimming, even if distracted or endangered. It can use the run action while swimming, provided it swims in a straight line.

The Dwarves (Exp5) are initially indifferent but are willing to sell Drodarian racial weapons to other dwarves. They have a limited stock of mastercrafted and superior weapons, also. The dwarves will also sell mastercrafted and normal chainmail waistcoats, and explosives listed in the special substances and items of the *Lone Wolf* main rulebook but at 10% more than the price listed. The dwarves know what prices they can expect when they reach port, so they will not haggle.

## Day 5: Sabotage

There are two saboteurs on the *Valtariol*. When cargo was stored, they installed some cargo of their own: three bang sticks are stuck to the aft side of the second cargo hold, concealed behind grain barrels. During the evening of the fourth day, one of the saboteurs will cunningly disable the ship's water pumps. The damage is obvious upon examination, but requires a Perception check (DC 22) to notice otherwise. Having any ranks in Profession (Sailor) gives a +2 synergy bonus to this check. To repair the pumps requires a Disable Device check (DC 22) and two minutes of time.

On the fifth day, the saboteurs slip into the aft cargo hold and detonate the bang sticks, creating three breaches (see boxed text). They then stand their ground in the rapidly flooding hold and fight to the death to prevent anyone from repairing the breaches.

It is possible to search the cargo hold for signs of sabotage but this will take an extended amount of time because the holds are so full of supplies. It takes 1 hour for every Perception check made to search one of the three cargo holds. It is DC 16 to find one bang stick, DC 18 to find the second, and DC 20 to find the third. Preventing the sabotage will be seen as a good omen by the buccaneers while failure will definitely be regarded as a bad omen – if anyone survives.

**Easier:** Change the number of bang sticks to 2 and reduce all the related DCs by 1.

**Harder:** Increase the number of bang sticks to 4 and all related DCs by 1.

## The Saboteurs

The saboteurs use exactly the same statistics as the other new crewman except that, instead of Acrobatics +2 and Climb +2, they have Disable Device +2 and Stealth +2 instead. They will try to blend in with the crew at all times and follow any orders they are given by the Captain. If the party is suspicious of the ship having so many new crew members, a DC 20 Diplomacy check will allow the crew space to be searched. Searching the area for possible saboteurs requires a Perception Check (DC 18). If

successful, the vast majority of sailors trunks will contain personal effects and 9 + 1d6 gc (representing just over a month's pay), however in each of the saboteur's chest the heroes will also find a felt pouch with a drawstring containing 30 gc and 10 Kika and a deck of tarot cards. (See *The Darklands*)

The saboteurs are zealots and as such have little regard for their personal safety. They know that they will die when they send the *Valtariol* to the bottom, and so they

### Breaches

If the *Valtariol* is breached, then it will begin to sink. Count the number of breaches the saboteurs have inflicted, and compare to the following table:

| Breaches | <i>Valtariol</i> sinks in ... rounds |
|----------|--------------------------------------|
| 1        | 22                                   |
| 2        | 12                                   |
| 3        | 8                                    |

If the ship's water pumps are working, reduce the effective number of breaches by one. If the ship has one breach, but working pumps, it will sink after 1d3 days. Hopefully, the Player Characters will have done something about it by then...

Repairing a breach requires five rounds of work, and up to five people can contribute to each breach (thus fixing the breach in one round). For a round of work to 'count', a worker must make a DC 10 Craft (woodworking) check. If the breach is below the waterline (and all the breaches the saboteurs make will be), a worker must also make a DC 10 Athletics check for his work to 'count' as well.

are not concerned with dying in the pursuit of their goals. They will deny any knowledge of the money or the cards but the Captain will have the saboteurs put in chains and placed under guard until the port of Ljuk can be reached. (They will attempt to escape and cause havoc at every opportunity.) It may be possible to suggest other punishments to the Captain through successful Diplomacy attempts. Encouraging the Captain to use the harsher justice of the sea will be seen as a good omen by the Shadaki buccaneers.

### Day 9: Blood on the Water

On the horizon, a small warship with sleek lines appears out of nowhere. A horde of bestial forms, with hairless faces, grey-brown skin, and narrow, vicious-looking eyes crew the ship. Even as the ship closes a tall, rat-faced figure draped in a fine cloak barks orders to its savage minions who move ballistae into firing position.

This fast frigate was sent by the Darklord Gnaag to prevent any ships reaching Kalte. The crew of the *Predator* seeks to capture any larger ship they come upon and use it as bait or a decoy to attract others. Consequently, they will only fire the ballistae once at the *Valtariol* before closing and attempting to board. The attack roll for Giak-fired ballistae is -4, and they

### Giak Predator Fast Frigate Medium Warship (Sailed, Light)

**Structure Dice:** 4d10-4 (18 sp)

**Hardness:** 5

**Manoeuvrability:** +1 (light)

**Seaworthiness:** -1

**Speed:** 40 ft. (tactical)

**Turn Rate:** 100 ft.

**AC:** 10

**Weapons Fore:** 2 ballistae

**Weapons Aft:** None

**Weapons Broadside:**

Light catapults, 2 ballistae

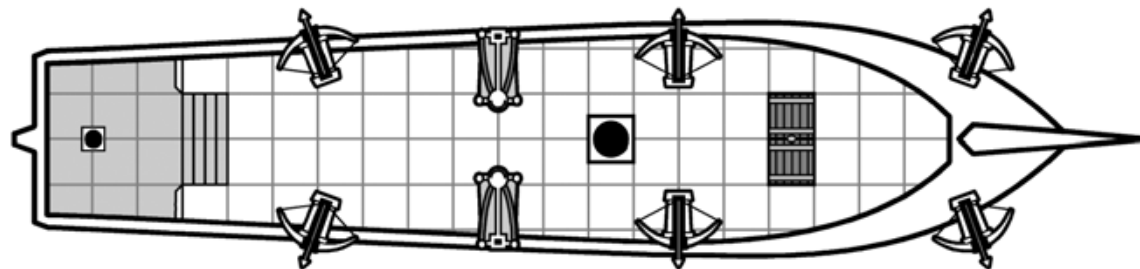
**Damage:** Light catapult 1d6 (sp);  
ballista 3d8 (Endurance)

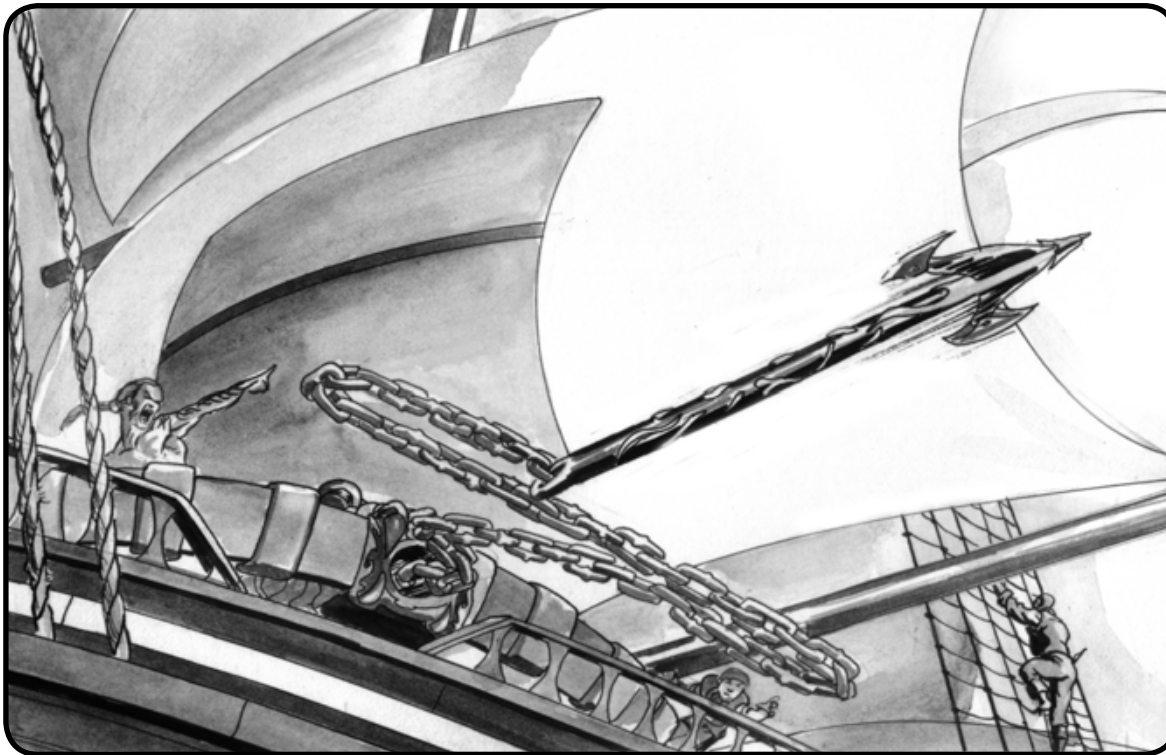
**Crew:** 40

**Passengers:** 0

**Cargo:** 30 tonnes

**Weapons Note:** If you have Lone Wolf, The Darklands you will quickly notice that the ballistae and catapults on the ship do not conform to the statistics for of the siege weapons that are listed therein. This is because the weapons that can be loaded, used and manoeuvred on a ship must be smaller.





will aim more at the crew than the ship. The Liganim will remain on board the *Predator*, firing his Nightfire Rod at anyone who tries to board the Darklands ship and making psychic attacks against any targets who draw his attention with flashy displays of magic or Kai powers.

The *Predator* has four boarding ramps that it will use to secure itself to the *Valtariol* when it is close enough to attempt to do so.

### Simplifying Combat

The ship to ship combat can be a complex process if it is run exactly as normal combat. To make everything

a little easier the following suggestions are made to simplify things.

† Make one initiative roll for the entire crew of each ship, so all the crewmembers act together.

† Do not treat the Shadaki and Giak combat as though they were players, it will be easier if damage becomes an abstract. Each Giak can be hit twice before falling in combat, unless flanked by Shadaki and then only one hit is needed. The Shadaki guards will fall if struck once in combat.

† The Captains will be unable to join combat until the ships have come along side one another and have been grappled together.

### Liganim

|                           | Medium Humanoid<br>(Darkspawn)  |
|---------------------------|---|
| <b>Endurance Dice:</b>    | 4d8 (18 Endurance)  |
| <b>Initiative:</b>        | +1  |
| <b>Speed:</b>             | 30 ft   |
| <b>Armour Class:</b>      | 16 (+1 Dex, +5 natural)   |
| <b>Attack:</b>            | Sword +3 melee (1d8, 19-20/x2)  |
| <b>Space/Reach:</b>       | 5 ft/5 ft   |
| <b>Special Attacks:</b>   | Nightfire rod   |
| <b>Special Qualities:</b> | Darkspawn traits, magical combat, psychic combat  |
| <b>Saves:</b>             | Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +5  |
| <b>Abilities:</b>         | Str 10, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 18, Wis 12, Cha 10  |
| <b>Skills:</b>            | Appraise +8, Craft (alchemy) +9, Handle Animal +6, Knowledge (arcana, architecture & engineering) +9, Occult +9, Perception +6, Ride +4, Stealth +6 |
| <b>Challenge Rating:</b>  | 3   |
| <b>Allegiance:</b>        | Evil  |
| <b>Equipment:</b>         | Cloak, sword, nightfire rod, instructions written in the Dark Tongue, 18 pt, 6 gc.  |

*Nightfire Rod:* All Liganim carry one of these items. It inflicts 4d6 fire damage to a range of 200 feet and requires a ranged magical attack to hit an opponent. The Counterspell DC is 17. The one in this Liganim's possession has only 32 charges remaining.

40 Giak Raiders: See page 273 of the Lone Wolf main rulebook.

### Good Omens/Bad Omens

This is a pivotal moment in the heroes' voyage across the sea. It is also the time that the luck of the sea will come back to help or hinder them. Total the number of instances of good luck and the number of instances of bad luck that the players have experienced so far. Take the difference of the luck scores and divide it by two (round down), this will be applied as a circumstance bonus to the attack rolls of the Shadaki guards and Franklin if the heroes have caused mostly good omens or as a circumstance penalty if the heroes have caused mostly bad omens. Luck is fickle, though, and can change with the ebb and flow of battle.

- 1 circumstance penalty if 50% of the Shadaki are killed
- 1 circumstance penalty if Franklin or the Captain is killed
- 1 circumstance penalty per breach the ship has suffered
- 1 if the Valtariol is reduced to 50% or fewer structure points
- +1 circumstance bonus if 50% of the Giaks are killed
- +1 circumstance bonus if the Liganim is killed
- +1 if the Predator's siege engines are destroyed
- +2 if the Predator is sunk

### The Battle

After their initial round of ballistae fire, the Giak ship closes swiftly with the *Valtariol*. This takes five rounds, during which the crews can exchange missile fire. The range begins at 200 feet and closes 40 feet each round. When the *Predator* arrives, it rams the *Valtariol*, creating a single breach below the waterline (see Sabotage, above) and requiring everyone on the tradeship not firmly braced to make an Acrobatics check (DC 15) or fall

prone with the impact. The Giaks will throw grapples and drop boarding ramps, and the two ships will be locked together and tactical combat will begin.

### Day 10: Pillar of Rock

Like a blade of darkness against the horizon a black tower of stone rises out of the ocean. The area is not known for volcanic activity, and this shaft of basalt seems to have a flattened top. Around the pillar float the remains of what may have been a ship.

The debris is all that remains the *Ancient Wanderer* – a private yacht that set sail from Gologo in Dessi. Varilos, a Magician of Dessi, was travelling north on a voyage of personal discovery when his yacht was attacked by the *Predator*. Catapult fire breached the ship which quickly began to sink. The Magician called upon the earth elementals to save him. They forged this pillar of basalt, raising him from the sinking wreckage to 160 ft. above the surface of the Kaltersee.

Should anyone climb the pillar to look at what is on top they will find the body of the magician. His clothes are burned in several places from the Liganim's Nightfire Rod attacks, and his eyes are blank as his mind has been destroyed by the creature's psychic attacks. Having killed the magician, the Liganim was content to leave his body on the pillar. With a Perception check (DC 12, automatic with a thorough search) it can be discovered that that the magician wears a Blue Stone Triangle pendant around his neck. Additionally the magician carried a belt pouch with 10 pt, a Dessi Wizard's Staff, a vial of antitoxin and a piece of Larnuma fruit.

### Day 12: Icebergs

As the *Valtariol* gets closer to Kalte, the temperatures drop and icebergs become common sights. If the Saboteurs are still alive, they will try their best to escape and steer the ship into an iceberg. If this happens, the *Valtariol* sustains 1d3 breaches per round of contact (see Sabotage, above). Otherwise, the Captain is able to plot a safe course. If the Captain has been slain in a previous event, whoever is steering the ship must make three DC 20 Profession (Sailor) checks over the course of the day, one every eight hours. Any failure means contact with an iceberg, inflicting 1d3 breaches below the waterline.

### Day 13: Arrival...

Smoke rises into the sky and flames lick at the buildings of Ljuk. It appears the truce that has held for the last 1,000 years in Kalte has ended...

And that's all there is for this month! Tune in again next time, when your heroes can trek across ice plains, fight barbarians, and infiltrate an ancient Shianti fortress...

### Blue Stone Triangle

This simple stone pendant was enchanted by Shianti as a good luck charm and as a key to several secure areas of the Fortress of Ikaya. Anyone wearing a Blue Stone Triangle Pendant receives a +1 luck bonus to attack rolls and armour class. A Blue Stone Triangle will also open any door in the Fortress of Ikaya that is adjacent to a small block of granite with a triangle cut into it.

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