



# Signs & Portents

44

Roleplayer

## CONAN

Face the Horror in Numalia!

## WARS: EQUIPMENT

Everything a spacefarer could ever need

## MY BROTHER'S FEAST

A Gloranthan scenario. Hunt some trollkin... for dinner!

Plus... The World According to Roleplaying,  
spirits for RuneQuest, Deadwood for DGL  
Wild West, and loads more!

S&P Roleplayer 44

May 2007

MBP 5544R

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So, I've redecorated the magazine a little. In honour of the new Ionic columns I have attached to some articles<sup>1</sup>, here is a one-sentence guide to ancient Greek philosophers:

**Socrates** - Made a great reputation for himself by only ever arguing with idiots.<sup>2</sup>

**Plato** - Was a wrestler as well as a philosopher; Plato, meaning 'broad' and describing his shoulders, was his wrestling nickname.

**Aristotle** - Much like modern politicians, he made a lot of stuff up out of whole cloth and became an international celebrity and general legend as a result.

**Pythagoras** - Founded a cult with a number of bizarre teachings that ranged from 'be vegetarian' to 'speaking without thinking is punishable by death'.

**Hippocrates** - The father of modern medicine is reported as such an all-round good guy that history *must* be hiding some sort of juicy gossip about him.

**Zeno of Elea** - Proved without a shadow of a doubt that if you fire an arrow at a tortoise, it will never hit.<sup>3</sup>

**Galen** - Performed eye and brain surgery in about 160 A.D, which is long before the invention of anaesthetic.<sup>4</sup>

**Ludwig Wittgenstein** - Neither ancient, nor Greek, his inclusion in this list is something of an aberration.

**Ted Chang** - 'Nuff said.

---

P.S.: When I dug the 'Ailments and Contagions' article out of an old folder on someone else's computer, it didn't have a name attached to it. If it was you who wrote it, drop me a line.

<sup>1</sup> Check them out on this very page. Cool or what?

<sup>2</sup> Further improved this reputation by appearing in *Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure*.

<sup>3</sup> If there was any justice, he would have died from being shot.

<sup>4</sup> OUCH.

Chris

**Editor:**

Chris Longhurst

**Managing Editor:**

Ian Barstow

**Editorial Director:**

Matthew Sprange

**Production Director:**

Alexander Fennell

**Mongoose Studio Staff:**

Ian Belcher, Richard Ford,  
Adrian Walters, Nick  
Robinson, Ted Chang,  
Kelly George, Ed Russell

**Cover Art:**

Chris Quilliams

**Artists:**

Ryan Horvath, Ronald  
Smith, Chad Sergesketter,  
Alejandro Villen, Kieran  
Yanner, April Lee, Claudio  
Pozas, Tony Parker, Rhonda  
Libbey, Marcio Fiorito,  
Chris Quilliams

**Contributors:**

Tim Bancroft, Nick  
Robinson, Ian Barstow,  
Semaj Nosnibor, Matt  
Thomason, Vincent  
Darlage, Eric Rodriguez,  
Greg Lynch



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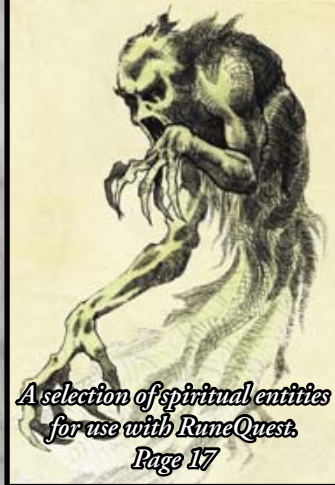
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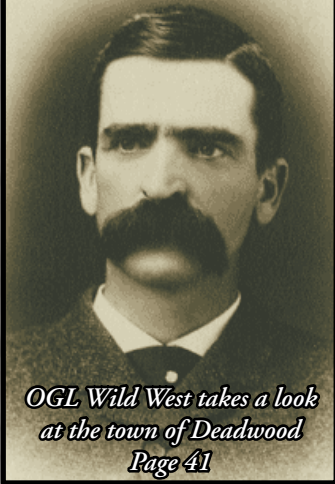
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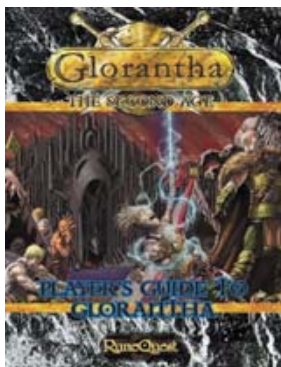
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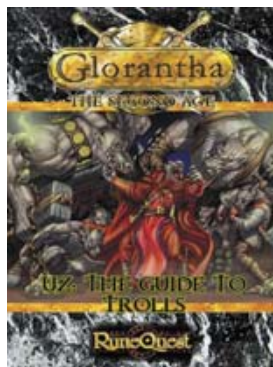
# EYE ON MONGOOSE



## The Player's Guide to Glorantha

There is not another world in existence quite like Glorantha. With its rich background and fantastic creatures mixed liberally with heroism and villainy; there is no true way to explain it all in one sitting. It could take a longstanding fan several days to describe it all to a new player. The Player's Guide to Glorantha is the essential reference sourcebook, designed to help readers become more familiar with Glorantha and all of its wonders.

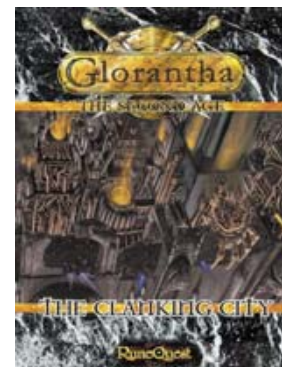
This book is a handy guide for both new and seasoned players looking to progress beyond the races, cultures and plot hooks that we unveiled with earlier Glorantha products – introducing several new ways to enjoy both RuneQuest and the Gloranthan Second Age setting, including everything you will need to know about Folk Magic.



## Uz: The Guide To Trolls

Ugly, brutish, malevolent and in service to dark powers: the uz of Glorantha have a bad reputation which is all too well deserved. The Guide to Trolls presents everything Games Masters need to present these brutes as detailed enemies in Glorantha campaigns, as well as including the necessary lore for players to portray uz characters themselves, seeing how it feels to play the 'other side' of things.

Included are expanded details on uz culture and physiology, regional differences between the trolls, as well as including new rules for troll magic: rituals to appease their dark gods and the magic of the uz cults that revere many of the most sinister deities ever to walk the face of the world during the Godtime.



## The Clanking City

The city of Zistorwal is part-factory, part-fortress and instrumental to the Zistorite God Learners. Under smoking towers, the citizen workers scurry among machinery built upon stolen Mostali secrets. Through the streets, a giant automaton, the avatar of Zistor, strides proudly through the city named for him. In underground surgeries, God Learners replace their weak mortal flesh with alchemically-treated mechamagical implants, rising from blood-stained tables bearing metal limbs powered by sorcery and clockwork joints.

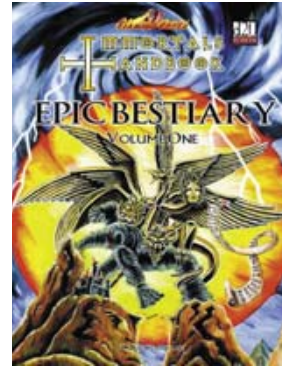
This is the Machine City, known as the Clanking City for the noise its thousand engines make, and it stands defiant against a great siege mounted by the EWF and their allies of convenience. The Clanking City allows Games Masters and players to walk the streets of this infamous city in its golden age, shaping their own plots in the towering structures and dark smoke-clogged alleys of this magical-technological nightmare metropolis.



### Nehwon

This essential book contains the expanded details on the wide world of Nehwon, adding to the information presented in the main Lankmar book, which primarily dealt with the City of the Black Toga and the possible adventures therein. It is part-appendix to that first tome and part-expansion. Ilthmar, with all its filth and poverty; Quarmall, with all its dark and hidden sorceries; the northlands, where the temperature falls with each step north – these realms are revealed in greater detail between the covers on this book, combined with the first part in a multi-scenario adventure that takes characters from Lankmar across Nehwon and back again.

Finally, taking up the latter half of the book is the scenario Swords Across Nehwon. This scenario is designed for characters to leave the walls of Lankmar behind them and travel the length and breadth of the wider world in their quest for adventure. It is also designed to link directly into the pdf scenario Swords Against Sorcery, serving as the first steps on a much longer path. A number of story hooks and plot devices that occur in the adventure here tie into later scenarios, allowing Games Masters to connect the tales in one epic campaign.



### Immortal's Handbook - Epic Bestiary, Volume One

Unleash the most powerful collection of monstrous forces ever assembled and teach humility to even the mightiest immortals...

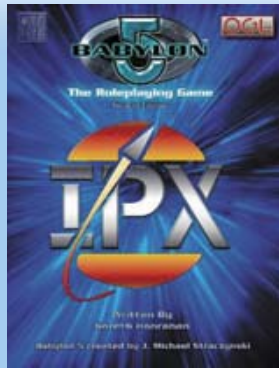
- Expanded Size Rules: Create creatures of any size, even larger than universes should you need them.
- Density and Virtual Size Categories.
- The Kosmos: Get an outline of the various dimensions, as well as their rulers and inhabitants.
- Over 40 truly epic monsters from CR 10 to beyond CR 1000; including the unstoppable Neutronium Golem and the awesome World Flayers.
- 5 Templates (with examples): such as the immortal devouring Akalich; devastating Macrobe creatures and the ultimate expression of evolution, the Amidah.
- Each entry has multiple adventure ideas.
- Almost every entry has round-by-round tactics - a must when dealing with creatures this detailed!
- Over two dozen new artefacts and epic spells.
- 11 new epic feats, including the basis for a whole new system of spellcasting.



### Nephandum

Ancient cosmic terror looms over your campaign in this lavishly illustrated d20 book, fully compatible with any d20 setting. Five dark entities rule over five different aspects of fear: Disease, Madness, Blood, Darkness and Savagery. They lurk in Nephandum, and now they are about to take over your campaign! The GM can freely choose the preferred degree of influence and the style of play. Be prepared to face your worst fears and start a thrilling journey that will lead you into the darkest reaches of this dynamic campaign setting. Things will never be the same again!





## IPX

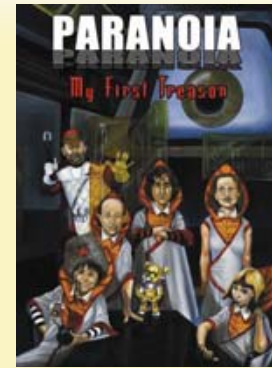
In many ways, the Babylon 5 universe is a science-fiction retelling of a fantasy epic. There are ancient prophecies, slumbering monsters, warriors with bright swords (or StarFuries), wise mentors, jealous kings, powerful wizards, angels and demons...and there are also crazed, greedy adventurers who delve into deadly, trap-filled dungeons in search of treasure and magic items. They are the employees of IPX - and they just hired you.

This sourcebook details the history and inner workings of the IPX corporation, from its connections to EarthForce to the search for a cure to the Drakh plague. Characters can be employed by the corporation, or struggle against it, or just use the equipment and new character options presented in this book. There is a galaxy out there to be plundered.

IPX - exploring the past to bring you the future.



Need more Babylon 5? Check out *Ranger Dawning*, Richard Ford's novel length story, available for free download from '<http://www.lulu.com/content/822014>'.



## My First Treason / Sweep of Unhistory

Double the adventure, double the fun, double the treason!

### Sweep of Unhistory

Whenever the yearcycle rolls around, The Computer's loyal army of editors and censors goes to work. The official histories have to be rewritten each time. Approved events are added to the archives; unapproved events are unhappened and made unhistory. A billion billion forms need to be edited and updated to the new, official timeline. By the time the legacy of the last yearcycle 214 has been integrated into the approved history, why, it's almost time for the next yearcycle 214!\*

And that, in a nutshell, is The Sweep of Unhistory. The Troubleshooters are recloned and reconnected over and over again, brought back in successive eras of Alpha Complex future history, to bring their unique skills to bear on a series of problems. From the next few yearcycles to the distant future of the complex, The Sweep of Unhistory will bring the Troubleshooters into increasingly strange yet nightmarishly familiar missions.

### My First Treason

My First Treason's characters are brave young junior citizens: Alpha Complex kids in an Alpha Complex crèche. The four chapters of the mini-campaign each cover one year of their education, from age 10 to age 14). Along the way, they'll run into secretive conspiracies, nefarious traitors, weird mutants and gratuitous terminations – all in their very own crèche! Can the characters solve their problems and the secrets of their past while still studying for the Approved Revised History of Alpha Complex (fifth edition) exam?

# CONAN<sup>®</sup>

## THE ROLEPLAYING GAME

SECOND EDITION

### PREVAIL BY STRENGTH

What's coming up for warriors in Conan's second edition? Explore new options in desperate combat with merciless enemies. Make more use of your soldier's combat formations with the Officer ability:

*'Officer. Starting at 5<sup>th</sup> level, the soldier gains the ability to co-ordinate and command others. He may temporarily allow up one other person to count as a soldier with the appropriate Formation, as long as that person is of equal or lower level to the soldier. For example, a 5<sup>th</sup> level soldier and a 3<sup>rd</sup> level soldier both have the Skirmisher formation. Under normal circumstances, they would be unable to benefit from this Formation. However, by using the Officer ability, the 5<sup>th</sup> level soldier could extend the formation to a third character, allowing the three to enter Skirmisher formation.'*

Or, if indirect combat is more your thing, relax safe in the knowledge that borderers may now choose 'trapping' as a combat style in place of archery or two-weapon fighting. The new combat manouevres can be used by anyone to gain an unexpected advantage - use Dance Aside to enhance the mobility of the nomad, or take advantage of the mighty swings of a barbarian and Leave Them For Dead.

Like Conan himself, *Conan, The Roleplaying Game* has matured with time. The second edition is better presented, with a whole host of new tricks that it didn't have before, but the same fierce heart still beats within its covers. Still adventurous. Still bloodthirsty. Still fully OGL compatible.

## AUGUST 2007

ARE YOU READY?

# TALES FROM MONGOOSE HALL: HOW TO WRITE A BULLETPROOF ADVENTURE

BY CHRIS LONGHURST

This may come as a surprise, but playtesting is a difficult job. You've got to have an analytical mind, pay painstaking attention to every detail, and possess both an in-depth knowledge of game mechanics and at least a passing familiarity with the conventions of good writing. Testing a scenario to destruction may require several play-throughs and a great deal of dedication.

Or one encounter with the Mongoose gang.

As gamers, most of you will be familiar with the story about the scientist and his monkey. For those of you who aren't, the tale runs that a scientist designed a room with three ways out and put a monkey inside it to see which exit it would discover first. The monkey found a fourth way out, ruining the experiment, making the scientist a laughing stock and wasting millions of pounds of research budget. Player Characters are often likened to the monkey, since they are almost guaranteed to find unexpected solutions to problems that require the Games Master to improvise frantically until they wander back on track.

Having spent a reasonable amount of time peering over a GM screen at the fine gaming minds of Mongoose Hall, I am confident in my declaration that they are not only guaranteed to find unexpected ways out, but will not even spare a glance for the 'conventional' exits. Like the monkey, they have the uncanny ability to identify the tiny cracks that you may have overlooked while designing the adventure, and will often screech a lot and throw feces about while they're at it. I have yet to encounter the, um... encounter, that operates as intended round here. Big Bads die in single sweeps of a lightsaber. Two ghouls kill off half a party that should have been able to defeat them before you can say 'turn undead'. There are fatalities at the mission briefing *when we're not playing Paranoia*. A simple break-and-enter job leads to grand theft (of an entirely unrelated sword), poisonings, corruption of priests, Eberron's first Conga line, the making of no fewer than four powerful enemies, a court case and the incidental fall of a paladin.

It is with these thoughts in mind that I would like to present the Mongoose Hall Guide To Bulletproof Adventure Design.

**1. DON'T THINK 'PLOT HOOK':  
THINK 'PLOT MAN WITH A GUN'**  
Imagine the scene... a group of brave young souls meet in a tavern. Full of dreams of adventure (and reasonably priced beer) they decide to seek their fortune together. By an amazing coincidence, a man approaches them, offering to sell them a treasure map...

'I spent all my money on adventuring equipment,' says one.

'I spent it all on chickens,' says another. 'What? They're in the book!'

'Don't look at me!' says the third, 'I'm a monk! You can count my starting gold coins on the fingers of a very bad chainsaw juggler.'

And the adventure ends there. Theoretically. What is more likely to happen is that the Player Characters will attempt to steal the map. What will actually happen is that the Player Characters will kill the mysterious stranger when he goes outside for a bathroom break and pluck the map from his rigor-mortised fingers.



**To avoid this problem:** make your plot hooks compelling. Don't have a man offer to sell the party a map – have the tavern explode!<sup>1</sup> In the ruins, they find a map which apparently leads to the source of whatever blew up the inn. No self-respecting adventurer will turn down that kind of power.

## 2. DON'T EXPECT SUBTLETY...

It's conventional wisdom that every party needs a rogue. Someone sneaky and good with locks. Someone who sticks to the shadows and knows the best places to fence goods – because even in a the tiny village of Blart, population 7, *someone* will buy your dodgy recently-owned (-by-someone-else) armour with all the arrow holes and *fireball* scorch marks.<sup>2</sup>

Unfortunately, every party also has at least one character who has no stealth skill at all. And wears full plate armour *all the time*. Often, they complete the ensemble by ringing a giant bell and bawling the hits of Jimmy Somerville at the top of their lungs. This character and his accomplices, who are about as subtle as a mariachi band<sup>3</sup> and nowhere near as tuneful, render any attempts at stealth wholly pointless.

**To avoid this problem:** do not write adventures that depend on the party avoiding a great and terrible adversary – an entire army, for example – by stealth. It just won't happen. Odds are your typical adventuring party will simply proceed in a straight line directly through the obstacle, or directly *into* the obstacle if it somehow manages to resist their attentions. In the latter case, and if the obstacle seems to be receptive to communication, you might expect Player Characters to try to and talk their way out of trouble...

## 3. DON'T EXPECT DIPLOMACY...

Unfortunately, most Player Characters' approach to talking themselves out of trouble runs along the lines of 'release me or die'. Particularly ambitious characters may try 'join me or die'. Other classic acts of diplomacy include 'Look behind you!', 'Fire!' and 'It wasn't me, it was them.'

And this sort of discourse is about what you can expect in any and all situations. Got a classic 'evil twin' scenario lined up, where the players must ask clever questions to tell good from evil? Forget it. Chances are the Player Characters missed all your subtle clues in the first place, and *speak with dead* is easier to cast than *discern lie*. Need the Player Characters to negotiate a vital peace between warring empires in order to gain access to a long-forgotten tomb in the middle of the war zone? Read up on your mass battle rules and prepare to watch the party walk to the tomb on a path of corpses.

As the adventuring maxim runs: 'In times of peace, roll initiative.'

**To avoid this problem:** do not put a piece of plot-critical information solely in the mouth of a Non-Player

Character. These people keep journals for a reason – that reason being, of course, so that adventuring parties don't miss any clues while looting their corpse. This advice goes double if you happen to be playing a 'grim 'n' gritty' game where characters can be felled by a single lucky shot. If you choose to put the plot-critical information in the hands of a Non-Player Character the players *hate*... well, you richly deserve to have your campaign utterly derailed when they take the first opportunity they get to drop a mountain on his head.<sup>4</sup> Which brings me to my next point...

## 4. ...EXPECT VIOLENCE

Think the waitress at the inn doesn't need combat stats? Think again. Think you need a rogue to get through locked doors? Think again. Think that a paladin in shining full plate armour isn't going to go hunting rabbits for dinner with a two-handed battleaxe? You get the idea.

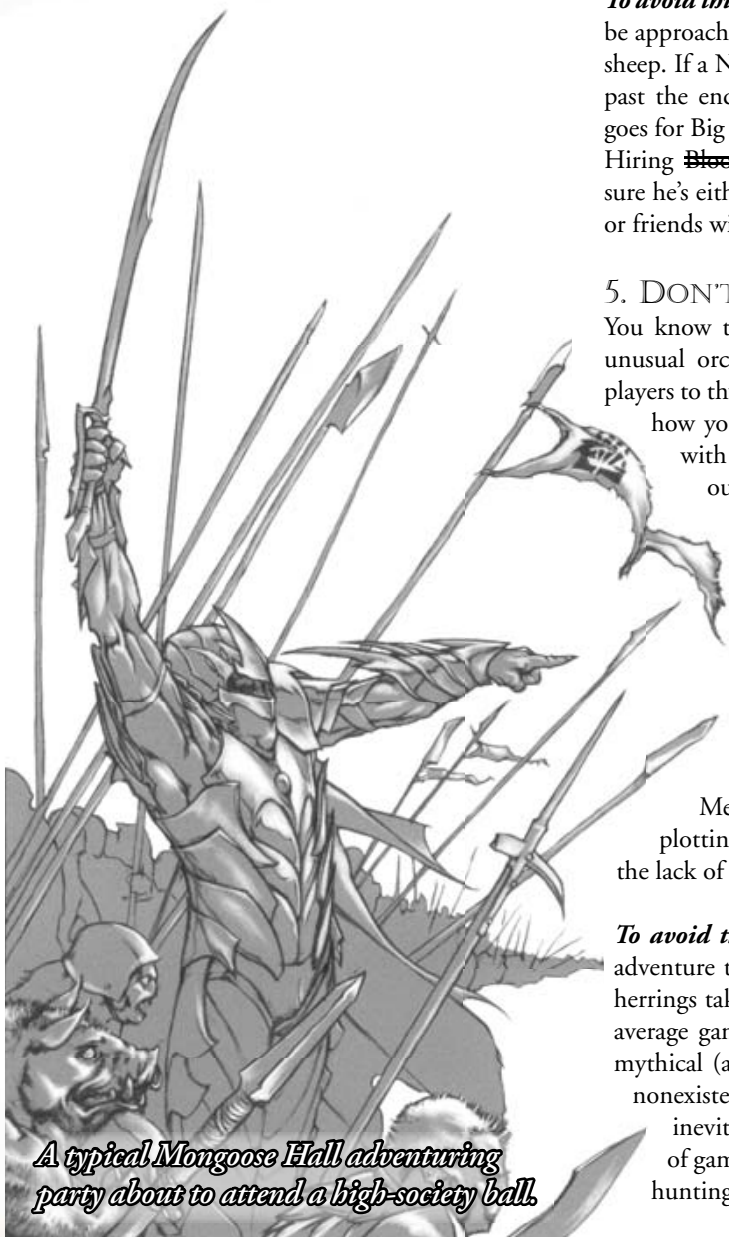
To paraphrase an old saying 'when all you have is a bloody great sword and a list of combat feats too big to fit on your character sheet, suddenly everything starts looking like a combat encounter'.

<sup>1</sup>This is also a good way to get rid of those annoying chickens. A bit of Games Mastering advice here: do not trust any player whose character spends significant amounts of gold on livestock. Nothing good can come of it.

<sup>2</sup>You know what I think? I think these people are all fronts for evil merchants. 'Why, yes sir, I'd love to buy 36 suits of slightly used goblin armour,' says the 'farmer'. The moment your party is out of town, he's back in the caves you just cleared out flogging the newest tribe of goblins some second-hand kit.

<sup>3</sup>And I'm talking about the kind of mariachi band that carry rocket launchers in their guitar cases.

<sup>4</sup>I have played published scenarios where, I discovered afterwards, we were expected to stroll over and have a pally chat with the main villain before the climactic fight. We hid behind a nearby hill and destroyed him with the kind of sorcery banned by the Geneva Convention



*A typical Mongoose Hall adventuring party about to attend a high-society ball.*

**To avoid this problem:** accept that every encounter may be approached by a party loaded for bear and aiming at sheep. If a Non-Player Character really needs to survive past the end of the second combat round – and this goes for Big Bad Evil Guys just as much as Noble Kings Hiring ~~Bloodthirsty Mercenaries~~ Adventurers – make sure he's either powerful enough to survive on his own, or friends with people who are.

### 5. DON'T DEPEND ON THE PLOT

You know that town you designed, the one beset by unusual orc attacks and the first clue that leads the players to thwart a global conspiracy of drow? You know how you've got that throwaway flavour encounter with 'Smelly George', the town beggar? Turns out that encounter isn't throwaway. No, the Player Characters have taken a liking to George, and they want him to be mayor. Short of divine intervention he *will* be mayor, because the Player Characters are going to run his election campaign, and they're not going to shy away from murdering your plot-critical Non-Player Characters while they sleep if they raise so much as an eyebrow in opposition.

Meanwhile, the global conspiracy of drow are plotting away and getting increasingly paranoid at the lack of antagonistic adventurers.

**To avoid this problem:** do not put anything in your adventure that is not directly tied in to the plot. Red herrings take on cosmic significance in the eyes of the average gaming group, and a chance mention of the mythical (and, as the Games Master knows full well, nonexistent) Scarlet Pilchard of Boru Boru will almost inevitably have Player Characters spending weeks of game time constructing vorpall fishing rods and hunting for the damned thing.

### 6. DON'T NAME NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS AFTER RUDE WORDS OR ANYTHING YOU MIGHT FIND AT THE BREAKFAST TABLE

By which I mean, don't give your Non-Player Characters names that *sound like* rude words or anything you might find at the breakfast table. Because within ten minutes General Bormfast will be General Bumfast, and so he will remain for all time. Good luck with the impressive pre-battle speech when the Player Characters are falling about giggling at the thought of the mighty General scooting about on his backside.

**To avoid this problem:** ...don't name your Non-Player Characters after rude words or anything you might find at the breakfast table. In all honesty if a group of players *aren't* cracking jokes about the names of your lovingly-crafted Non-Player Characters, they probably have no sense of humour – but the least you could do is avoid giving them an easy target. Roleplayers have to be able to think on their feet, and coming up with inventive ways to mock typical fantasy names<sup>5</sup> is all part of the mental warm-up for outwitting the Big Bad Evil Guy. Players might get lazy if the local wizard is named Toaster.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup>And by 'typical fantasy name' I mean one with more punctuation than vowels.

<sup>6</sup>Never mind the game I played in briefly where the local wizard was called, without a trace of irony, 'Bollocks'.

# NOBLE FOLLOWERS

A GUIDE TO ASSEMBLING YOUR VERY OWN LEGION IN *CONAN, THE ROLEPLAYING GAME*. BY TIM BANCROFT.

## A NOBLE AND HIS FOLLOWERS

A noble Player Character can add a fantastic dimension to a Conan game. His diplomatic, information handling and negotiation skills act as a wonderful support to the barbarians, soldiers and thieves of a typical party and enable the whole group to achieve things they would otherwise struggle to do. But a noble Player Character also brings his own problems as his whole focus is on leadership and the interaction with others: foremost amongst these problems is what can a Games Master do with the number of followers a noble can rapidly attract to his side?

When a noble reaches 6<sup>th</sup> level he automatically receives the Enhanced Leadership ability, giving him the Leadership feat plus bonuses equal to one third of his noble level. What is more, a good noble almost always has good bonuses due to a high Charisma. As a result, a well-built noble will have a Leadership rating of 12 or more so can automatically attract a retinue of up to 32 1<sup>st</sup> level followers and a 2<sup>nd</sup> level follower. All these followers are completely loyal, making this such a powerful and useful feat that it is unlikely a sensible noble will ignore the opportunity!

The problem with such a massive number of supporting Non-Player Characters is that they can completely overshadow the Player Characters. A Games Master has to be very careful they do not ruin or overshadow the campaign thread and has to make sure their use does not dictate the plot-flow. But how can this be done without letting the Player Character feel cheated? The noble's player and

the other players see this ability as his major source of strength, sometimes resorting to great lengths to ensure the followers are financed: such a need can dominate the game.

Outlined below is an approach to this potential problem. It hinges on a number of questions that are sometimes not actually asked. What are these followers? Who are they? Will a noble really have a retinue that consists of all soldiers or barbarians?

Of course not. A noble's loyal retinue should be the core of a household staff, those on whom the noble should be able to rely. It is around these followers that any noble can build a house, an estate or a court. What is more, the type of followers are likely to vary widely depending on which race the noble is from, where he is located, and of where he is a noble, never mind any questions about his current living circumstances. The staff of a refined Stygian lord, for example, is likely to be very different from a Cimmerian chieftain.

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

A few guidelines and questions are provided to help with selecting these core members of staff. Following these are some sample generic characters for all nobles which answer these questions. In addition, we show how the staff of a Stygian noble based away from his homeland can be chosen.

## WHAT ARE THEY?

The first question which springs to mind is 'what class are these followers?' Many Player Characters will

instinctively demand a platoon of soldiers, pirates or nomads depending on where the campaign is located and the activities within the campaign. After a few moments reflection the characters may include a thief or two, for infiltration work, and perhaps a Borderer or two for scouting purposes. Understandably, they try to build a highly effective fighting or marine force with the followers at their disposal.

But these followers are all offensive in nature. But what about *defence*? What about the Player Character's personal health and safety? What about the potential for poison from assassins, from food? After all, the noble is now an important personage with the potential for political influence. What about the potential for disease, whether magical or natural? How can the noble know he can trust his personal servants not to slip something nasty into his bed? How can he rely on them? What about visiting dignitaries – how are they catered for? How are they watched? How are they impressed? What about the horses, the hawks, the building maintenance... and what about the temptresses, acolytes and servants who are such an important part of a Hyborian household?

It is worth the Games Master and the player sitting down together and going through all aspects of the Player Character's life to identify those areas in which there is a weakness, a potential for a hostile attack, or a need to ensure the character's safety. Using the questions outlined in the paragraph above a list of apparently mundane tasks and roles can be built which demonstrate a need for one or more loyal followers to work in the area. Each loyal follower would either have oversight

on the other members of the noble's retinue, could be assigned general inspection duties and can be given important or critical tasks, not least of which is 'Cook all my meals, personally.'

All this may seem somewhat Machiavellian, but even a casual read of the experiences of Conan shows they are justifiable fears for a noble in the Hyborian age, especially one who is involved in any way with the sometimes Byzantine politics of the major centres of power.

### HOW ARE THEY FINANCED?

A method of avoiding the focus on financing these followers is to provide them for free from the Player Character's perspective. As an in-game device this makes a great deal of sense: the retinue is either provided by the noble's family or lord, or is a group of followers who have flocked to the noble's cause because of his reputation or fame. Such a group can also be considered to working or supported by additional members of his retinue who are not *followers* but merely members of the household staff, with a net income for the noble of zero. With the staff on a large, landed estate or a small tribe this can also act as a useful focus for subsequent plot devices and initiators.

Not only does this sense in game, but also from a meta-game perspective. Not only are the Player Character's freed from providing for the followers, but the make-up of the followers is also put more firmly into the hands of the Games Master. A player is more likely to share the management of his followers with the Games Master if he knows his character has not difficulties in providing for them. Of course, with players who like a high degree of characterisation this can end up being a highly fruitful sessions not just for the Player Character but for the plot as a whole: who might feel aggrieved by the up-and-coming noble's success?

### WHERE DO THEY LIVE?

Though a tribe of nomads may not have much of a problem finding a place to

live, a big problem is straying onto land which another warlord considers his own. But without a territory on which to graze their herds how can a nomadic tribe survive? How can it feed? Whilst these mundane questions are hardly the stuff of a Conan RPG session, a noble's followers and his additional staff can make it one less problem for the Games Master and players to worry about.

Allowing a nomad leader to inherit an area of land on which to graze, or allowing any other noble to inherit or acquire a territory removes the problems associated with running a demesne. It can also provide the Player Characters with a stable base, irrespective of the noble's Hideout ability, one to which they can retreat to recuperate and one from which they can issue forth to foil the machinations of yet another Stygian sorcerer. It also gives a stable point within which a Player Character scholar can establish his laboratory or stock a library.

Even abroad, a noble can be granted a place in which to live as a reward for a service performed for a king or important local ruler. Having been granted this land or a vacant tenancy, the issue becomes of how it should be filled or staffed – a problem ideally resolved by a sensible application of the Leadership feat.

### WHAT TYPE OF RESIDENCE?

This is not only highly dependent on the location, but also governs the core staff needed to run the residence. The Games Master and player should, again, ask each other how best to fit the residence with the aims and directions of the campaign and can come up with ideas which enhance the feel significantly. If a simple base were needed, then a quiet manor in the hills or plains of any of the major countries of Hyboria would be ideal. If the campaign plot line can cope, however, one in the borders of Aquilonia or in Zingara would give plenty of scope for interesting problems at home.

A pirate campaign, or one based around Zingara or the

Barachan Isles could result in the noble being given control of a Zingaran carrack or galleon. Such a large ship becomes an ideal mobile base for the Player Characters. Most nobles in such a campaign could be granted a small manor on the coast of Argos, Zingara or Shem, or even a house in Messantia itself.

Nomads, of course, merely need land on which they can set up their encampments and graze their cattle – although to be truly *nomadic* they will need a great deal of land. Alternatively, a noble can establish a settlement on the coast of the Pictish Wilderness or the Vilayet Sea, and the struggle to maintain it would become a major aspect of the campaign. The need to maintain a small number of boats becomes paramount, as does the need for good scouts.

Though there is a variety, the common theme between them all is the need to have a reliable and appropriate member of staff to oversee the maintenance of the residence. Ships, of course, could do with additional pirates, but households need maintenance staff, best represented by commoners. Tents still need maintenance and construction, particularly when exposed to harsh winds: again commoners are useful but specialised nomads in Handle Animal or perhaps with Craft (tent making) are useful.

### WHAT DOES THE NOBLE DO OR REPRESENT?

This final question is not often considered, but can change the scope of any of the above. If a noble is merely part of a Player Character group, then most of his staff would be representative of his home kingdom, maintaining the household when he is present. For nobles intending to move into other ventures, then some of his trusted staff should be able to actively support such a venture.

Finally, all nobles need bodyguards. A bodyguard is not necessarily a soldier

who would accompany a noble into battle, but would be someone who is capable of effectively guarding the main residence. Spot skills need to be good and hand-to-hand skills are vital. While some skill in crossbows or bows is certainly useful specialisation can be a problem when guarding against infiltration by night.

### WHAT ARE THEY CALLED?

It can be fun choosing appropriate names for all the early, loyal members of a noble's staff. As a noble increases in level and his Leadership Score increases, he can promote favoured members of staff to higher levels, back-filling the empty slot at the lower level. Indeed, some players get as attached to their loyal followers as their Player Characters.

### WHERE NEXT?

At higher levels the noble's Leadership score can accelerate dramatically, giving him a powerful force. Whilst some of that force would be similar to the staff outlined below, the majority in a Conan campaign should be mercenary soldiers, if running a mercenary company, pirates or commoner sailors if running a naval campaign, barbarians in a Pictish campaign or nomads in a desert campaign. All have archetypes in the Conan chronicles.

At the higher levels this large force of followers becomes less of an impact on the Player Characters, though it may demand some flexibility from the Games Master. By then the Player Characters can begin to echo Conan's career as a buccaneer, a Zuagir chieftain and a Free Company commander: a loyal band of hardened warriors can become part of the campaign plot and its resolution. They are becoming rather heroic themselves.

A 12<sup>th</sup> level noble is likely to have a Leadership Score of around 22, giving him 250 first level followers plus a number of more potent characters. With such a large force the Player Character group could have a substantial influence on the affairs of the states through which they

travel. More importantly it means they can face the many minions of the powerful, Stygian sorcerer they have been chasing for so long with bravery and panache.

## THE CORE STAFF OF A HOUSEHOLD

From whichever society the noble is descended, there are some core roles which always need to be filled. These are focussed around the necessities of life: those who cook for the nobility; those who look after the horses, and chariots if in Stygia; trusted household servants; entertainer/spies for visitors; clerks or scribes for reliable, honest, day-to-day administration; and those who oversee the maintenance of the key elements (buildings, tents or ships) of the estate. Most of these staff are loyal commoners, whose commoner levels only count as half a Player Character class level.

For any coastal domain, or any area with reasonably fast access to the coast or major rivers, a pair of trustworthy seamen is a necessity. These can be used to man any boats and handle any ships needed for a fast escape. In the west Zingarans and Argosseans are almost always preferred due to their excellent, natural coastal skills, though other coastal states such as Stygia or the Black Kingdoms might have their own, native, personnel.

The final member of the core staff is frequently a personal, trusted physician. Those most sought-after are from Stygia with their superb emphasis and insight into medical issues and problems, though if a Stygian cannot be obtained a local or Hyborian physician would be preferred.

The remaining staff should be guards. The staff leader or house major-domo should be a directly representative leader of the race from which the noble is acquiring his staff. For a Stygian, for example, the Master of the House should be a charioteer, the driver of the noble's chariot, or a scholar/priest, depending on the noble's

predilection for war or organisation; for a Pict this right-hand assistant would most likely be a Pictish shaman; a Zamorian would most likely have a weasel-eyed thief or spymaster.

### STAFF NUMBERS

After following the process outlined above, the following is an appropriate staff primarily focussed on 'caretaker' work for a noble near the coast or living near a river in on of the Hyborian kingdoms.

12 to 14 guards (1<sup>st</sup> level soldiers) less than half archers unless from an archery nation, the remainder biased towards defensive skills.

1 or 2 scouts assigned as personal guards or undercover servants.

2 to 4 personal assistants or guest servants (1<sup>st</sup> level temptresses).

1 chief cook (2<sup>nd</sup> level commoner)

2 to 4 servants (2<sup>nd</sup> level commoners)

2 builders/handyman (2<sup>nd</sup> level commoners)

2 sailor/servants (2<sup>nd</sup> level commoners or 1<sup>st</sup> level pirates)

1 or 2 scribes or chancellors (1<sup>st</sup> level scholars)

2 or 3 stablehand/squires (2<sup>nd</sup> level commoners)

1 personal physician (1<sup>st</sup> level scholar)

A shaman or priest, but such a follower is of far more use at higher levels, perhaps even as the Player Character's cohort.

At 6<sup>th</sup> level, the non-combat staff makes up over 50% of the total. At higher levels non-combat staff should make up considerably smaller proportion. The tricky decision for the noble is who to bring in at higher levels given the questions asked above. Is a spymaster more appropriate? Is a chancellor more effective to optimise income from the estate? Would a Personal Physician with superbly developed Craft (alchemy) skills be a good counter to disease and ill health? Or would a powerful sorcerer – assuming that he can be trusted – be more useful?

A set of statistics and templates usable for the non-combatant characters follow. All commoners use the Khauran Non-Player Character race, though if in other countries (such as Stygia) appropriate hybrids can be used instead.

### 'SERVANTS'

These can be of any gender and have a their skills focussed towards the service they supply. This template can be used for almost any generic servant, including sailors.

	<b>Medium Human (Khauran) 2<sup>nd</sup> Level Commoner</b>
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	2d4-2 (3 hp)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+1 (+1 Dex)
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft
<b>Dodge Defence:</b>	11 (+1 Dex), touch 10, flat-footed 10
<b>Parry Defence:</b>	10, touch 10, flat-footed 10
<b>DR:</b>	-
<b>Base Attack/ Grapple:</b>	+0/+0
<b>Attack:</b>	Hunting spear +0 (1d8, AP 1) or dagger +1 finesse (1d4, 19-20/x2, AP 1)
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft/5 ft (10 ft reach with spear)
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	-
<b>Special Qualities:</b>	Khauran traits
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort -1, Ref +1, Will +0
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 10, Dex 11, Con 8, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 9
<b>Skills:</b>	Craft (appropriate) +11, Craft (other) +5, Listen +6, Profession (appropriate) +11, Spot +6, plus one other 'hobby' skill with 3 ranks.
<b>Feats:</b>	Skill Focus (Craft), Skill Focus (Profession)



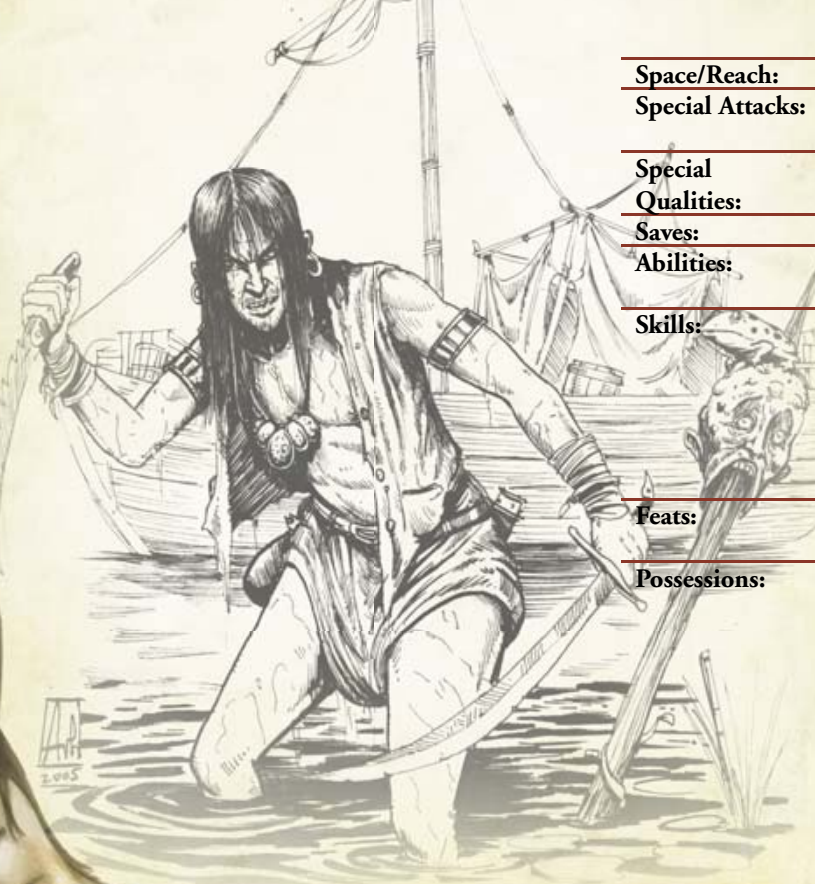
### SQUIRE/STABLEHAND

These fellows have been chosen because of their affinity with animals of all kinds. Despite their level, they are a good quality squire and stablehand. The nature of Stygian society means that Stygian squires substitute Charioteer's Affinity (Chariot and Handle Animal +2) for Animal Affinity, lose the Ride skill, gain Craft (Chariot) at +7 and one would substitute Skill Focus (craft (chariot)) for Skill Focus (profession (stablehand)). Some stablehands could be given ranks in craft (cart) instead of Use Rope.

	<b>Medium Human (Khauran) 2<sup>nd</sup> Level Commoner</b>
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	2d4-2 (3 hp)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+1 (+1 Dex)
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft
<b>Dodge Defence:</b>	11 (+1 Dex), touch 10, flat-footed 10
<b>Parry Defence:</b>	10, touch 10, flat-footed 10
<b>DR:</b>	-
<b>Base Attack/ Grapple:</b>	+0/+0
<b>Attack:</b>	Hunting spear +0 (1d8, AP 1) or dagger +1 finesse (1d4, 19-20/x2)
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft/5 ft (10 ft reach with spear)
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	-
<b>Special Qualities:</b>	Khauran traits
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort -1, Ref +1, Will +0
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 10, Dex 12, Con 8, Int 9, Wis 11, Cha 13
<b>Skills:</b>	Handle Animal +13, Profession (stablehand) +10, Ride +10, Use Rope +4
<b>Feats:</b>	Animal Affinity, Skill Focus (Profession(stablehand))

## SAILOR

These sailors would be used for any sea-borne endeavour the noble may wish to perform but can also function as nondescript servants around the house where their inquisitive nature can assist them in finding out secrets others would prefer remained hidden. Not only are they skilled in sailing, they are also skilled in small boat handling and in constructing rafts and small boats, perhaps for raids but, most importantly, for escape via river or sea. Whilst an Argossean pirate is provided as an example, it is quite likely that some could be generic servants as outlined above.



## Medium Human (Argossean)

### 1<sup>st</sup> Level Pirate

<b>Hit Dice:</b>	1d8+1 (5 hp)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+4 (+2 Dex, +2 Reflex)
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft
<b>Dodge Defence:</b>	12 (+2 Dex), touch 10, flat-footed 10
<b>Parry Defence:</b>	10, touch 10, flat-footed 10
<b>DR:</b>	4 (leather jerkin)
<b>Base Attack/Grapple:</b>	+0/+0
<b>Attack:</b>	Arming sword +2 finesse (1d10, 19-20/x2, AP 2) and poniard +2 finesse (1d6, 19-20/x2, AP 1)
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft/5 ft
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	Ferocious attack, two-weapon fighting
<b>Special Qualities:</b>	Hyborian qualities, seamanship +1
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +3, Ref +4, Will -1
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 10, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 9, Cha 8
<b>Skills:</b>	Balance +8, Craft (Boats) +4, Escape Artist +6, Gather Information +5, Knowledge (geography) +2, Profession (sailor) +10, Swim +5, Use Rope +8
<b>Feats:</b>	Argossean Dreamer, Skill Focus (Profession (sailor))
<b>Possessions:</b>	Storm jacket, boots, linen trows, shirt, hat, nondescript cloak and tunic (for rescue purposes), leather jerkin, arming sword, poniard

## HOUSEHOLD GUARDS

These vary so much by nation that a generic template is not possible. The household guards would use the weapons and equipment with which they are most familiar, have good Spot skills and be able to defend their lord in times of trouble.



## PERSONAL PHYSICIAN

Stygians are the most prized of all personal physicians. Stygian physicians do not just treat the body but the complete person, physically, socially and mentally. Whilst one might consider Pelishtim and Khitans to also be good physicians given their natural, scholastic bias, the flexibility of Hyborians means their physicians can be highly competent. Two physicians are provided: a Stygian and a generic Hyborian.

## STYGIAN PHYSICIAN

Even though this surgeon has just received his training he is very competent and eager to please the new master who has taken him into his confidence. He is likely to be regularly brewing useful pick-me-ups, antidotes and medicines.

Also provided are the statistics for a more generic Hyborian physician. Although not quite as skilled as their Stygian counterparts, Hyborian physicians are easier to find.

*Trust me.  
I'm a doctor!*



	Medium Human (Stygian) 1 <sup>st</sup> Level Scholar
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	1d6-1 (2 hp)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+1 (+1 Dex)
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft
<b>Dodge Defence:</b>	11 (+1 Dex), touch 10, flat-footed 10
<b>Parry Defence:</b>	10, touch 10, flat-footed 10
<b>DR:</b>	-
<b>Base Attack/ Grapple:</b>	+0/+0
<b>Attack:</b>	Dagger +1 finesse (1d4, 19-20/x2, AP 1) or Stygian bow +2 ranged (1d12, 19-20/x2, AP 2)
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft/5 ft
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	-
<b>Special Qualities:</b>	Stygian qualities, sorcery style, base PP, scholar, background (lay priest), knowledge is power +3, keeper of the first mystery of Djehuty
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort -1, Ref +1, Will +5
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 10, Dex 12, Con 8, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 13
<b>Skills:</b>	Appraise +5, Concentration +3, Craft (alchemy) +10, Craft (herbalism) +8, Decipher Script +6, Handle Animal +3, Heal +10, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Knowledge (mysteries: Djehuty) +6, Knowledge (mysteries: Set) +5, Knowledge (nature) +6, Knowledge (religion) +4, Perform (ritual) +7, Profession (scribe) +4, Profession (surgeon) +4, Search +4
<b>Feats:</b>	Diligent, Surgery, Stygian Physician
<b>Possessions:</b>	Travel overrobes, sandals, cloak, kilt, necklace, staff, surgeons hit, healer's kit, first aid equipment, shaving kit, cleaning equipment (e.g. strigil, soap, sweat-clothes, bowls, and similar)

	Medium Human (Hyborian) 1 <sup>st</sup> Level Scholar
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	1d6-1 (2 hp)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+1 (+1 Dex)
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft
<b>Dodge Defence:</b>	11 (+1 Dex), touch 10, flat-footed 10
<b>Parry Defence:</b>	10, touch 10, flat-footed 10
<b>DR:</b>	-
<b>Base Attack/ Grapple:</b>	+0/+0
<b>Attack:</b>	Dagger +1 finesse (1d4, 19-20/x2, AP 1)
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft/5 ft
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	-
<b>Special Qualities:</b>	Hyborian qualities, sorcery style, base PP, scholar, background (independent), knowledge is power +3
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort -1, Ref +1, Will +5
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 10, Dex 12, Con 8, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 13
<b>Skills:</b>	Appraise +5, Concentration +3, Craft (alchemy) +6, Craft (herbalism) +10, Decipher Script +6, Handle Animal +1, Heal +11, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Knowledge (nature) +6, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +6, Knowledge (religion) +4, Move Silently +4, Perform (ritual) +5, Profession (physician) +6, Search +4, Sense Motive +4
<b>Feats:</b>	Diligent, Skill Focus (Heal), Surgery
<b>Possessions:</b>	Travel overrobes, sandals, cloak, kilt, necklace, staff, surgeons hit, healer's kit, first aid equipment, shaving kit, cleaning equipment (e.g. strigil, soap, sweat-clothes, bowls, and similar)



## SCOUT/SPY/COUNTERSPY

These can be used undercover as household servants, perhaps inserted into an opponent's staff, or even used as scouts when in the wilds. Whilst Zamorian thieves or spymasters are the most sought-after, once again the generic qualities of the Hyborians mean they can be very effective in the role, especially in the wilds.

	<b>Medium Human (Zamorian) 1<sup>st</sup> Level Thief</b>
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	1d8 (4 hp)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+5 (+3 Dex, +2 Reflex)
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft
<b>Dodge Defence:</b>	14 (+3 Dex), touch 10, flat-footed 10
<b>Parry Defence:</b>	10, touch 10, flat-footed 10
<b>DR:</b>	-
<b>Base Attack/ Grapple:</b>	+0/+0
<b>Attack:</b>	Arming sword +3 finesse (1d10, 19-20/x2, AP 2) or poniard sneak attack +3 finesse (1d6+2d8, 19-20/x2, AP 1)
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft/5 ft
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	Sneak attack +1d6, sneak attack style (poniard)
<b>Special Qualities:</b>	Zamorian qualities, trap disarming
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +0, Ref +5, Will -1
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 10, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 10
<b>Skills:</b>	Balance +7, Bluff +4, Climb +4, Disable Device +9, Disguise +4, Escape Artist +7, Hide +10, Move Silently +10, Open Lock +9, Search +5, Sleight of Hand +9, Tumble +5
<b>Feats:</b>	Light-Footed, Stealthy
<b>Possessions:</b>	Clothes, weapons, bribe money, thieves' tools, nondescript cloak and tunic

## MAIDSERVANT

Common throughout the courts visited by Conan, these are selected for their devastating good looks and their ability to engage the guest in conversation. Whilst nominally present as entertainment and servants for guests, they also play a vital role in spying or identifying trouble before it develops. Some races, such as Stygians, are likely to use greater numbers of maidservants than others. Higher level maidservants are likely to develop their Sleight of hand skills as well as their Bluff, Perform (dance), Disguise and Diplomacy skills.

	<b>Medium Human (Hyborian) 1<sup>st</sup> Level Temptress</b>
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	1d6 (3 hp)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+3 (+1 Dex, +2 Reflex)
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft
<b>Dodge Defence:</b>	11 (+1 Dex), touch 10, flat-footed 10
<b>Parry Defence:</b>	9 (-1 Str), touch 9, flat-footed 9
<b>DR:</b>	-
<b>Base Attack/ Grapple:</b>	+0/-1
<b>Attack:</b>	Dagger +1 finesse (1d4-1, 19-20/x2, AP 0)
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft/5 ft
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	-
<b>Special Qualities:</b>	Hyborian qualities, comeliness +2, savoir-faire
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +0, Ref +3, Will +2
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 8, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 15
<b>Skills:</b>	Appraise +3, Bluff +8, Diplomacy +8, Disguise +6, Gather Information +6, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +3, Listen +4, Move Silently +5, Perform (dance) +8, Profession (handmaiden) +4, Search +4, Sense Motive +3
<b>Feats:</b>	Disarming Looks, Persuasive
<b>Possessions:</b>	Sandals, silk or cotton wrap, jewellery



# SPIRITS

A selection of spirits ready to manifest in your RuneQuest games, by Matt Thomason

Following are a selection of spirits the GM may wish to use when a character contacts the spirit world. Some of these represent a number of conceptual spirits, some generic spirits of the deceased, while some are just spirit entities in their own right. Far more spirits exist than those listed here, and GMs are encouraged to expand this list as well as adding corresponding Invocation spells for their creations. Further examples include nature spirits such as Dryads (tree spirits), Naiads (water spirits), Oreads (mountain spirits), and Heleads (fen spirits).

Spirits have no specific appearances, but suggested representations of each are given in the individual descriptions. The GM is free to modify these as they wish for each individual instance of a spirit. The appearance of an individual spirit is determined by its own idea of what it is, and over a period of time it is possible for its form to change as its knowledge of itself increases. Conceptual spirits are formed from the collective unconscious thoughts of living beings, and typically appear as an anthropomorphic personification of that idea or concept.

All of the following entities follow the standard rules for spirits found within the *RuneQuest Companion*.

## Death Spirit

A representation of the concept of death itself, Death Spirits typically appear as the personification of that concept. One common appearance is that of a cloaked, hooded skeleton carrying a scythe, sometimes riding a pale horse – in this case the horse is a part of the death spirit itself and not a separate entity.

Anyone within 10 metres of a Death Spirit will feel a chill, no matter what the temperature really is. Wounds caused by a Death Spirit will not heal naturally, and may only be healed by magic.

Should the Death Spirit possess an individual, they suffer 1 hit point of damage to a random location every hour.

### Characteristics

INT 3D6 (10)  
POW 3D6+6 (16)  
CHA 3D6 (10)

HP 16  
MP 16

### Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage
Spectral Weapon	50%	1D2

### Special Rules

**Combat Actions:** 2  
**Strike Rank:** +20  
**Movement:** 16m  
**Traits:** Covert Possession, Dark Sight, Night Sight  
**Skills:** Dodge 50%, Lore (Spirit World) 50%, Persistence 50%, Stealth 45%



## Love Spirit

Not all concept spirits represent bad or evil concepts. The Love Spirit typically appears as a chubby cherub wearing a toga, carrying a bow plus arrows with heart-shaped tips.

The bow carried has a range of 15m, and the Love Spirit never runs out of arrows. Should these hit a target, it will automatically fall in love with the next living being of the same (or physically compatible) race it sees.

The target will be unable to willingly harm the subject of its affections, and must make a Persistence test in order to resist doing as the subject asks, should it make a request. This effect lasts for ten minutes.

A Love Spirit will not willingly initiate combat, but can defend itself if attacked.

A Love Spirit is rather mischievous and enjoys selecting inappropriate targets for the affections of others.

In the event of a Love Spirit possessing an individual, that person gains a temporary bonus of 6 to their CHA.

### Characteristics

INT	3D6	(10)
POW	3D6+3	(13)
CHA	3D6+6	(16)
HP	13	
MP	13	

## Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage
Bow	35%	See above
Spectral Touch	30%	1D2

## Special Rules

Combat Actions:	2
Strike Rank:	+26
Movement:	13m
Traits:	Covert Possession
Skills:	Dodge 55%, Lore (Spirit World) 50%, Persistence 40%, Stealth 35%

## Hunger Spirit

A Hunger Spirit's appearance is typically that of an impossibly wasted human (or whichever race's collective thoughts it was formed from), wearing scant torn rags. If communication is attempted, it will answer but will constantly interject the fact that it is incredibly hungry into its replies, attempting to steer the conversation towards its hunger and where it could possibly get a meal from. Hunger Spirits in the spirit world will attempt to trick a mortal with Spiritcraft into bringing them into the mortal world and giving them physical form in order that they may feed.

If given physical form and free will, the Hunger Spirit will immediately attempt to consume anything in the immediate vicinity, beginning with any real food, then progressing to anything that appears edible (anything soft enough to be bitten through, including living beings!), and eventually onto inedible solid objects such as trees, furniture, walls, and if nothing else is available the very ground beneath it. Its hunger can never be satiated, and it will voluntarily break for no more than

a minute between its "meals" to interact with others or to change its location.

Should the Hunger Spirit covertly possess an individual, that individual will find themselves unable to leave a meal until they have finished it.

Anyone struck by a Hunger Spirit must make a Resilience test after combat, or be struck down with a wasting disease (Delay: 1D6 Hours, Potency: 70). While the disease affects them, they will be perpetually hungry but food any ingested will not be digested, leaving their body lacking in nutrition. They will grow hungrier and hungrier, with no amount of food able to satiate this desire. If not cured, they will eventually starve to death, losing 1 hit point from each location every day – this damage may not be healed until the disease has been cured.



### Characteristics

INT 2D6 (7)  
POW 3D6+6 (16)  
CHA 3D6 (10)

HP 16  
MP 16

### Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage
Spectral Bite	50%	1D2

### Special Rules

*Combat Actions:* 2  
*Strike Rank:* +17  
*Movement:* 16m  
*Traits:* Covert Possession, Night Sight  
*Skills:* Dodge 50%, Lore (Spirit World) 40%, Persistence 55%, Stealth 35%

## Happiness Spirit

Formed from the collective happiness of living beings, a Happiness Spirit typically appears as a slim, beautiful young woman with a gleeful expression on her face. Happiness Spirits have a playful nature and are virtually impossible to anger. They often tell jokes or otherwise attempt to entertain others, and have the innate ability to tell how unhappy a mortal is.

A Happiness Spirit will not willingly initiate combat, but can defend itself if attacked.

A mortal possessed by a Happiness Spirit gains a temporary bonus of +10% to any skills used to entertain, including Sing and Dance.

The presence of a Happiness spirit causes a +5% bonus to all non-violent skill tests taken by anyone within ten metres, as their enthusiasm in any task they perform is increased by its proximity.

### Characteristics

INT 3D6 (10)  
POW 3D6 (10)  
CHA 3D6+9 (19)

HP 10  
MP 10

### Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage
Spectral Touch	30%	1D2

### Special Rules

*Combat Actions:* 2  
*Strike Rank:* +29  
*Movement:* 10m  
*Traits:* Covert Possession  
*Skills:* Dodge 55%, Lore (Spirit World) 50%, Persistence 40%, Stealth 35%

## War Spirit

A War Spirit's appearance is dependant upon the culture whose collective thoughts it was formed from - it typically appears as a heroic member of that culture's fighting elite - for example a heavily armoured knight standing fully two foot taller than the average member of its race, or a muscular gladiator. Their faces are often covered by a helmet or hood of some kind.

War Spirits are unable to spend more than five minutes without combat - if they are not given a target within any given five minute period, they will attack the next living being or spirit they see.

A mortal possessed by a War Spirit gains a temporary bonus of +10% to all combat skills.

Anyone hit by a War Spirit in combat is immediately restored to a Fresh fatigue level - the Spirit wants a good fight, not an exhausted opponent.

### Characteristics

INT 2D6 (7)  
POW 4D6+6 (20)  
CHA 3D6 (10)

HP 20  
MP 20

### Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage
Spectral Weapon	60%	1D2

### Special Rules

*Combat Actions:* 2  
*Strike Rank:* +17  
*Movement:* 20m  
*Traits:* Night Sight  
*Skills:* Dodge 60%, Lore (Spirit World) 50%, Persistence 55%, Stealth 40%

## Healing Spirit

Appearing typically as a vaguely humanoid form composed of swirling water droplets, the healing spirit is unusual in that its touch heals rather than causing damage. It is naturally drawn to those who are injured or suffering from disease, and will attempt to “strike” them in order to heal them. The healing spirit’s touch converts innate magical energy within the target into healing power (whether they want it or not...).

Those who do not attempt to avoid are automatically “hit” for a healing effect of 1 hit point, which costs them 1 Magic Point (if they do not have any magic points they are not healed). If the target is suffering from any kind of disease, the healing spirit will cure this at a cost of 5 Magic Points.

Should a Healing Spirit possess a mortal, that individual regenerates 1 hit point of damage to every damaged location per day, in addition to any other healing.

A healing spirit is unable to cause damage to anyone or anything, even in self-defence. It is also unable to heal itself.

### Characteristics

INT 3D6 (10)  
POW 4D6+6 (20)  
CHA 2D6 (7)

HP 20  
MP 20

### Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage
Healing Touch	50%	See above

### Special Rules

*Combat Actions:* 2  
*Strike Rank:* +17  
*Movement:* 20m  
*Traits:* Covert Possession  
*Skills:* Dodge 70%, Lore (Spirit World) 60%, Persistence 45%, Stealth 45%

## Abhorrence

The Abhorrence is the spirit form of a mortal that died with insatiable thoughts of hatred and vengeance on its mind, thoughts not directed at any specific individuals. The spirit form comes into existence in the spirit world at the time of death, consumed by the overwhelming desire to avenge itself on anyone and anything. Abhorrences are brutally aggressive, cruel, and merciless. They will sadistically attack any other spirit or living being.



The typical appearance of an Abhorrence is that of a warrior in dark plate armour, with sharply angled edges. The armour is often spiked. They may be armed with any weapon, but a double-handed axe is common.

An Abhorrence can only be permanently destroyed by locating its physical remains, exhuming them, and re-burying them in consecrated ground. Otherwise if reduced to zero hit points it simply dissipates and reforms in a number of hours equal to its POW with a single hit point.

### Characteristics

INT 3D6+12 (22)  
POW 4D6+12 (26)  
CHA 3D6 (10)

HP 26  
MP 26

### Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage
Spectral Weapon	75%	1D6

### Special Rules

*Combat Actions:* 4  
*Strike Rank:* +32  
*Movement:* 26m  
*Traits:* Dark Sight, Dominant Possession, Night Sight, Recurring  
*Skills:* Dodge 70%, Lore (Spirit World) 60%, Persistence 70%, Stealth 40%

## Collective

Many spirits are formed from the collective thoughts of others, such as the concept spirits listed earlier. However, the collective should not be confused with these – rather than being formed by the thoughts of others, the collective is formed from other spirits, gathering these into itself and forming a greater whole. Understandably, most spirits like their individuality and do not wish to be a part of a collective, but collectives believe that the greater whole outweighs the wishes of individual spirits, and gathers them to itself despite their wishes. A Collective will try to absorb any other spirit, including other Collectives, and cannot be reasoned with or bargained with to prevent this – their whole reason to exist is to absorb other spirits, which they do with an animal-like instinct (hence their fixed INT score)

A collective may make promises to other spirits that they will retain their individuality if they give themselves to it of their own free will, but this is not the case – individual spirits absorbed by the collective are effectively lost. Their memories and abilities may be retained, but their own consciousness is discarded as part of the absorption process.

Collectives appear as gaseous clouds with many faces appearing upon their surface for a brief instant before disappearing and being replaced by another.

When a collective attacks another spirit (including any character traversing the spirit world in spirit form), they attempt to subdue and absorb them rather than destroy them. Combat is run as normal, but should they reduce their opponent to 0HP they are absorbed permanently into the collective rather than being slain or dissipated. Every spirit absorbed by a collective

increases its POW (and therefore HPs and MPs) by one. For every trait and advanced skill the absorbed spirit possesses that the collective did not, there is a 10% chance it gains that trait or skill (new skills are gained at the base level, not the level the absorbed spirit had in that skill). The collective also gains 1 point in any skill that the absorbed spirit possessed at a higher level than itself. This ability also functions against other spirits if both the collective and their target are in the mortal world.

The origin of the Collectives is unknown. Presumably at one point they were individual spirits that had the ability to absorb others unto themselves. It appears impossible that they can be created by other Collectives as they would simply try to absorb one another.

### CHARACTERISTICS

INT 4D6+6 (20)  
POW 3D6+12 (22)  
CHA 3D6 (10)

HP 24  
MP 24

### Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage
Spectral Touch	50%	1D4

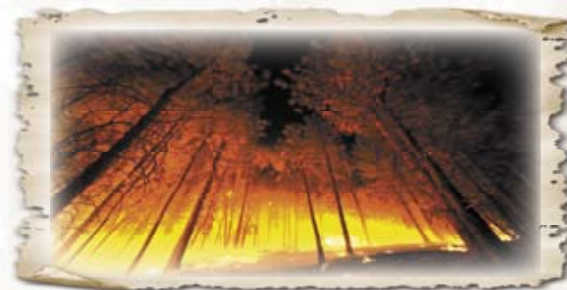
### Special Rules

*Combat Actions:* 4  
*Strike Rank:* +30  
*Movement:* 24m  
*Traits:* Dark Sight, Night Sight  
*Skills:* Dodge 30%, Lore (Spirit World) 70%, Persistence 50%, Stealth 45%

## Immolation

Death by fire is one of the most traumatic causes of mortal demise. Many of those who die in such a way feel immense pain and terror as the flames sear the flesh from their bones, and the emotion of their death carries over to their form in the spirit world. Many who die in this way take the spirit form of an Immolation, an entity hell-bent on seeking out those who deserve to suffer and causing them a horrible death in the same way as their own.

Immolations typically appear as a transparent sheet of flames flickering around a humanoid outline, with occasional spurts of flame extending up to a metre away. Living beings within ten metres can feel heat emanating from the Immolation as if they were standing next to a burning fireplace.



Immolations retain a degree of their previous personality. Anyone or anything that their mortal personality had a grudge against becomes a target for the Immolation – obviously this makes Immolations extremely unpredictable as it is not possible to know quite who or what they will attack.

An Immolation has the innate ability to create fire, as per the Rune Magic spell Ignite but with no rune required. An Immolation is assumed to have a skill in Runecasting (Fire) of 65% for this purpose.

### Characteristics

INT 3D6+6 (16)  
POW 5D6+12 (29)  
CHA 3D6 (10)

HP 29  
MP 29

### Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage
Spectral Touch	55%	1D6

### Special Rules

*Combat Actions:* 3  
*Strike Rank:* +26  
*Movement:* 29m  
*Traits:* Dark Sight, Night Sight, Recurring  
*Skills:* Dodge 60%, Lore (Spirit World) 65%, Persistence 65%, Stealth 40%

## Poltergeist

The Poltergeist is the spirit form of a mortal that had great willpower and has managed to cling onto some semblance of life as a spirit, refusing to give up their existence until a final task has been performed.

Poltergeists are able to manipulate the world around them to a degree, exerting a small amount of telekinetic effort to move tiny items. By expending a magic point, they may move larger items, up to the size of a dagger or rock – these may be used as ranged weapons.

Although usually invisible, a Poltergeist may choose to make themselves visible to mortals, or can be seen by mortals using magic to see spirits. They retain their original appearance, but with an impossibly weary, haggard expression on their face.

A poltergeist's existence is purposed towards achieving a specific task – usually one final goal they dearly wished to accomplish in life. Should this task ever be completed, they will dissipate into nothingness, and the spirit of the deceased will fade away.

### Characteristics

INT 3D6+6 (16)  
POW 3D6+12 (22)  
CHA 3D6 (10)

HP 24  
MP 24

### Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage
Touch	50%	See above
Rock (thrown)	45%	1D2
Dagger (thrown)	45%	1D3+1

### Special Rules

*Combat Actions:* 3  
*Strike Rank:* +26  
*Movement:* 24m  
*Traits:* Covert Possession, Dark Sight, Night Sight  
*Skills:* Dodge 50%, Lore (Spirit World) 50%, Persistence 50%, Stealth 45%

## Spectral Creature

Spectral Creatures are the spirits of small animals, such as dogs, cats, rats, and birds. They appear as a ghostly form of their original species.

Unlike most summoned spirits, Spectral Creatures are immediately loyal to the person who summons

them, responding in an almost petlike way. Even those creatures that in life were untamed feel the need for companionship once they take on their spirit form.

Spectral Creatures may only attempt Covert Possession of living creatures of their own species.

### Characteristics

INT 4 (4)  
POW 3D6 (10)  
CHA 3D6 (10)

HP 10  
MP 10

### Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage
Spectral Bite	40%	1

### Special Rules

*Combat Actions:* 1  
*Strike Rank:* +14  
*Movement:* 10m  
*Traits:* Covert Possession, Night Sight  
*Skills:* Dodge 45%, Persistence 40%, Stealth 55%

**Stay tuned next month for the rules for Spirit Invocation, a new form of magic that will help you summon, command, and bind all of these spirits and more!**

# THE WORLD ACCORDING TO ROLEPLAYING

THE FIRST IN A NEW SERIES  
INVESTIGATING WHAT HISTORY  
MIGHT LOOK LIKE IF IT WAS THE  
RESULT OF A ROLEPLAYING GAME...

BY NICK ROBINSON  
AND IAN BARSTOW

## 1. SCOTT OF THE ANTARCTIC

### DRAMATIS PERSONAE:

Captain Robert Falcon Scott – Paladin  
Captain Lawrence Oates – Paladin, Technically  
Dr Edward Wilson – Cleric  
Lieutenant Henry Bowers – Fighter  
Petty Officer Edgar Evans – Monk

### SCENE 1

*The heroes are ready to leave their base camp in order to be the first to reach the South Pole. They have, of course, met up at a tavern.*

GM (A DETACHED VOICE): Alright, get on with it. It's past 7 o'clock already.

SCOTT: Righty-ho. Well chaps, we should soon be able to get underway, I trust you've all been out getting the equipment we needed as we discussed earlier.

OATES: There was a meeting? When did that happen? And who made you leader?

SCOTT: You were in the toilet. We thought we'd start without you, and if you read the briefing you'd know it's *my* expedition.

EVANS: I have the rocks.

OTHERS: Eh?

EVANS: Um. This is a geological expedition you know. Remember. When we met the patron at the start. (Slowly) We had to collect rocks.

SCOTT: I was under the impression we were to collect rocks after we got there, not before. I'm not convinced a bag of Margate shingle is going to break any new ground.

EVANS: (Mumbles) Stupid toffs...

SCOTT: Well apart from the obviously important rocks (*chuckles all round*) I trust you all have the necessary equipment.

WILSON: Yep. I checked the manual and we have enough rations for us and the dogs for six weeks. More than enough.

SCOTT: Marvellous. We will beat that Amundsen fellow to the pole and no one will remember him. Rule Britannia and all that. How are those dogs, Bowers?

BOWERS: Dogs?

SCOTT: Yes. Dogs. What have you done?

BOWERS: I got this rather splendid deal on these Siberian pit ponies.

SCOTT: *Ponies*? How did that happen?

BOWERS: Have you seen the price of dogs? 30gp each. I can get these knackered old ponies for 10gp each. That leaves us plenty of flash money in case we run into any encounters.

EVANS: Encounters? Where exactly do you think we'll be going?

SCOTT: Yes, quite. Now Bowers, I did give you plenty of gold pieces to get these dogs and I... um, Bowers, old chap, why have you got a ruddy great rifle on your back?

BOWERS: Oh, this? Picked it up at my gunsmiths. Masterwork, you know. Very accurate. Should rack up some decent XP with this puppy.

SCOTT: Sadly it's the only puppy about, you twit. What exactly do you think you are going to kill?

BOWERS: Polar Bears. Rabid Penguins. All sorts of things.

SCOTT: *Polar bears!*? This is the South Pole you pillock. Didn't you read the scenario brief?

BOWERS: Er... Shoggoths, then...?

OTHERS: What the hell is a Shoggoth?

BOWERS: Sorry, wrong setting. My bad.

WILSON: This pile of dog food that I've got then. Do ponies eat Pedigree Chum?

SCOTT: Good grief. I suppose the ponies could forage or something. (Looks unconvinced). I trust you managed to get the cold winter clothing without any problems, Oates?

OATES: I was in the can, remember?



SCOTT: So, no winter clothes then?

OATES: Don't worry. I've maxed out on Endurance feats. Should be a piece of cake.

SCOTT: You realise not all of us have turned ourselves into human yetis, don't you?

*Oates shrugs and eats a chocolate biscuit from the table.*

EVANS: Great, I'm going to die thanks to a bunch of inbred idiots...

*Oates makes an offensive gesture at Evans, who doesn't see it. Bowers and Wilson do, giggle and pass round the biscuits.*

WILSON: Shame we can't take these with us. Damned good biccies, these.

*The others nod at this sage wisdom.*

## SCENE 2

*Scott, Wilson, Oates and Bowers are all huddled in their tent. All are shivering, except Oates. The ponies have long since starved to death.*

SCOTT: Evans will be gutted. He was due to level up.

BOWERS: No need to go home in a mood though. Miserable git.

*Oates nods, looking to see if any chocolate biscuits are left.*

WILSON: Bad luck failing that Climb check.

BOWERS: Look, it wasn't my fault. I thought *he* was supposed to bring the ropes.

SCOTT: Well, at least he died with his beloved rocks.

BOWERS: Technically it was the weight of those that meant I didn't have the Strength to haul him up.

OATES (*LIFTING TENT FLAP*): looks a bit grim out there at the moment.

SCOTT: Yes it does. And us down to our last can of vichyssoise soup.

WILSON: Hmm. We probably would be at the supply depot by now if the ponies hadn't all died.

BOWERS: One mistake and I get all the blame. Well, two if you count the rope thing. And I still say my rifle might have saved someone's life. If we had come across those rabid penguins. Or something.

OATES: Yes, quite. So how is the soup coming along?

SCOTT: A bit ropey. Haven't got any ranks in Profession (cook).

*Several minutes go by...*

WILSON: You can probably get your tongue off that can with an opposed Strength check.

*Scott and Bowers look sheepish.*

SCOTT: Can I use Dex? My Strength sucks.

OATES: Right, I'm going outside. I may be some time, since I'm going to walk to the south pole.

WILSON: In this weather?

OATES: Yes. I put my best stats into Strength and Constitution, and the feats I have mean that I can walk three hundred miles in this weather without rest. To be honest I think you lot are only slowing me down.

WILSON: Git.

OATES: Never mind. I'll send help, so you chaps will be all right. Tooodle-oo.

## SCENE 3

*Much later, Captain Oates is making steady progress across the barren polar plateau when he sees a form approaching him in the blizzard.*

OATES: Hello, company coming.

FIGURE IN THE BLIZZARD: Grrrrrr.

OATES: Crikey, a Shoggoth. What were the odds?

GM: Roll Initiative.

OATES: A-ha! Natural twenty. I ready my rifle.

BOWERS (*A DETACHED VOICE*): Technically that's my rifle, you thieving git!

OATES: Yeah, whatever. Masterworked, right? Look, another natural twenty! What were the odds?

GM: That's a threat, Oates. Roll to confirm.

*There is a collective groan on the wind as the Shoggoth keels over and hits the snow.*

OATES: That's some serious XP, if ever I've seen it...

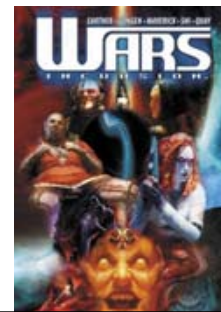
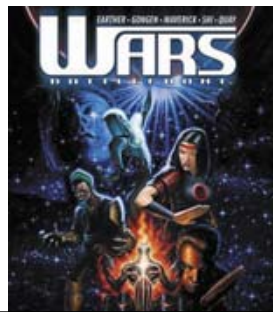


*Oates of the Antarctic*

# Monty's Offer of the Month

## Total WARS

On page 30 of this month's Signs and Portents you can find a long list of equipment for a spacefarer's every need in the world of WARS. In preparation, why not pick up the complete set of WARS books - the core rulebook, the rules supplement Battlefront, and the introductory adventure Incursion - at the ridiculously low price of \$50/£30 for the whole bundle? We won't even charge you for postage!



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SIGNS & PORTENTS MAY '07

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# AILMENTS AND CONTAGIONS

A selection of deleterious diseases both usual and un- for your d20-based enjoyment.

Contracting a mysterious illness can unsettle even the most battle-hardened of adventurers, presenting a problem that cannot be solved with a strong sword arm or a blast of magic. Not knowing the cause or cure of the sickness, or what lies in store, places a character in a very undesirable position. Of course, not all ailments turn out to be life threatening – some are just downright embarrassing. Included here are a few ideas for introducing either of these extremes into your d20 fantasy games.

Each ailment is presented with the following information, which differs slightly from the rules for diseases included in *Core Rulebook II*:

**Method of Infection:** This explains how a character might contract the disease.

**Onset DC:** This presents the Difficulty Class for resisting the initial contraction of the sickness. The Save is always based on a character's Fortitude.

**Incubation Period:** The time which must elapse between the initial infection and the onset of the first symptoms.

**Development:** The number before the slash indicates the amount of time that must pass before the character checks to see whether the symptoms continue (or in some cases worsen) or clear up. The number after the slash indicates the Fortitude Save DC for this check. As usual, two successful Fortitude saves in a row will indicate the disease has cleared up on its own.

**Effect:** A description of how each ailment will affect a character. Special rules for each condition will also be presented here, including, in some instances, a possible cure.

The Heal skill may still be used to aid recovery, using the rules presented in *Core Rulebook II*.

## Infuriating Infections

This first lot of ailments are intended as nothing more than humorous distractions that, whilst they might inconvenience a character, will cause no lasting harm.

### Barnacle Mouth

**Method of Infection:** Drinking contaminated water

**Onset DC:** 13

**Incubation Period:** 1 week

**Development:** 2 days/14

**Effect:** The character has contracted tiny mollusc-like parasites that live within the mouth, nestling against the inside of the cheeks and palate.

Although the parasites start off small, they quickly grow, eventually reaching 1 cm in diameter. Following the incubation period, during which time the character experiences a dry, itchy throat, his mouth seems to fill overnight with barnacles.

Obviously, this makes it difficult to speak, bestowing a –2 penalty on all skill checks where speech is required. This includes diplomacy, intimidation and so forth.

Bards and spell casters suffer especially from this ailment. Any spell with a verbal component has a 50% chance of failure so long as the character remains infected. Singing is almost impossible. Only through a supreme effort of will can a character overcome the discomfort (DC 20 Will Save) and hold a tune. This check must be made every round that the character attempts to sing; only by doing so can he use the magical abilities of bardic music.

Characters will most likely contract barnacle mouth by drinking from streams deep beneath the ground. Damp caves and labyrinthine tunnels provide the dark pools where these tiny parasites grow.

### Flatulent Grumblings

**Method of Infection:** Eating or drinking orcish food

**Onset DC:** 17

**Incubation Period:** 1 hour

**Development:** 1 day/15

**Effect:** The infected character feels as though his innards are on fire. As his body struggles to expel the infection, it emits a series of unpleasant gases. Every time it would be inconvenient for the character to do so (hiding, engaging in important diplomacy, and so forth), he must make a DC 12 Will check or violently release foul smelling gas. The smell is so potent that anyone within 10 ft. of the character must make a DC 10 Concentration check if they wish not to acknowledge the smell through a pained facial expression.

Flatulent Grumblings seems only to infect humans, elves, half-elves and halflings that try to eat questionable orc food.

### Scaly Flange

**Method of Infection:** Exposure to spores of the Wortberry plant

**Onset DC:** 15

**Incubation Period:** 1 day.

**Development:** 1 day/15

**Effect:** The character develops scaly grey skin along the inside of his thighs, making it very uncomfortable to walk. This reduces the character's Speed by 10 ft. In order to run, he must make a DC 12 Will Save each round to overcome the extreme discomfort involved.

The wortberry plant, also known as *nadgescratch*, thrives in marsh and swampland and may be encountered by any adventurers that find themselves in such an environment. The wortberry releases its spores when something brushes up against it or there is simply a strong gust of wind. A character that makes a DC 15 Survival check may identify a wortberry plant before he strays too close and avoid any risk of infection.

## Curious Contagions

These infections are rather more sinister and, although they will not result in a character's death, they will certainly make a lasting impression.

### Troll Rot

**Method of Infection:** Contamination of blood with troll blood

**Onset DC:** 16

**Incubation Period:** 1 day

**Development:** 1 week/16

**Effect:** As the invasive troll blood seeks to regenerate itself, the infected character's own blood is destroyed.



With the onset of the first symptoms, the character feels weak, suffering a -2 penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks.

If the infected character fails his first Development saving throw, it indicates that most of his blood has been replaced by the invading troll blood. His eyes take on a green hue, as do his nails and lips. He no longer feels ill however and so may ignore the previous penalty.

If the character fails a second Development saving throw, his body is permanently altered. He is now a hybrid creature with troll cells living alongside his own. The character gains Fast Healing 1. However, his Intelligence and Charisma are both permanently lowered by two points, and he will forever walk with a trollish stoop.

If the character makes either his first or second Development saving throw, his body has fought back against the troll blood and managed to destroy it. He recovers fully.

Certain trollish tribes have been known to intentionally inflict troll rot on prisoners that they intend to keep as slaves. Others, most notably adventurers, have been unfortunate enough to contract the infection whilst in combat with these foul beasts.

### The Slime Sweats

**Method of Infection:** Exposure to filth and squalor

**Onset DC:** 17

**Incubation Period:** 2 days

**Development:** 1 day/15

**Effect:** The character feels permanently hot and feverish. He perspires profusely, secreting a slick layer of slime that covers his entire body.

As a result of the excretions, which start following the incubation period, the character finds it difficult to hold on to anything, as his palms are permanently soaked in slime. Unless wearing gloves – which quickly become sodden – the character suffers a -2 penalty on all attack rolls and skill checks that involve manual dexterity or a firm grip. In addition, every time the character hits with a melee attack, he must make a DC 10 Reflex Save or drop his weapon. If using a two-handed weapon, the save DC drops to 8.

As the slime is secreted from every pore of the character's body, his clothes quickly become drenched, glistening faintly with slime. As a result, he suffers a -2 penalty on all Charisma based skills or checks with other non-reptilian or amphibian creatures.

The character also suffers a -5 penalty on all attempts to grapple an opponent. On the plus side, the character gains a +10 modifier on all Escape Artist checks.

There is no development of this disease. As soon as the character makes two of his Development saves, the disease ends.

The exact cause of the disease is unclear, but characters who find themselves exploring sewers, rooting through the seedier districts of a town or similar locations put themselves at risk.

The only known cure for The Slime Sweats is a poultice made with the pollen of fire lilies. These plants are

common on the elemental plane of fire but on the material plane can flourish only in places of exceptional heat such as lava flows.

## Deadly Diseases

Presented here are some of the most unpleasant sicknesses that characters are ever likely to encounter. News of their spread can instill fear, incite riots and lead to the abandonment of entire regions. These infections can also provide the impetus for a quest in which characters seek to locate a cure.

### Huskweed

**Method of Infection:** Proximity to overgrown graveyards and burial sites

**Onset DC:** 18

**Incubation Period:** 12 hours

**Development:** 1 day/22

**Effect:** Huskweed is plant-like parasite that can consume a host body with terrifying speed. After the short incubation period, during which time the infected character feels drowsy (-1 penalty on attack rolls and skill checks), the huskweed becomes visible as it begins to grow out from beneath the skin. By the end of the first day of infection, a multitude of tiny vines will have wormed their way around the victim's body. The development is most pronounced around the neck, where thick cables of grey vine emerge from the victim's shoulders, snaking upwards to disappear into his ears. Not surprisingly, the victim finds this process extremely painful (-6 penalty on all attack rolls and saving throws).

After the first day, the infected character should make his Development saving throw. If this is successful, his body manages to fight off the invading parasite. Without magical healing, he will be left permanently scarred (permanent reduction of Charisma by 1), but

over the next week the vines will wither and drop away. If the Development saving throw is unsuccessful, the character falls into a coma. Once the infection reaches this stage, only powerful magic can save him. Anyone attempting to use magic to cure huskweed must make a caster level check against DC 25, with a circumstance bonus equal to the level of the spell used.

Over the next day, the huskweed will devour a comatose from the inside out, leaving nothing more than a brittle shell, filled with new huskweed shoots and fragments of bone.

Huskweed may be contracted from ancient burial grounds, overgrown and long forgotten. The only known cure is also to be found there. The bones of one consumed by huskweed are changed in some way by the process. If ground into a fine paste and massaged into the skin of someone infected with the parasites, the vines will immediately begin to shrivel and die. The bones of one victim can be used to produce a treatment for one person. This paste must be applied before the victim falls into a coma in order for it to be effective.

### Plague of Wrath

**Method of Infection:**

Proximity to the scene of an especially bloody battle

**Onset DC:** 17

**Incubation Period:** None

**Development:** Special

**Effect:** Any character that lives in an infected region (see below) for a month or more must make the Onset saving throw, or be permanently infected. From that moment on, whenever

the character comes within 30 ft. of a sentient being, that being must make a DC 15 Will save. If successful, the being senses something deeply troubling about the infected character and will immediately try get away from him or physically drive him away. If the save is failed, the being is instantly possessed by an uncontrollable rage. He will lash out at everything around him, seeking to destroy; the more pointless the destruction, the more satisfaction the being takes from it. If there is nothing living to destroy, the being will attack property. Failing that, he will turn his anger against himself. The rage lasts until the carrier has moved on or until those affected are dead.

It is surmised by some that, so terrible is the plague of wrath, it must be a disease born in the depths of Hell. In truth, it is a curse formed by man's own inhumanity to man. Terrible scenes of bloodshed can leave a permanent stain on the landscape – a kind of hatred that seeps into those who come to live in the area. There is no known cure for one who carries the plague of wrath.



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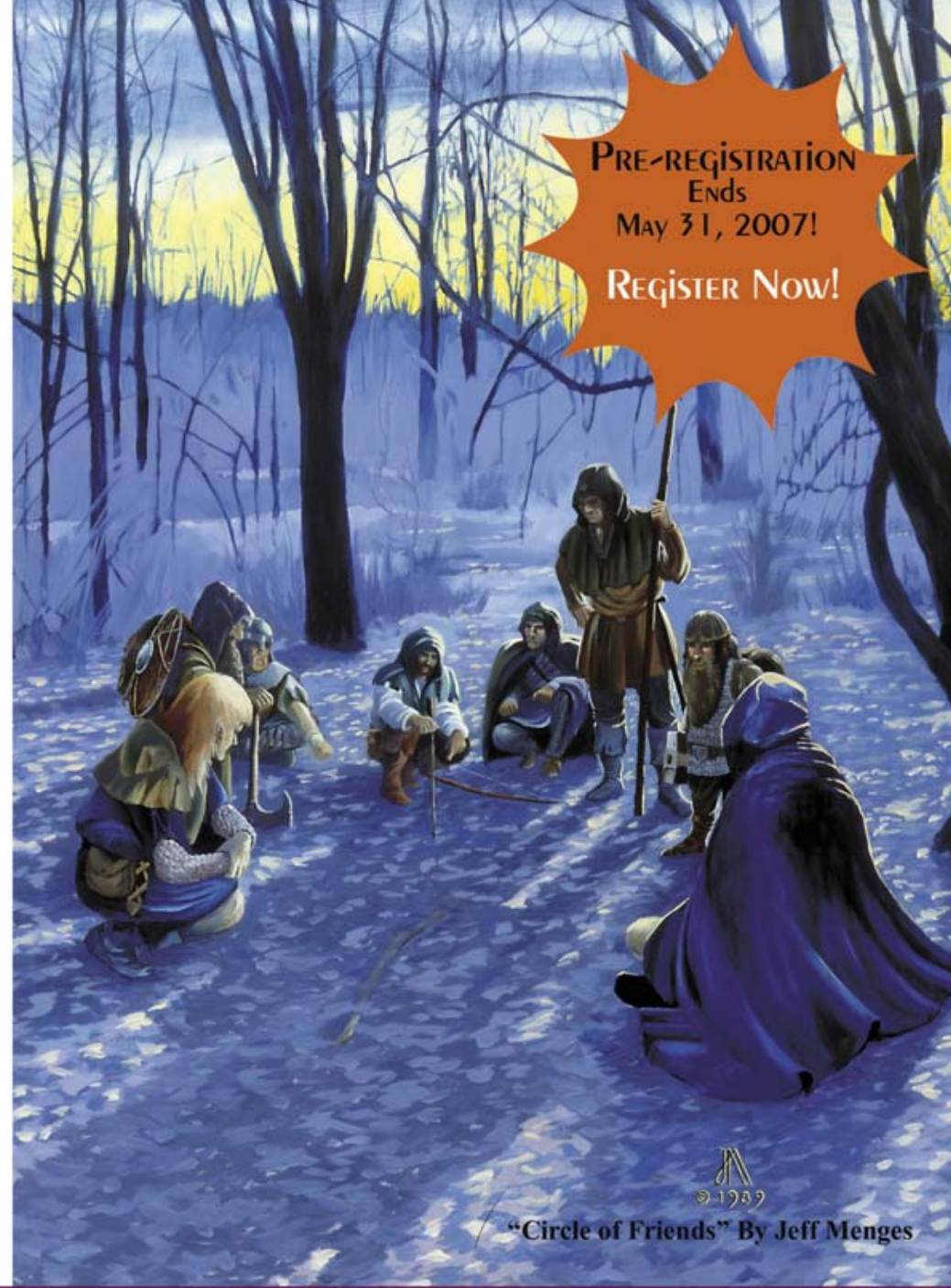
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# TIME TO PLAN!

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# WARS: Equipment

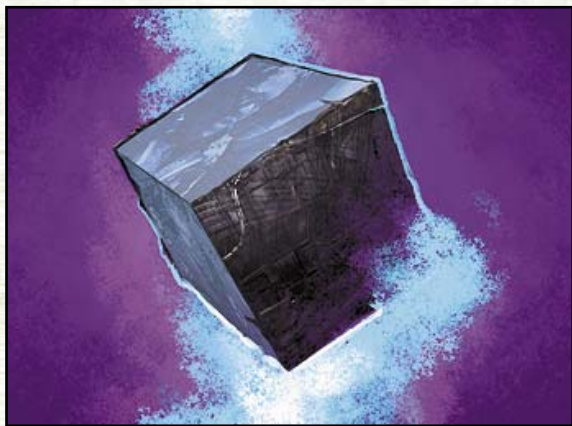
Part 6 of the unreleased supplement, *Soul and Steel*. Written by Greg Lynch

Guns and armour might keep a character alive in a firefight, but such items occupy only a small part of a well equipped character's inventory. After all, even the most battle-hardened veteran or Maverick raider spends about 99% of his time *not* fighting.

## General

This list expands on the list of general equipment in the *WARS Roleplaying Game* core rulebook, encompassing all the odds and ends a Player Character might need to survive (or at least make his life easier).

## Air Scrubber, Portable



The word 'portable' is a charitable adjective for this particular item. Weighing in at 9.5 kg, it is a cube

some 30 cm on a side. When it is needed, however, the weight and cumbersome size seem like a small price to pay. The portable air scrubber is able to recycle and purify air, making it breathable and safe. The volume of air it is able to scrub is limited, however, and a single air scrubber like this one can only maintain a breathable atmosphere of 40 cubic metres. Time is often an issue when this device is put into operation, and it is capable of recycling one cubic metre of air every round.

Of course, the more people using the atmosphere, the less air the scrubber can keep clean. For every individual breathing normally within the area, the Games Master should subtract one cubic metre from the total area the scrubber can maintain. Thus, with eight people breathing, the scrubber can only keep 32 cubic metres of air clean. Something of an energy hog, the portable air scrubber is best used when plugged into an existing power grid, though it can run for half an hour off of a Type IV utility power cell.

A popular accessory for the air scrubber is a portable compressor and nozzle adaptor, which allows the scrubber to be used to refill spent air tanks (like those of a spacesuit). This process takes five minutes for every hour of tank capacity, and the scrubber cannot be used to keep the air around it clean while it is refilling a tank. This accessory weighs 5.5 kg and costs 75 creds. Cost: 350 creds.

## Atmospheric Sampler

An atmospheric sampler is a small device about the size of a deck of cards. By exposing it to an atmosphere and pressing the activation button, the user can send the sampler into action. It will collect a small quantity of the air and begin analysing it, a process that takes about 30 seconds. The atmospheric sampler will determine the composition of the atmosphere and scan for any diseases, poisons or other contaminants, then display a summary of its findings on the screen on one side of the device, showing the user whether the air has enough oxygen to breathe and whether the atmosphere contains any dangerous compounds. The atmospheric sampler uses a Type I utility power cell. Cost: 200 creds.

## Battery Charging Unit, TW-3 'Thor' Powered Armour

This battery charging unit is specifically tailored to the unique needs of the Gibson Group's TW-3 'Thor' powered armour battery systems. The Thor armour's battery power supply is only useful for four hours of operation before the suit must be recharged, something that is only possible with this charging unit. It can be plugged in to any standard power outlet found in any of the three human factions, converting the electrical flow to match the precise needs of the Thor's battery. After four hours of operation, the Thor's battery must be plugged into this charging unit for a full 24 hours to fully power the suit. Note that the battery systems

Item	Cost	Weight
Air Scrubber, Portable	350 creds	9.5 kg
Atmospheric Sampler	200 creds	0.5 kg
Battery charging unit, TW-3 'Thor' powered armour	500 creds	15.5 kg
Bedroll *	35 creds	1.5 kg
Blanket *	15 creds	1 kg
Bolt cutters	35 creds	1 kg
Breather mask *	60 creds	0.5 kg
Camera	40 creds	0.5 kg
Camera, holographic	100 creds	1 kg
Camera, holographic video	450 creds	1.5 kg
Camera, micro	125 creds	0.1 kg
Carryall *	25 creds	0.5 kg
Chain, steel *	40 creds	1 kg
Climbing cable	200 creds	2 kg
Climbing gear	110 creds	1.5 kg
Communicator, throat mic, 4 km *	80 creds	—
Communicator wrist link, 40 km *	200 creds	—
Communicator, hand unit, 60 km *	250 creds	0.5 kg
Communicator, backpack, 500 km *	700 creds	2.5 kg
Communicator, vehicle mount, 4,000 km *	1,450 creds	35 kg
Crowbar *	10 creds	2 kg
Data disk *	5 creds	—

Item	Cost	Weight
Fire foam *	60 creds	0.5 kg
First aid kit *	80 creds	1 kg
Flashlight *	10 creds	0.5 kg
Geiger counter	40 creds	0.5 kg
Gongen Shinobi Stealth Suit	10,500 cr.	2.5 kg
Grappling hook *	35 creds	1 kg
Hammer *	10 creds	0.5 kg
Hand computer *	150 creds	2 kg
Handcuffs *	30 creds	0.5 kg
Homing device	200 creds	1 kg
Lock, electronic DC 10 *	90 creds	—
Lock, electronic DC 15 *	150 creds	—
Lock, electronic DC 20 *	425 creds	—
Lock, electronic DC 25 *	800 creds	—
Lock, electronic DC 30 *	1,250 creds	—
Lock, electronic DC 40 *	2,700 creds	—
Lock, mechanical DC 5 *	30 creds	0.5 kg
Lock, mechanical DC 10 *	50 creds	0.5 kg
Magnetic boots (pair)	110 creds	4 kg
Mining laser, portable	1,500 creds	24.5 kg
Molecular adhesive (one application)	65 creds	0.5 kg
Pain band	350 creds	0.5 kg
Paper (notebook)	3 creds	0.5 kg
Plastic ties (10)	25 creds	—
Quay tactical webbing	30 creds	2 kg
Ration pack (one day)	4 creds	1 kg
Rocket piton	10 creds	0.25 kg

Item	Cost	Weight
Rope, 30 metre *	70 creds	2 kg
SCUBA suit	100 creds	7.5 kg
Shack in a Box	3,000 creds	30 kg
Shroud *	10,000 cr.	1 kg
Silencer *	85 creds	0.5 kg
Spacesuit, Basic *	200 creds	10 kg
Spacesuit, Reinforced *	350 creds	20 kg
Suit Patching Kit	75 creds	1.5 kg
Surgery kit	200 creds	2.5 kg
Survival cocoon, Cog	200 creds	5 kg
Toolkit, advanced electronic *	500 creds	1.5 kg
Toolkit, advanced engineering *	100 creds	3 kg
Toolkit, advanced evidence	120 creds	3.5 kg
Toolkit, advanced mechanical *	300 creds	8 kg
Toolkit, electronic *	250 creds	1.5 kg
Toolkit, engineering *	50 creds	3 kg
Toolkit, evidence	60 creds	2 kg
Toolkit, mechanical *	150 creds	8 kg
Utility Power Cell, Type I	25 creds	0.05 kg
Utility Power Cell, Type II	50 creds	0.5 kg
Utility Power Cell, Type III	150 creds	1 kg
Utility Power Cell, Type IV	250 creds	2 kg
Utility Power Cell, Type V	300 creds	4 kg
Utility Power Cell Recharger	400 creds	5.5 kg
Welding Strips (10)	50 creds	1 kg
Welding Torch	75 creds	3 kg
Wristcomp *	300 creds	0.5 kg

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



of the Thor powered armour are integral to the suit and cannot be removed, eliminating the possibility of carrying multiple batteries and simply replacing them as needed. Cost: 500 creds.

### **Bolt Cutters**

Looking like something that would result from a mating of scissors and pliers, bolt cutters are designed to snip easily through the hasp of a padlock, the links of a chain or any similar piece of metal up to 2 cm thick. Using the bolt cutters requires a DC 10 Strength check and is a standard action. No office should be without a set! Cost: 35 creds.

### **Camera**

This simple camera is only capable of capturing still images in two dimensions. The images may be displayed on the small screen on the camera itself, or downloaded to virtually any viewing device (such as a wristcomp's holo screen). The camera can hold up to 300 such images. Basic cameras have a zoom feature, enabling 4X magnification, but more advanced (and more expensive) models can magnify up to 20X. Cost: 40 creds for a basic model.

### **Camera, Holographic**

An upgraded version of the simple camera, this device can capture still images in three dimensions, and may hold up to 100 such images. Many wristcomps feature a smaller version of the holographic camera, able to hold only 10 images. Cost: 100 creds.

### **Camera, Holographic Video**

While hardly the equal of professional holographic video cameras, which can cost tens of thousands of creds, this device performs remarkably well for its price. Instead of still images, the holographic video camera can capture and store up to 30 minutes of full-

motion holographic video and audio. It also has a zoom feature, enabling X4 magnification. It is powered by a Type II utility power cell. Cost: 450 creds.

### **Camera, Micro**

This is a tiny version of the simple camera, only a couple of centimetres in length and only able to hold 100 images. However, it is incredibly easy to conceal, granting a +6 bonus to Sleight of Hand skill checks to hide it. Cost: 125 creds.

### **Climbing Cable**

This device looks like an oversized pistol with a grappling hook stuck in its barrel – and essentially that is exactly what it is. When fired, the grapple launches from the pistol, trailing a thin cable behind it. The cable has a length of 40 metres and the grapple can anchor itself in any substance of Hardness 10 or less. With the press of a button, the cable begins to rewind, hauling the user toward the grapple at a speed of eight metres per round. The climbing cable has an effective weight limit of 300 kg. Cost: 150 creds.

### **Climbing Gear**

This is a set of ropes, carabiners and climbing harness used to scale cliffs and mountains. Using a set of climbing gear provides a +4 bonus to all Athletics skill check rolls for climbing. Cost: 110 creds.

### **Geiger Counter**

In space, in the Asian Waste, on an ancient space station, radiation is an invisible and deadly enemy. The Geiger counter is the cheapest and easiest way to determine whether it lies in wait. This device tests the area for radiation, displaying for its user the level of radiation and informing him of the approximate danger (as well as how long, if at all, it is safe to remain in the area). Cost: 40 creds

### **Gongen Shinobi Stealth Suit**

The Gongen Shinobi Stealth Suit is an attempt to mimic the shroud created by the Earther corporation Xe-Labs. Instead of warping light, however, it creates a technological chameleon effect, changing colours constantly to match its surroundings and providing the wearer with total technological concealment (see the *WARS Roleplaying Game* core rulebook). Instead of a cloak wrapped around the body, the stealth suit takes the form of a skintight body suit.

The one failing of the stealth suit is that, as advanced as it is, there are still some limits on its colour changing abilities. If the wearer is moving faster than normal human movement (12 metres per round), the suit cannot change its colours quickly enough to blend perfectly with the background. In such cases, the concealment rating provided by the stealth suit is decreased to heavy concealment (see the *WARS Roleplaying Game* core rulebook). Cost: 10,500 creds.

### **Homing Device**

Though they are rarely manufactured for sale to the general public, homing devices are in relatively common use by the three human factions. In fact, they are common enough that a large number of them do find their way to the markets of places like Ceres Station and Themis Station, where they can be acquired relatively easily.

A homing device is a small box, about the size of a deck of cards, designed to be easily hidden in or attached to the hull of a ship, the inside of a bot, even within a standard carryall. The homing device emits a powerful signal on a single radio frequency (set by the owner) at regular intervals. This signal has a range of up to two AU, and degrades at a constant rate. The

owner can use the signal to determine exactly how far away, and in which direction, the homing device is.

It is possible to create a homing device from scratch, a process that requires 100 creds and a Craft (electronic) skill check roll (DC 25). Cost: 200 creds.

## Magnetic Boots

There are many places in the Solar System where gravity is uncertain. From the bowels of Ceres Station to the deck of a wounded ship, a character may suddenly find himself floating helplessly in microgravity. Magnetic boots provide a cheap and reliable way to avoid this. Powered by a Type I Utility Power Cell in the heel of each, magnetic boots generate a localised magnetic field of weak strength, but enough to hold a character reliably in place.

The field generated by these boots is equal to Strength 4, meaning that a character wearing an active pair will have to succeed at a Strength ability check (DC 4) every round he wants to move. While this is no problem for most people, an active pair of magnetic boots will nonetheless limit the wearer to his base movement every round – so long as the boots are on and functioning, he cannot move faster than a walk. Obviously, the boots only work on a metal surface. If the character wearing them is trying to move around on an asteroid of rock and ice, he will find them of little use. The boots are turned on and off by a small switch in the cuff.

The base price for a pair of magnetic boots is 110 creds, but this is for a simple, bottom of the barrel pair. Like other forms of footwear, magnetic boots come in a multitude of styles, and someone can easily spend 2,000 creds or more on such a pair. Cost: 110 creds.

## Mining Laser, Portable

Most lasers in WARS are meant as weapons, able to unleash extremely brief bursts of hideously powerful energy. The portable mining laser is another matter entirely. It is designed to operate continuously over long periods of time, creating a beam with far less energy than a normal laser, but exceedingly useful in mining. A mining laser slowly disintegrates any matter of Hardness 10 or less it is focused on for an extended period of time. This version of the mining laser is able to cut a round tunnel one metre in diameter and one meter deep into stone for every five minutes it remains focused.

Obviously such an item is of little use on the battlefield, as an enemy can certainly move before the slow molecular excitement created by the mining laser does any real damage. However, these items have been put to use before as a torture and interrogation instrument. If a living being (or a bot) is held fast and the mining laser is focused on him, it will begin to dissolve him as efficiently as it does stone. The subject of the beam suffers no damage the first full round of exposure. On the next, he suffers one hit point of fire damage. On the next, he suffers two hit points, then four, then eight and so on, doubling every round.

This is the smallest mining laser commonly produced, and the only one small and light enough to be carried. It is usually plugged into an existing power grid, but can operate continuously for four hours on a Type V utility power cell. Cost: 1,500 creds.

## Molecular Adhesive

Molecular adhesive is basically a form of extremely powerful glue. It adheres almost instantly to any solid object it is placed on, and creates an almost unbreakable bond between two objects. Breaking the

bond formed by molecular adhesive requires a DC 35 Strength ability check or use of the adhesive solvent, usually sold separately. The solvent takes five minutes to dissolve the bond formed by molecular adhesive. Cost: 65 creds for the adhesive or the solvent.

## Pain Band

The pain band has been around for almost 200 years in various incarnations, used primarily as a torture device by governments and gangs who were not terribly squeamish about how they extracted information from a captive. It is only in short time since the appearance of kizen powers that the pain band's dubious beneficial properties have been realised.

No corporation mass produces these items – instead, they are created individually, but each one is very similar to any other. A pain band is basically a headband about two centimetres wide and one millimetre thick. It has a small slot on the back side that holds a Type I Utility Power Cell. Dozens of tiny filaments stud the inner side of the pain band, which penetrate the scalp of the wearer and establish contact with his nerves. When activated, a pain band causes the wearer excruciating pain without any real physical damage. The intensity of the pain is such that the wearer suffers a –4 penalty on all attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks and ability checks, and cannot activate kizen powers at all.

As deleterious as this effect can be, however, it does have a silver lining. The agony created by the pain band is so great that it is incredibly difficult for any kizen to actively manipulate the mind of a person wearing one. Any kizen attempting to contact the mind of a character wearing a pain band (with the Mind Control or Telepathy kizen trees, for example), must succeed at a Will saving throw (DC 25) for every round he tries to remain in contact with the wearer's

mind. For many people throughout the Solar System, the pain band is the only defence they have available against such insidious kizen powers. Cost: 350 creds.

### **Paper, Notepad**

Despite the usefulness and ubiquity of items like the wristcomp, sometimes there truly is no substitute for the simplicity of a pad of paper for dashing off a quick note or scribbling a crude map. The basic notepad measures 10 cm by 15 cm and has 100 sheets. Pencils are commonly available for 1 cred per 10, while pens usually cost 2 creds each – though some may run much higher. Cost: 3 creds

### **Plastic Ties**

These are essentially single-use handcuffs, a thick cable of plastic looped around the wrists and drawn closed. They have Hardness 1, 5 hit points and a break DC of 25. They can only be removed by cutting them off (Escape Artist and Technical skill checks fail automatically). Cost: 25 creds for 10 ties.

### **Quay Tactical Webbing**

Tactical webbing is essentially a widely woven mesh of sticky fibre the Quay wears over his torso like a shirt. The webbing is sticky enough (with an organically-derived compound) that it can hold small objects of up to two kilograms without any chance of them falling off. For extremely small items, the tactical webbing usually has several small pouches stuck to it, which the Quay can use to hold such things. Any item heavier than two kilograms must be stored elsewhere. The Quay tactical webbing can be modified to fit a human torso with a Repair skill check roll (DC 15). Cost: 30 creds.

### **Ration Pack**

One of the harsh realities of a life spent travelling about the Solar System is that the food simply is not very good. The ration pack, however, goes beyond the ‘not very good’ into the ‘absolutely awful’. A bar of densely-packed protein, vitamins and calories, the ration pack has been unfavourably compared to everything from cardboard to sewage, despite optimistic and wholly baseless labels such as ‘roast beef’ and ‘vegetable soup’ adorning the wrapper. Its foul taste aside, a single ration pack contains enough nutrition in half a kilogram to sustain an adult human for a day, and seemingly stays ‘good’ forever. Cost: 4 creds.

### **Rocket Piton**

Originally created as a technologically advanced version of the basic piton – a spike driven into rock by climbers – the rocket piton has found uses throughout the Solar System. It is a metal spike about 10 cm long with a wide eye at one end, through which a rope or cable can be tied. On top of the eye is a small button. By holding the rocket piton against a hard surface and pressing the button, the piton fires itself into the surface and anchors itself. A rocket piton can be used on any substance with a Hardness of 15 or less. Embedded in stone, a rocket piton is capable of supporting as much as 350 kg.

Once embedded, a rocket piton can be easily removed by holding the top button down for five seconds. This will cause the spike to loosen itself, allowing it to be pulled out. However, the rocket piton is a one-use item; it will not fire a second time.

A rocket piton makes a poor weapon (if used as such, it should be considered Exotic), but is sometimes used as such in a pinch. A successful attack with the rocket

piton (assuming it is deployed on impact) is 1d4+2 impact damage. If it has been deployed, the damage is only 1d3. Cost: 10 creds.

### **SCUBA Suit**

This suit is the very latest development in Self Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus. With a SCUBA Suit and a successful Athletics skill check roll (DC 15), a human can safely descend as much as 30 metres beneath the surface (in Earth-standard gravity). For every 20 metres beyond that mark, the DC of the Athletics skill check increases by five. Even the most skilled divers, however, cannot descend much past 100 metres, as the pressure of the water past that point is simply too much for the human body to bear. Obviously, tolerable depths vary depending upon the gravity of the area. A standard SCUBA Suit includes a one hour air supply. Cost: 200 creds

### **Shack in a Box**

On the barren and frozen planets, moons and asteroids that make up the vast majority of the ‘land’ in Maverick space, the environment can be deadlier than any enemy. The intense cold would be almost instantly lethal to an exposed human, but considering the poisonous or altogether absent atmospheres on most of these places, even the cold is likely to be a secondary concern. Becoming marooned on some unnamed asteroid, or on an uninhabited moon, is one of the great fears of all spacefarers.

The shack in a box is designed to let people survive that worst-case scenario. Created by a Cog inventor named P.T. ‘Slam’ Vale about 30 years ago, the shack in a box has undergone a number of refinements over the years, and is popular enough among the Mavericks that it is built and used by almost every gang in the Belt and the Rim.

The shack in a box is a cube about 75 cm on a side. Heavy and unwieldy, it nonetheless is considered essential equipment by anyone whose business takes them far from such 'civilised' areas as Ceres Station, Europa and Titan.

When the shack in a box is deployed, it rapidly expands into a full-size shelter, a cube three metres on each side, a process that takes only one round. Each of the four corners of the shack that are flush with the ground have a steel tab on them, equipped with a rocket piton that can be fired into rock to keep the shack anchored in place.

Inside, the shack in a box is austere. It contains a small air scrubber, a heater, a rudimentary low gravity toilet and an emergency beacon detectable up to 20,000 km away. With its included power supply, the shack in a box can function for as much as ten days – though the power supply can be replaced with standard Type V Utility Power Cells, effectively allowing it to run forever (at a cost of one such cell per ten days). The walls of the shack are thin but effective insulation, enabling the shack's heater to keep the shack at human-tolerable temperatures even when the outside temperature falls as far as -250°C. The sturdy construction of the shack can stand up to winds of up to 300 kph, and the walls have a hardness of 10 and 15 hit points. Cost: 3,000 creds.

### Suit Patching Kit

For anyone with the tremendous ill fortune to find himself in regular battles while relying on a sealed suit of armour to protect him from a hostile environment, this small kit is indispensable. Such kits are manufactured by Earther, Gongen and Mavericks alike, and though there are some cosmetic differences, the actual result of the items is essentially identical.

A suit patching kit is a small pouch containing 10 flexible polymer patches, each with an adhesive side. These patches can be used as a stopgap measure to reseal a suit of armour or spacesuit that has been breached. A single patch is enough to reseal any breach up to Medium size, while two patches together are enough to reseal a Large breach. No amount of patches can reseal a Huge breach. Although multiple breaches are counted together as one single breach of larger size to determine the length of time it takes for the suit to lose all environmental containment, when utilising a suit patching kit every breach must be patched individually. Thus, while three Tiny breaches equal one Medium breach for loss of suit containment, they will require three separate patches to restore the integrity of the seal.

These patches have a phenomenally strong adhesive that bonds instantly to any solid substance, requiring a DC 25 Strength check to pull loose. However, they are not particularly sturdy, and have only a hardness of one and a single hit point. The bond created by a patch lasts for one hour, before the adhesive decays too much to maintain the bond. Cost: 75 creds.

### Surgery Kit

While certainly no substitute for a proper hospital, the surgery kit offers a surgeon everything he needs to perform surgery in an emergency. Using this kit



properly requires that the character have the Surgery feat (see the WARS Roleplaying Game core rulebook). So long as the character has both the feat and this kit, he may use his Treat Injury skill to perform surgery without penalty. Cost: 200 creds.

### Survival Cocoon, Cog

First created some 50 years ago, the Cog survival cocoon is one of the few pieces of Maverick equipment that is manufactured in large quantities. The reason for this is its simple utility, and the fact that for Mavericks, it is all too often useful.

The Cog survival cocoon is the last resort of someone who has been blown out into space by explosive decompression, or any other means. It is designed to allow a human to survive in space for as long as 12 hours.

In its undeployed form, the Cog survival cocoon is an oblong package about 20 cm long and 10 cm wide. When deployed, it immediately unfolds to its full dimensions of two metres long and one metre wide. The cocoon contains a small air scrubber, small heating element, a simple homing beacon detectable up to 10,000 km away and a power supply, and it has an airtight seal. The reflective material of its outer shell confers radiation resistance 6 upon the occupant, enough to withstand the cosmic radiation of space. Deploying, entering and resealing the cocoon is a process that requires two full round actions, during which time the user will be exposed to the full dangers of being in space (see the WARS Roleplaying Game core rulebook).

The cocoon's power supply has a life of 12 hours, after which the air scrubber, heating element and homing beacon will cease functioning, though obviously the radiation shielding provided by the construction will

continue working normally. There are no supplies of food or water included in the cocoon, which is just as well, as the cocoon also lacks any means of dealing with the waste resulting from the consumption of these things. Cost: 200 creds.

## Toolkit, Evidence

An evidence toolkit includes clean containers, labels, gloves, tweezers and swabs to gather physical evidence, as well as an array of chemical-testing equipment. This toolkit is required for an Investigate (collect evidence) skill check. Cost: 60 creds.

## Utility Power Cell, Type I – Type V

Most devices in common use throughout the Solar System require power of one kind or another to function. Often, these devices can be plugged into an existing power grid, but others, which may be as small as a wristcomp or as large as a mining laser, require a more portable source of power. Whereas energy cells are most often used in weapons and are able to deliver enormous jolts of energy, a utility power cell is designed to supply a steady stream of power. The duration of a utility power cell's useful charge varies depending upon the item.

- **Type I Utility Power Cell:** The smallest of these items, these tiny cells are used to power small devices like hand computers and wristcomps, both of which can run for a month or more on a single cell. Cost: 25 creds.
- **Type II Utility Power Cell:** This power cell is used in items as various as a holographic video camera or a stun stick. Cost: 50 creds.
- **Type III Utility Power Cell:** An all-purpose 'medium' grade power cell, this powers such things as the General Robots CT4 'Extermination' Bot. Cost: 150 creds.

- **Type IV Utility Power Cell:** Weighing in at 2 kg, this power cell is commonly used for machinery with a high power consumption, such as the portable air scrubber. Cost: 250 creds.
- **Type V Utility Power Cell:** The largest of the utility power cell, this is reserved for those objects that require an extremely large amount of power, like the mining laser or the shack in a box. Cost: 300 creds.

## Utility Power Cell Recharger

This device is designed to plug into an existing power grid and recharge a utility power cell. It features an adjustable chamber that can house any size utility power cell (unlike energy cells, utility power cells are not designed to be plugged directly into a power grid). It takes five minutes per 'type' of utility power cell for this unit to fully recharge it. For example, a Type I cell can be recharged in five minutes, while it takes 20 minutes for a Type IV and 25 minutes for a Type V. Cost: 400 creds.

## Welding Strip

A welding strip is the kind of item most people hope they never need, as its original intention was for it to be used as last-ditch method of sealing a hatchway on a ship or space station during an explosive decompression or enemy attack.

A welding strip is about 1 cm thick, 5 cm wide and 30 cm long, and is as flexible as a piece of cloth. On either side of the welding strip is a thin piece of film, both of which must be peeled off (a move-equivalent action) for the strip to be used. The removal of the film starts a chemical process in the strip itself, as well as revealing the molecular adhesive coating on either side.

As soon as the pieces of film are removed, the welding strip begins to get very hot very quickly. On the first round of exposure, it is merely uncomfortably warm. On the second, it is hot enough to melt most plastics and on the third is hot enough to melt steel. It maintains that heat for one more round before burning out and completely consuming itself. If the welding strip is placed between two pieces of steel (for example, between a hatchway door and the jamb), it will fuse them together by the end of the third round, making it impossible to open the hatchway without inhuman strength or a welding torch (see below).

Though welding strips were initially created for safety reasons, many scoundrels and thieves have adopted them as a means of cutting off pursuit. Note that welding strips merely generate heat; they do not combust, making them useful in any kind of atmosphere (or lack thereof). However, in a volatile atmosphere (containing large quantities of oxygen and methane, for example) the Games Master may wish to assign the welding strip a chance of igniting the atmosphere. Cost: 50 creds for 10 strips.

## Welding Torch

A welding torch is designed to heat two pieces of metal to the point they fuse together, but in fact is used as often as a cutting torch – heating a piece of metal until it is cut in two. A welding torch is capable of generating intense heat, and is able to cut through metal as hard as (or even harder than) steel in only minutes. A welding torch is useless against stone.

A welding torch has multiple settings on it for different degrees of heat, adjusted depending upon the needs of the user. Someone using a welding torch in a constructive capacity, such as repairing a damaged ship, will likely have use for all of these settings.

Someone who is merely using the torch to join or separate metal as quickly as possible will have little need for any but the highest.

The welding torch works by liquefying metal, removing its hardness incrementally (based on the torch's setting). At its lowest setting, the welding torch softens metal by one hardness point each round it remains in continuous contact, though the torch is not hot enough to remove more than five hardness points. At its highest setting, the torch removes five hardness points each round it remains in contact, up to a total of 25 hardness points. Once the hardness of the metal has been completely removed, it can be welded together or cut apart. A welding torch can cut through as much as five centimetres of metal this way.

If used as a weapon, the welding torch is treated as an Exotic melee weapon. On its highest setting, it inflicts 1d8 fire damage with a successful attack. A welding torch at its highest setting can operate for 10 minutes on a canister of fuel. Additional canisters are available for 10 creds each. Cost: 75 creds.

## Weapon Accessories

There is more to a weapon than a trigger and a bullet. The equipment listed below is designed to make weapons deadlier, or at least easier to carry.

### Cogwerks 'Bullseye'

A relatively simple but extremely useful device, the Cogwerks 'Bullseye' is a small fisheye lens camera designed to be mounted to a gun barrel. The image the camera sees is transmitted to a receiver implanted in either a pair of sunglasses (a popular but wholly useless item among the Mavericks) or, for an additional 50 creds, in a cybernetic eye. The Bullseye allows the user to look around corners without exposing himself

to fire, though the curvature of the lens makes the Bullseye a poor substitute for direct vision, inflicting a -4 penalty on all Perception (spot) checks made while using it. The Bullseye may be used with a laser sight (see below), but not with a scope. Cost: 115 creds.

### Detonator

Most explosives require a detonator to explode. At its core, a detonator is simply an electrically activated ignitor and a device that delivers the electrical charge. Connecting a detonator to an explosive is a fairly easy, though dangerous procedure that requires a Demolitions skill check (DC 15). Failure means the detonator was not connected properly, and the explosive will not explode. Failure by 10 or more indicates the explosive goes off when the detonator is attached, except for Shi detonators, which have no such chance of catastrophe.

#### Detonator, Blasting Cap

This is a simple detonator that can be wired into any electrical device, causing the explosive to go off when the device is switched on. Commonly used by assassins to lay a trap, the detonator could be wired into anything from an electrical door lock to a light switch with a Demolitions skill check (DC 10). Cost: 25 creds.

#### Detonator, Radio

Essentially a modified version of the basic throat mic and a simple transmitter, the radio detonator activates the explosive when the on/off switch on the transmitter is toggled. Cost: 100 creds.

#### Detonator, Timed

This is a small chronograph attached to a blasting cap. It can be set to go off at a particular time, usually anywhere between one second and one month. Cost: 50 creds.

Item	Cost	Weight
Cogwerks 'Bullseye'	115 creds	0.25 kg
Detonator, Blasting Cap	25 creds	0.25 kg
Detonator, Radio	100 creds	0.25 kg
Detonator, Timed	50 creds	0.5 kg
Detonator, Wired	20 creds	1 kg
Detonator, Shi	250 creds	0.25 kg
Earther energy cell	950 creds	1 kg
Gongen energy cell	950 creds	1 kg
Quay energy cell	950 creds	2 kg
Shi energy cell	950 creds	0.5 kg
Holster, Concealed	20 creds	0.5 kg
Holster, Hip	15 creds	0.5 kg
Laser sight	30 creds	0.5 kg
Laser sight, invisible	100 creds	0.5 kg
Magazine, Firearm	10 creds	0.25 kg
Magazine, Heavy weapon	20 creds	1 kg
Omnimount	400 creds	10 kg
Omnimount, universal	600 creds	12.5 kg
Rifle Sling	25 creds	1 kg
Scope *	150 creds	0.5 kg
Scope, thermographic *	500 creds	0.5 kg

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

### **Detonator, Wired**

The very simplest of detonators, this is simply a blasting cap attached to a spool of wire, with a simple toggle switch at the other end. When the toggle switch is thrown, the explosive goes off. These detonators usually come with 30 metres of wire, but more wire can be added on with a Demolitions skill check (DC 10). Cost: 20 creds plus 10 creds for each additional 30 metres of wire.

### **Detonator, Shi**

A Shi detonator works telepathically, requiring either a Shi or a kizen with the *send thoughts* ability to activate it. It may be telepathically activated (so long as it is within range), or it may be instructed to activate at a particular time or in case of a particular event (such as someone walking into the room). Cost: 250 creds.

### **Energy Cells**

Earthers, Gongen, Quay and Shi each produce their own energy cells for use in the energy weapons of that particular faction, and they do not fit into the weapons of any other faction. Mavericks do not produce their own version of the energy cell, preferring to use and copy captured technology. Almost all energy weapons require a energy cell, though some of the less powerful ones (primarily those that do not need to draw huge amounts of focused energy) may use a utility power cell instead. This will be noted in the individual weapon's description.

### **Holster, Concealed**

This is a holster designed to stay out of sight. Usually slung beneath the armpit, a concealed holster may also be in the waistband of a pair of pants or even strapped around a character's ankle. It can only accommodate

weapons of size Small or smaller. A concealed holster grants the user a +4 bonus to his Sleight of Hand skill check to hide the weapon.

### **Holster, Hip**

Common among military and police forces, as well as swaggering Mavericks, the hip holster carries a pistol on either the left or right hip of the wearer. Cost: 10 creds.

### **Laser Sight**

A laser sight is attached to the barrel of a gun. When activated, it projects a tiny red dot onto the target at the precise point where a bullet fired from the gun will strike. A laser sight grants the wielder of the gun a +1 bonus to attack rolls made against targets within 10 metres. It may be used with a scope or a Bullseye. Cost: 30 creds.

### **Laser Sight, Invisible**

Based on the same principles as the laser sight, this sight projects a dot onto the target that is invisible unless viewed with infrared vision. This is a favoured tool of assassins, and grants the wielder of the weapon a +1 bonus to attack rolls against targets within 20 metres. It may be used in conjunction with a thermographic scope. Cost: 100 creds.

### **Magazine, Firearm**

Most slugthrower weapons store their ammunition in magazines, usually carried in the stock or grip of the weapon. This is simply an extra magazine, which the character can fill with bullets for easy reloading in the heat of battle. Of course, the exact specifications and dimensions of a magazine are unique to each weapon, but they are sufficiently simple items that an empty magazine for a given weapon will cost roughly the

same as an empty magazine for another weapon. Any magazine for a slugthrower listed on the Firearm table (see Signs and Portents Roleplayer #40) falls under this heading. Cost: 10 creds

### **Magazine, Heavy Weapon**

This is an additional magazine for any of the slugthrower heavy weapons (see Signs and Portents Roleplayer #41). Cost: 20 creds.

### **Omnimount**

This is the same item that comes attached to the TMW 'Bulldog' Light Assault Vehicle (see a future issue of Signs and Portents: Roleplayer), and must be mounted to a vehicle or structure (Repair skill check DC 15) to be of any use. An omnimount-secured weapon may be fired without the Vehicle Mounted Weapon Proficiency feat without incurring an attack penalty (the gunner must still have the Heavy Weapons Proficiency feat). Cost: 400 creds.

### **Omnimount, Universal**

The phrase 'universal omnimount' might seem redundant, but in fact it is merely hyperbole. The universal omnimount can mount Gongen-made heavy weapons in addition to Earther-made weapons. Quay and Shi weapons are too dissimilar to be mounted using this item without serious customisation. Cost: 600 creds.

### **Rifle Sling**

This item is an adjustable-sized tube of synthetic leather or cloth. It is attached to a long strap, and is carried on the wearer's back. The tube is designed to accommodate a long weapon of size Medium or Large, such as a rifle or shotgun. Cost: 25 creds.

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# Deadwood

## Gem of the Black Hills

Characters from the most famous town in the Old West, and adventure hooks for your OGL Wild West games. By Semaj Nosnibor.

The superb television series Deadwood brought to life many of the harsh realities of the old west and offers a vivid setting for players of the OGL Wild West game. Critically acclaimed, the show ran for three series and focused on events and people in and around the historic gold boom town of Deadwood. Life in Deadwood was certainly grim – in its early history there was an average of about one murder a day – and a considerable portion of the population fell to foul play.

The idea of using the characters that appeared in the show is very tempting, for the show comes with a wide array of heroes and villains, most of which were based upon real historical figures. The plotting Al Swearengen, owner of the Gem Saloon, Sherriff Seth Bullock and his family, Sol Star, E. B. Farnham... the list goes on. But how do these fictionalised characters measure up to their historical counterparts?

By using the historical, rather than the now more familiar fictional, characters the Gamesmaster can make their games more interesting and unpredictable, especially for those players who have seen the show

themselves. Some of Deadwood's characters from the show never existed, others are completely different and there were figures just as colourful who never made it onto the screen. Below are just a few of the major (and not so major) figures of that town around which a campaign could be based.

### Al Swearengen


There is no doubt that the Al Swearengen was a ruthless pimp and an extremely unpleasant man. The historical Al may well have been an even nastier character than that portrayed by the excellent Ian McShane. The real Al was an American (not English) born in Iowa. Married and divorced three times as a direct result of his violence towards his wives. Originally the owner of the Cricket Saloon, he built and ran the first Gem Saloon until 1879, the date of the great fire of Deadwood which destroyed the Gem, and much of the rest of the town.

Whatever else may be said about Al it is true that he knew when he was on to a good thing, and he rebuilt the Gem as a grander place of entertainment. Although the day-to-

day 'entertainment' offered by Al was liquor and prostitutes, Al was a canny businessman who ran various events to keep the customers returning for more. 'Prize' fights (more notable as there were no prizes for the winners of these bare knuckle brawls), actors, dancers and singers – all were attractions at different times. On one occasion Al ran a costumed ball where he provided all the costumes due to the lack of his clientele having anything suitable to wear.

There is no doubt that Al was also a violent man. As a pimp he would have been ruthless, forcing desperate young women into prostitution - he certainly would not have been any gentler to them than he was to any of his battered wives. He was once charged with assault and there is little doubt that as a saloon owner he would have had more than his fair share of scuffles.

His employed thugs, most notably Dan Doherty and Johny Burns, were also nasty and violent men, even by the standards of the day. His younger brother Winfield also came to Deadwood in 1878, although little is



known about him. He could make a new and interesting ally (or enemy) for Al.

With his henchmen Al was a very successful businessman in Deadwood, and despite the efforts of Seth Bullock and others in the town, managed to run his saloon very successfully until 1899, when the Gem burned down once again. This really was the last straw for Al, and he left Deadwood for pastures new. Unfortunately these pastures were a rapid descent into alcoholism and destitution, and he died trying to hitch a ride on a train several years later.

### Adventure Hooks:

**Robbery:** The Gem could take in between \$5000 and \$10000 per night (up to \$170000 equivalent today). As such the place could draw all kinds of undesirables to rob it. These could be the player characters, eager to make a quick payday, although the robbers would have to face Al, Dan and numerous other employees, as well as many irate customers. An alternative is that Al would offer a reward for the capture of anyone who robbed him, with the posse not only getting to keep the recovered money but also getting a month's free 'entertainment' at the Gem as well! Of course Al would want to see proof that the culprits had been caught, although he definitely would not want to see them brought to trial (dead thieves are a great disincentive to other thieves!)

**Entertainment:** Al often brought in entertainers into Deadwood to add variety for his customers. He employed an agent to

do this, but perhaps the agent has disappeared (in real life the problems with communication meant that Al often had to wait for long periods of time before news of newly hired acts reached him from his agent). Al might want the players to go out and find new acts for him instead (perhaps some 'Indian savages from the reservation to do their dancing and the like') or maybe he wants his employee tracked down and whatever the problem is resolved.

### Dan Doherty

Dan acted as Al's general manager for several years at The Gem, and, along with Johny Burns, had a reputation for being brutal towards the working girls (a trait common to pimps and panderers). He eventually fell out with Al and set up his own saloon with one Johnny Cooley.

This establishment was in direct competition with the Gem and moved location several times, and eventually the partnership with Cooley ended sometime after the great Deadwood fire of 1879. He married in Deadwood and later left, opening new saloons in new boom towns. Whilst travelling from Deadwood to join her husband Mrs. Doherty was once robbed and thrown into a river by road agents. Considering the brutality of many of these outlaws she could count herself lucky that was all that happened.

### Adventure Hooks:

**Find the Lady:** One of the girls wants out and has run off. Either the characters will have

to help defend the terrified young lady from Dan and any hired thugs he has in tow, or else be hired to track her down and bring her back to the Gem by Dan and Johny before Al finds out on his return to town.

**Falling Out:** With the split between Dan and Al violence and bad blood could ensue. Perhaps one of the relocations of Dan's new saloon business was due to agents of his rival burning down the place...

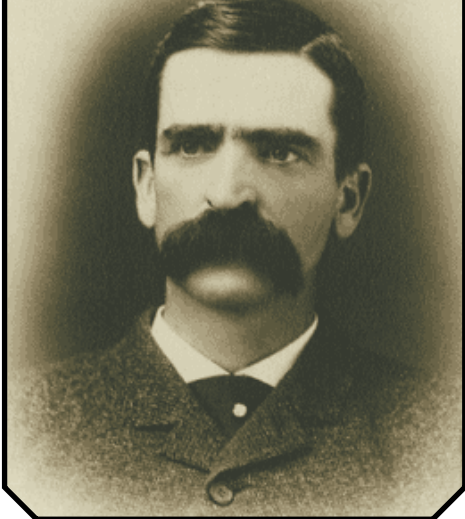
**Robbing the Lady:** Furious with the drenching of his wife Dan hires the characters for some straightforward revenge. A severe beating of Al's latest hired thugs would be the minimum he would want as revenge.

### Seth and Martha Bullock

Few characters in Deadwood had as colourful a life as Seth Bullock, the town's second sheriff. Raised by his army father he left home at an early age, but did take with him a firm morality and ideals about right and wrong.

As a lawman, Seth had a harsh reputation, but his reputation was such that he rarely had to kill anyone. The one exception, prior to his Deadwood days, was when he hanged a horse thief by the name of Clell Watson, ensuring that the approaching lynch mob did not get to the condemned man. Although this may seem like cold comfort, avoiding the long drawn out killings often inflicted by such vigilantes would certainly have appealed for poor Clell!

*Seth Bullock*



Seth moved to the town of Deadwood and opened a successful hardware store with his business partner Sol Star, believing that the boom town had greater potential than the location of their existing store at that time. The business was successful but the lawlessness of the town and murder of Wild Bill Hickok led to Isaac Brown becoming the town's first sheriff. It is highly unlikely that Seth and Hickok even met given that he had only just arrived in the town when Hickok was killed. Barely two weeks later Sheriff Brown had also been killed along with Reverend Smith and two other men and Con Stapleton then became town marshal.

Seth became county sheriff in early 1877, but was never the town's marshal. Legend has it one of his earliest encounters was with Wyatt

Earp, who had come looking to see if Seth's job was available, upon being told quite clearly it was not Earp returned to Dodge City.

With the town soon reaching a state of comparative calm Seth brought his wife Martha, his childhood sweetheart, and daughter to town and proceeded to raise his family (they later had a second daughter and a son). It is extremely doubtful that he ever committed adultery as it does go against the historical character of the man and certainly not with a totally fictional woman as happens in the show.

His business interests with Star blossomed and spread to several nearby towns, with interests in a ranch, mill, mining and other stores. He was instrumental in bringing the railroad to the region by providing free land and built Deadwood's first luxury hotel after the original hardware store burnt down in 1894 (fire in the old west was a real hazard, although it does appear that Deadwood was especially unfortunate!). The 64-room luxury hotel still stands today and doubles as a casino.

He also formed a close relationship and friendship with another lawman who would eventually become president: Theodore Roosevelt. Bullock was a captain in Roosevelt's Rough Riders during the Spanish-American War, although he never saw combat. Seth eventually died in 1919 and is buried in the same cemetery as Hickok and Calamity Jane, facing Mount Roosevelt, which he had successfully campaigned to be renamed in his friend's honour.

### **Adventure Hooks:**

**On the Ranch:** Bullock, because of his business interests, can provide characters with a variety of jobs. His ranch would always be on the lookout for good ranch hands and the player characters may well fit the bill, especially if there happened to be trouble with rustlers at the time...

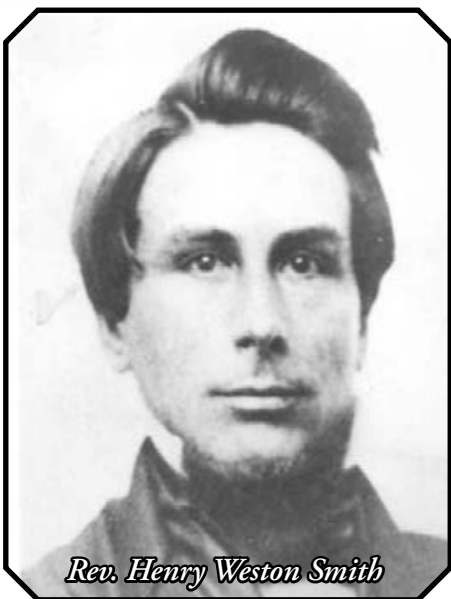
**Deputy:** Bullock deputised a number of citizens of Deadwood to act as deputies at various points. Bullock will need to leave town on occasion and leave law and order in some capable hands. Of course the time he is away would be the time a group of road agents decide to try their luck at the local bank...

### **Henry Weston Smith**

The Reverend Smith was a Methodist preacher, the first of any denomination in Deadwood. A man of unshakeable faith, this was to lead to his downfall.

He arrived in Deadwood in the company of a Captain C. V. Garner, who allowed him to travel with his wagon as they were of the same faith, and became a street preacher, doing odd jobs to support himself.

His doom was when he left for a three day walk to Crook City, planning to preach there, but was shot and killed not far outside Deadwood. The most likely culprits were local hostile Indians, although road agents or even saloon owners afraid of his influence affecting their livelihoods may also have been culprits. He had ignored advice not to go, proclaiming that the Lord would protect him



*Rev. Henry Weston Smith*

from harm. His travelling companions Sheriff Isaac Brown, Charles Mason, and Charles Holland all met a similar fate.

### **Adventure Hooks:**

**Protect the Faith:** Several ruffians have been hired to break up Smith's street sermons and a prominent local figure wishes them to be stopped with a minimum of violence. Although this would not be a difficult task the ruffians' employers would not look favourably upon those who had thwarted his hirelings and would look to more drastic measures to rid themselves of this troublesome priest.

**Robbery on the Crook City Road:** Reverend Smith has managed to find a number of large nuggets of gold and wishes to bank them in

Crook City, to help pay for his ministry in future with the construction of a church once he has collected enough. A motley group of claim jumpers and road agents have found this out - the players see them riding into the distance when they come across the reverend's body. Will they give chase?

### **Jack McCall (Crooked-Nose Jack)**

A former buffalo hunter originally hailing from Kentucky and a drunkard, McCall murdered Wild Bill Hickok, by shooting him in the back of the head whilst the latter played poker. Found innocent at the impromptu camp trial using a bogus claim of avenging a non-existent, murdered brother, McCall would eventually be tried and hanged in Yankton where the first trial was deemed illegal on account of it being held in Indian Territory.

McCall appears to have been motivated by an 'insult' where Hickok gave him money for breakfast, having won all of McCall's money at poker.

### **Adventure Hooks:**

**Conspiracy!:** Some theorise that McCall was merely the agent for other, lawless, interests in Deadwood and may have been a paid assassin in the employ of those worried that a lawman such as Hickok might be a threat to their activities. Perhaps the player characters come across a scene where McCall is paid

off by his shadowy employers while he leaves town, leaving the characters to find out what is going on and who is behind it.

### **Charlie Utter**

A close friend of Wild Bill Hickok, he arrived in Deadwood with Bill, Calamity Jane and his brother Steve Utter on a wagon train he and his brother led. He tried to help his friend avoid the trouble he attracted but was away on the fateful day of McCall's murderous act.

Charlie was a successful businessman, running a mail freight business that proved very lucrative. Very proud of his appearance, he wore fine buckskins, with a well combed moustache and long blonde hair. He also bathed daily, most unusual for the time!

Charlie briefly ran a saloon in South Dakota, where he ran into legal difficulties with his business. The Great Deadwood fire happened just as he returned to Deadwood, and seeing little opportunity in the ruined town for himself he left for pastures new in other gold rush towns in Colorado and New Mexico, before disappearing from history.

However a C. H. Utter did turn up in Panama some time later, and one of Charlie's old friends stated that he was living there, running a pharmacy and acting as a local doctor. He was allegedly still alive in 1910, a blind and grizzled figure who used to sit on his rocking chair on the porch.

### Adventure Hooks:

**The Mail Must Go Through:** Charlie runs his successful business, taking thousands of letters to Yankton from where the postal service would take over. On occasions when he might not be able to make his normal delivery run he would need help, and this is where the characters could step in. Of course a trip through territory full of hostile Indians and road agents would be bad enough, but perhaps in amongst all that mail is a letter that identifies a known murderer hiding out in Deadwood – and that murderer is determined the note fails to reach the proper authorities!

**Justice For Wild Bill:** Charlie was a man of means and would have been more than willing to have his friend's killer brought to justice. The characters might be hired to track down and hand over McCall to the proper authorities in nearby Yankton, or perhaps make a delivery (of money) to a certain judge who would rule on the (il)legality of McCall's first trial. Either situation offers plenty of potential for a Gamesmaster.

### Sol Star

Born in Bavaria but moving to Ohio at the age of ten when his family emigrated, Sol was the business partner of Seth Bullock. In addition to the joint business ventures, he became a very successful local politician.

Elected to the town council in 1876, he eventually became mayor in 1884, and served ten terms for a total of fourteen years in that

position. He took part in state politics and was Clerk of Courts for Lawrence County for twenty years. He died in 1917 having never married.

### Adventure Hooks:

**Stocktaking Day:** The hardware store run by Star needs constant re-supply, and will have orders delivered from other towns. These will need to be guarded from the rigours of the wilderness.

**Gerrymandering:** Elections in such a rough and tumble settlement are going to be less than ideal, on occasion. With some of the less savoury elements looking to keep their interests protected Sol could need some protection from rabble rousers at a rally of his supporters.

### Quong Lee and Wing Tsue (Mr Wu)

The Chinese population in Deadwood did not arrive in any numbers until the early 1880's, later than when the show was set. With these hard working and industrious people came various criminals, leaders of various Tong gangs. Quong Lee and Wing Tsue were two individuals who owned gambling houses/opium dens in the town. Like any criminal gangs in competition there would be bound to be friction.

### Adventure Hooks:

**Raid:** The good citizens of Deadwood have had enough with the 'filthy Chinese gangsters

that are poisoning good folk with their insidious opiates'. It is time for the sheriff to organise some men to smash up these houses of ill repute and throw the trash out beyond the town limits!

**Tong War:** Like any businessman the Opium Den owners want to expand their operations by eliminating the competition. However hiring white men to do the killing would be an excellent way to do business, as no one would question a white man who guns down a Chinese, especially one that happens to be a known criminal.



*A typical Tong leader.*

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# HORROR IN NUMALIA

A CONAN, THE ROLEPLAYING GAME SCENARIO, BY VINCENT N. DARLAGE AND ERIC K. RODRIGUEZ

Numalia, on the Road of Kings, is the second largest city of Nemedea, a Hyborian Age metropolis, boasting a population of 45,379 residents among its gleaming spires. Numalia also lies on the southern caravan route, a well-travelled road through Ophir, Koth and Khoraja. The police here are identified by their scarlet tunics and they carry short stabbing-swords and bills. Lord Ostorio Bragorus is the Governor of Numalia. One of the roads of Numalia is called the Palian Way. The wealthy of Numalia live in villas and usually travel by chariot. This city is featured in the Robert E. Howard story, *The God in the Bowl*.

As a civilised nation, the people guild their words in honeyed phrases and sometimes veil their meanings to preserve a sense of respectability and etiquette. Those who do not conform to conservative Nemedians' sense of good manners are disliked and may be treated with varying levels of hostility (dependent perhaps on the Charisma of the offending party and the importance of the offended party). People who ask questions too directly are not likely to find the answers they seek. The challenge in Nemedea is to properly present oneself, to show that co-operation is returned in kind yet without openly saying so. Gather Information DC's for barbaric characters will be much higher in Nemedea than for civilised characters.

Out in the countryside, an exiled scholar from one of the temples of Shadizar is binding demons to scarecrows. He then proceeds to craft amazing scarecrows and mannequins for sale in Numalia, shipping them to the crowded bazaars. Once in the bazaars the demon-scarecrows begin slaughtering the masses.

## PREPARING TO PLAY

Characters should be 4th to 5th level, with an average of 4 to 6 players. Any characters can be played and Games Masters can easily modify the adventure to accommodate any character class.

Games Masters will need copies of *Conan, the Roleplaying Game*, *The Road of Kings*, and *Conan: Scrolls of Skelos*. A player only needs a copy of *Conan, the Roleplaying Game*.

## CHAPTER ONE:

### A GRIM SLAUGHTER

The characters are in a bazaar in the city of Numalia when animated scarecrows begin slaughtering people, attacking even the Player Characters. The characters may or may not have noted the booth selling the scarecrows earlier, but it should become very obvious as the scarecrows animate at a rate of one per round. Characters must make a DC 11 Will save against Terror when they first see the stalking monsters. A number of scarecrows will animate sufficient to challenge the Player Characters. The rest are either inanimate or destroyed by other people in the bazaar with fire. Stuffed inside each scarecrow (Search DC 10 to find) is a cloth bearing the crest of Narkiss, a possible clue directing people toward an exiled family. The scarecrows also include materials derived from vines, directing investigators toward the most extensive vineyards around Numalia, the Arideusan Fields. The seller of the scarecrows – Pentheus, in disguise – has vanished seemingly without trace.

## ANIMATED SCARECROW

	Medium Construct
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	2d10+20 (31 hp)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+0
<b>Speed:</b>	40 ft
<b>Dodge Defence:</b>	10, touch 10, flat-footed 10
<b>Parry Defence:</b>	-
<b>DR:</b>	3 (wood frame)
<b>Base Attack/ Grapple:</b>	+1/+2
<b>Attack:</b>	Slam +2 (1d8+1) or by weapon
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft/5 ft
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	-
<b>Special Qualities:</b>	Construct traits, darkvision 60 ft, low-light vision
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +0, Ref +0, Will -5
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 12, Dex 10, Con -, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 1
<b>Skills:</b>	-
<b>Feats:</b>	-

Animated scarecrows come in all sizes, shapes, and colours. They owe their existence as creatures to spells such as animate sword, animate statue or similar supernatural abilities.

### Combat

Animated scarecrows fight only as directed by the animator. They follow orders without question and to the best of their abilities. Since they do not need to breathe and never tire, they can be extremely capable minions.

However, what seems to be a random act of supernatural violence is actually a cunning distraction. While the characters are fighting, a young noblewoman is kidnapped. Pentheus, who has taken the time to dress in his armour, rides through the bazaar on his uncanny steed (a demonic black horse of horrific aspect), pausing only to grab the Lady Livia on his way past. With a sprinting speed of 320 feet per round, the steed and its passengers can easily outdistance any pursuer.

After the attack posts go up quickly, offering a reward for the return of the governor's daughter. Scarlet officers are investigating everyone, especially if they look suspicious. Most Player Characters certainly fall under the 'suspicious' mantle.

At some point after the attack and interrogation by the constables, the player characters will be approached by a Mitran priest named Daphnis. He introduces himself and tells the players his story. He believes the scarecrows are the work of a horrible nobleman named Pentheus, a dabbler in the occult who became enslaved by an immortal sorcerer named Teotlamatl (a name he whispers while looking around). He will say the name only once. He believes Teotlamatl is a vampire or an unspeakably ancient sorcerer who has lived for eons. He also forwards the possibility that this Teotlamatl may be spurious, a case of someone merely taking the name of a famous monster in some obscure history. He tells them that several days ago a young daughter of a local countess had been kidnapped. He tells them that if they can rescue the girl, along with Lady Livia, they will be making noble connections that may be able to help them in the future, if not provide them with an immediate material reward. He tells them of his researches about the sorcerer Teotlamatl and shows them his silver mace. He tells them this weapon can be used to fight the sorcerer. He will loan it to the characters if they want on their word to return it to the temple of Mitra. He also gives them directions to the Arideusan fields. He will accompany them if the games master desires.

## CHAPTER TWO: THE ARIDEUSAN MANOR

If the Player Characters investigate, the chain of clues will lead them to a fief outside Numalia known as the Arideusan Fields. Pentheus goes by the name of Sir Fedor here and few will recognise the name of Pentheus save as that of an exile. The vineyards are a maze of paths, fences, hedges and grapevines. At the centre of the fields is the manor house occupied by 'Sir Fedor.' Of course, Pentheus has permanently animated several guardians. Strewn about the gardens and manor are several life-size statues of past Nemedian heroes. Games Masters should determine how many are actually animated; however there should be at least a minimum of two guardians.

### ANIMATED STATUE

	Large Construct
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	4d10+30 (41 hp, due to age)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+0
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft
<b>Dodge Defence:</b>	10 (-1 size, +1 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 10
<b>Parry Defence:</b>	-
<b>DR:</b>	8 (stone)
<b>Base Attack/ Grapple:</b>	+3/+10
<b>Attack:</b>	Slam +5 (2d6+4)
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	10 ft/10 ft
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	-
<b>Special Qualities:</b>	Construct traits, darkvision 60 ft, low-light vision
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +1, Ref +1, Will -4
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 16, Dex 10, Con -, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 1
<b>Skills:</b>	-
<b>Feats:</b>	-

### THE FIRST FLOOR OF THE MANOR

**Entry Hall:** The entry hall is a 20 x 25 ft area. This hallway also boasts two eight foot statues of Nemedian heroes. These do not animate, but Player Characters may well expect them to.

**Servant's Sitting Room:** This room, right off the entry hall, has two chairs, a davenport and a coffee table. A window on each of the exterior walls of this corner room looks out of the room over some of the vineyards. There are no other doors in the room. This room is where the servants may entertain guests or where guests can await the master of the house.

**Dining Hall:** This room, complete with two windows, has a door connecting to the main hallway. Another door opens into a servant's galley.

**The Servant's Galley:** This room is where food can be prepared for proper presentation and where the servants can eat after the masters of the house have eaten.

**Sitting Room:** This room has several quality chairs and a davenport.

### THE SECOND FLOOR OF THE MANOR

**Hall of Nobles:** This landing and hallway is richly decorated with paintings and tapestries.

**Guest Rooms:** Six rooms, 10 x 20, are decorated with comforts for sleeping and living.

**Privy:** A cold, bare room with decorative pillows, candles and a lit torch.

**Storage Closet:** Filled with ancient cloaks and robes, covered in dust and moth eaten.

**Lords Chamber:** This room is richly decorated, but sombre. Several items of wealth lie about the room.

**Staircase to Attic:** Is behind a stout, locked wooden door in lord's chamber.

### THE ATTIC OF THE MANOR

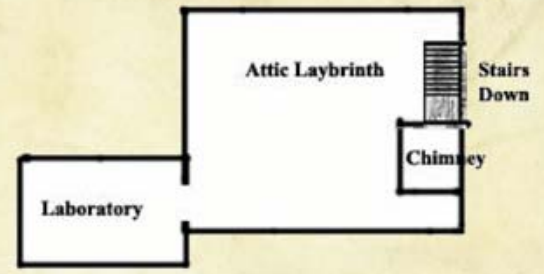
Once the characters make it to the top of the stairs they will find themselves in a miniature labyrinth. Pentheus, in his madness, had the labyrinth erected out of wood, covered in jagged pieces of rusted metal. Afterwards he sacrificed





Manor Ground Floor

Window  
Door



Manor Attic



Manor First Floor

the builders to his master Teotlamatl. Games Masters are encouraged to add their own devious traps or puzzles for the characters to encounter.

At the end of the labyrinth is Pentheus' laboratory. Pentheus has decorated this chamber with all sorts of mystical and demonic paraphernalia. Scattered about the room are the remains of several unfortunate victims. Chained to a basalt altar in the middle of the chamber is the Lady Livia. Covered in nothing but a gossamer shift, Lady Livia seems to be asleep or in a drugged state. If characters manage to traverse the maze without setting off any of the traps, Pentheus will be taken unawares. However if even one trap is missed, Pentheus will be aware of the characters approach and will make sure that he is prepared for them. Whether the characters kill or capture Pentheus, they should find out that he serves a greater master. Pentheus is obviously insane and in his insanity he will relate his tale in a haphazard manner, including the naming of his master, Teotlamatl, and divulging the location of his dark tower.

Lady Livia, after recovering from her imprisonment and near death experience will confirm most of Pentheus's story. While lying upon the altar, seemingly in a drugged state, Lady Livia was in fact awake and lucid enough to hear Pentheus talking to himself and the shadows about the room. Lady Livia will insist that the characters escort her to her father's estate, where they will be amply rewarded. She will also insist that if Pentheus was captured, he be escorted to a stockade in Numalia. If the characters decide to search Pentheus' laboratory before they leave, have them make a Search Check (DC 15) to find a loose stone on the wall. Behind this stone, Pentheus has hidden his most valuable treasures. Characters will find a sack of 200 gold Nemedian Eagles, 300 silver pieces, and three rubies worth 100 gold pieces each. They will also find three doses of black lotus smoke and a gemmed Akbitanan arming sword. Also in the hidden cubicle is rolled up piece of vellum that shows a crude map of Pentheus's lands and shows the route

to Teotlamatl's tower, which is south-west of Numalia, along the Red River.

### CHAPTER THREE: THE DEMON OF THE NIGHTED GULFS

The Demon of the Nighted Gulfs dwells in a magnificent tower erected by magic lying just two hundred yards from the edge of the Red River. The tower is ornate, with massive statues engraved along the exterior. Inside, each room has swords mounted on the walls and most rooms have at least one statue. These swords and statues constitute the main defence of the tower, as they may be animated by Teotlamatl. There are no silver decorations in the tower of any kind.

#### LEVEL ONE

**Reception Hall:** This room is where Teotlamatl's slaves greet guests. Uninvited guests (those the slaves were not told about) are treated with violence. Others are escorted



to one of the side Council Meeting Rooms (2, 3). At the end of the reception hall is a beautiful double pronged staircase that winds up around the tower, crisscrossing several times en route to the second level. Four statues are in this room. Two of the four are Medium statues and two are Large. Several swords are mounted on the walls.

**Training Room:** This room is used by Teotlamatl to train new students in the dark arts.

**Council Meeting Room:** Teotlamatl uses this room to meet with his inner circle of acolytes.

**Amphitheatre:** Teotlamatl speaks here to his assembled masses or for extremely important rituals.

**Slave quarters:** These three rooms, clustered at the end of the reception hall, are where most of the slaves sleep. They are all human and in semi-drugged states. Characters will find several missing noblemen's children among the slave quarters.

#### LEVEL TWO

**The Library:** The library is the dominant feature of this level, taking up over half the tower. Nineteen bookcases stand in rows and against walls, each holding valuable tomes and ancient scrolls gathered over the centuries by Teotlamatl.

**Study Chamber:** A small room off the library is outfitted with a comfortable chair, plenty of candles, a desk, ink, quills and plenty of vellum and other writing materials.

**Study Chamber:** A small room dedicated to Teotlamatl's inner circle of acolytes.

**Laboratory 1:** This chamber is used by all acolytes.

**Laboratory 2:** This chamber is used by Teotlamatl's inner circle of acolytes.

**Ashanafe's Chamber:** A small, sparsely decorated room of Teotlamatl's personal bodyguard.

**Prison:** This chamber is barren except for the sconces on the wall and the numerous lengths of chain that are set into iron rings. A table with various torture paraphernalia stands ominously in the corner of the room.

### LEVEL THREE

This large chamber is devoid of any rooms or walls separating it into sections. One large chamber is what greets the characters as they come up the stairway. The way is lavishly decorated, but in very dark and sombre tones. Closer inspection will show divans, couches and a large bed and other furniture, each decorated with carved demons and monsters from the dark imaginations. Teotlamatl is a dangerous adversary by himself, adding his minions and acolytes into the battle make for a real challenge to the player characters. Games Masters may wish to add or reduce the number of minions currently in the tower to make the game more interesting and create a better game balance. Even if Games Masters remove the acolytes from the battle, Ashanafe should at least be present to fight at his master's side when the characters arrive. Teotlamatl is a dangerous foe and a very ancient and capable sorcerer. He should have several spells prepared and will fight to the death. However, he is more than willing to flee and gain his revenge at a later date if it looks like things are going badly.

Whether the characters defeat Teotlamatl or he escapes into the night, they have three hours to search the tower before it comes crashing down around them. Teotlamatl created a contingency spell long ago to destroy his creation if ever he was killed or forced to flee more than 50 miles from it. If the characters decide to search Teotlamatl's room a Search check (DC 16) is required to find a locked coffer in a niche, behind an ancient shield. The coffer can be trapped or not, Games Master's decision, and is filled with several treasures that Teotlamatl has gathered over the years: a sack containing 34 precious stones, 450 silver pieces, a small gold box with four pinches of yellow lotus blossom, six roots (woundwort), the *Ring of Tu-Lang*, a yellow vellum scroll covered in arcane writings (the spell *control monstrous humanoid*) and three ash wood arrows with black onyx tips (+1 to hit and damage).

### RESOLUTION

With the defeat of Teotlamatl and his insane servant Pentheus, the characters should find themselves celebrated as heroes. The nobility of Numalia will spread praise and wealth upon the characters for their actions. Lord Bragorus II will most assuredly offer the characters positions in Numalia's army. If a character has a high enough Charisma score, Lady Livia may suggest that that character be her 'personal' bodyguard. Other nobles whose children have been returned to them will also offer characters monetary compensation and may enlist the brave and heroic characters in future endeavours. Whatever the characters decided, they can rest assured that some of Teotlamatl's followers escaped and are even now plotting the characters' doom.

### ITEMS

#### BANE MACE OF TEOTLAMATL

This mace, designed in white ivory and silver, is decorated in manner reminiscent of a glorious heavenly host, all facing inward. Their legs form the handle and their silvered wings form the flanges of the mace. Teotlamatl enslaved an entire Zhemri city in ancient times, before the coming of Acheron. This weapon was created to battle the demon and send him off. The Mitran priest who owns it now likens the angelic forms gracing it to Mitra's heavenly host, although that was not the artistic intent (it was created long before the religion of Mitra came into being).

The bane mace of Teotlamatl can be used in three possible ways:

- ✦ A character holding this mace can cancel any spell cast by Teotlamatl as a move-equivalent action, at the cost of 1 PP or 1 hp damage (character's choice).
- ✦ If the mace touches Teotlamatl, he is automatically rendered sluggish and weak (may take only a single standard action each round) for 2d6 rounds

or until the contact is removed. In ages past, the mace was powerful enough to paralyse him completely, but with time his power has increased enough to resist it somewhat.

- ✦ If the mace is used to attack Teotlamatl directly, it does +1d6 additional damage.

#### RING OF TU-LANG

This item comes from distant Khitai and has had many owners over the centuries. The wearer of this ring gains a +3 bonus to all fear and terror checks. The ring is made of polished jade with ancient Khitain symbols and runes carved on it. This is a unique item and cannot be duplicated by modern sorcerous means.



## DAPHNIS, PRIEST OF MITRA

Daphnis, as the third son of a minor Nemedian noble, was sent into the priesthood when he was young. His oldest brother is being trained to take over the fief one day and the other older brother is serving as a knight in a higher-ranking noble's retinue. Although he is unswervingly loyal to the temple of Mitra and his superiors, he does not exactly seem to actually believe in Mitra. He definitely believes in the organisation and its capability to do good for society. He never says he does not believe in Mitra, but many people actually suspect it. His followers, however, do not see any weakness or pious failure on the part of Daphnis, completely blind to most of his mannerisms that clue others into his true allegiance. He collects battle axes from around the world and is skilled in the use of the weapon. Ornate or plain, if a newly found axe is of a unique or different style, he will use his connections to acquire it for his collection.

He used his connections to have Pentheus' family exiled when he discovered Pentheus' link with Teotlamatl. Daphnis then researched the history of the demon and, as a result of that research and the pulling of a few noble strings; he currently is carrying an ornate heavy mace. This mace, designed in white ivory and silver, is decorated in manner reminiscent of Mitra's heavenly host, all facing inward. Their legs form the handle and their silvered wings form the flanges of the mace. The mace is the Bane Mace of Teotlamatl. Unfortunately, his researches went too far and earned him a point of corruption and a phobia about animated objects, as well as a fear of Teotlamatl. Since earning the corruption point, his sleep has been plagued with nightmares about him slaying the people of his temple, superiors as well as the congregation and his followers, with the silvered mace.

He tends to speak with a practiced voice and asks questions often to make sure he understands what the speaker is saying. He also has the annoying habit of addressing everyone as "friend." He is a portly man with sandy blonde hair and a moustache. His eyes are brown and he likes to eat. He knows a lot about many things, having spent most of his time in study. He admires libraries and is a bit envious of those that own their own. He personally owns three books and two scrolls (all about historical subjects); those books and scrolls are cherished by him. He wants to become the high priest of Numalia's temple to Mitra, not because he believes Mitra has called him, but because of the connections such a position could provide. The high priest's private library is also appealing.

### Medium Human (Nemedian)

#### 10<sup>th</sup> Level Scholar

<b>Hit Dice:</b>	10d6+20 (55 hp)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+5 (+2 Dex, +3 Reflex)
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft
<b>Dodge Defence:</b>	15 (+2 Dex, +3 class)
<b>Parry Defence:</b>	13 (+3 class)
<b>DR:</b>	-
<b>Base Attack/ Grapple:</b>	+7/+7
<b>Attack:</b>	Battleaxe +7 (1d10, x3, AP 4) or Bane Mace +7 (1d10, x2, 4 AP)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Battleaxe +7/+2 (1d10, x3, AP 4) or Bane Mace +7/+2 (1d10, x2, 4 AP)
<b>Magic Attack:</b>	+6 (+5 base, +1 Cha)
<b>Power Points:</b>	10
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft/5 ft
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	-
<b>Special Qualities:</b>	Hyborian qualities, title, background (lay priest), knowledge is power, increased maximum power points (triple)
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +14
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 10, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 19, Wis 16, Cha 12
<b>Skills:</b>	Appraise +6, Bluff +4, Decipher Script +19, Diplomacy +16, Gather Information +16, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (arcana) +19, Knowledge (nobility) +19, Knowledge (religion) +19, Knowledge (nature) +13, Knowledge (geography) +19, Perform (ritual) +14, Profession (priest) +19, Search +10, Sense Motive +18
<b>Feats:</b>	Noble Blood, Dabbler (Counterspells), Iron Will, Priest, Diligent, Investigator, Negotiator, Knowledgeable, Leadership, Combat Expertise, Improved Disarm, Martial Weapon Proficiency (battle axe), Skill Focus (Profession (priest))
<b>Possessions:</b>	Battle axe, Bane Mace of Teotlamatl, priestly costume, 5 silver coins
<b>Corruption:</b>	1 (Phobia (animated objects))
<b>Reputation:</b>	15 (Honest) (He may add a +2 bonus to his Bluff, Sense Motive and Gather Information checks)
<b>Code of Honour:</b>	Civilised

## LADY LIVIA, DAUGHTER OF LORD OSTORIO BRAGORUS II

She is a young girl, about sixteen, and is the daughter of the governor of Numalia. She has no appreciable skills as far as this adventure is concerned - in court life and in matters of gossip she has some knowledge but not much else. She is extremely pretty, giving her an advantage in bluffing, and is a natural diplomat. She enjoys gossiping and learning secrets.

Livia's motivations are escape. Everything else is unimportant to her. Her personality is sweet-tempered if a trifle weak-willed. She is wont to do something silly (run off alone in the middle of the fight, for example) but will try her best to help out if told to do something by a suitably commanding person.



	Medium Human (Nemedian) 1 <sup>st</sup> Level Noble
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	1d8-1 (3 hp)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+2 (+2 Dex)
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft
<b>Dodge Defence:</b>	12 (+2 Dex)
<b>Parry Defence:</b>	9 (-1 Str)
<b>DR:</b>	-
<b>Base Attack/ Grapple:</b>	+0/-1
<b>Attack:</b>	Unarmed strike +2 finesse (1d4-1)
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft/5 ft
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	-
<b>Special Qualities:</b>	Hyborian qualities, title, rank hath its privileges, wealth
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort -1, Ref +2, Will +1
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 8, Dex 14, Con 8, Int 11, Wis 8, Cha 18
<b>Skills:</b>	Bluff +8, Craft (embroidery) +6, Diplomacy +12, Gather Information +9, Knowledge (nobility) +4, Knowledge (history) +2, Sense Motive +5
<b>Feats:</b>	Negotiator, Skill Focus (Gather Information)
<b>Possessions:</b>	None
<b>Reputation:</b>	5 (Honest) (She may add a +1 bonus to her Bluff, Sense Motive and Gather Information checks)
<b>Code of Honour:</b>	Civilised

## PENTHEUS OF NARKISS (SIR FEDOR, KNIGHT BACHELOR, LORD OF THE ARIDEUSAN FIELDS)

Pentheus, an elder son of a minor Nemedian baron, always had a weak arm and a strong mind. Although trained in arms, he preferred to be among his tutors and books. He had a gift for building things. Fascinated by scarecrows and dolls, he spent a lot of time building such constructs. Energetic and studious, he achieved his first two levels in scholar before he was sixteen, already bound by a demonic pact. Then he was forced to serve a short while to defend his father's master's fiefdom, taking a level in soldier during the two years of hard fighting; he used the name Sir Bramius during that term to hide his already cowardly reputation. He served with distinction, however, although few knew his demonic patron gave him his confidence. Displeased with some circumstance in Nemedia still not discussed in the open, he left his home and travelled to Shadizar the Wicked, where he continued his scholarly learning. While there he fathered a daughter. Several years later, the death of his father brought him back to his home. His daughter remained in Shadizar, the City of Wickedness, and he continues to send her an annual stipend. A local Mitran priest discovered Pentheus' demonic sorceries and caused him to lose favour in court. With continued efforts, the Mitran priest and the entire town of Numalia caused Pentheus' family to lose their entire fief as well an exile from Nemedia. Disowned of all eleven manors under their control, the family dispersed. Pentheus travelled to Asgalun and sat at the feet of ancient Pelishtim sorcerers to learn wisdom and further magic. He has now returned to Nemedia to work his revenge. He is using the name Sir Fedor to hide his identity, and he avoids being seen in or around his father's fief on the other side of Numalia. He rents a small manor house on the fief of Arideus and has sworn fealty to Count Arideus, who, being new to the region, does not recognise or know Pentheus. He holds no real allegiance to the count, as he is just using the count as part of his disguise.

Pentheus is a relatively short man on the slight side. He finds his small hands and long fingers somewhat embarrassing, especially when he mentally compares them to the massive hands of his large father. He has a goatee, grown to hide what he perceives to be a weak chin. His perfumed hair is long and curled. He is skilled at craft work, especially the creation of scarecrows and mannequins. When in combat, Pentheus will don armour and pick up a greatsword. Of course, if he is working his magic, he does not wear armour. If opponents find him without armour, he will run if possible to find armour.

He values his family and his heritage and is very upset at the loss of his family's fief and resulting exile. He has resolved to avenge his family honour, kill the Mitran priest and do some harm to Numalia. He hates posing as a member of the gentry when his true heritage is among Nemedian's peasantry. He tends to come across slightly cowardly, which often makes people underestimate him and his abilities. Often, his main goal in social gatherings is simply to go unnoticed, to be invisible, yet be there to hear and see what is going on. He knows contacts in Shadizar and Asgalun and can, if necessary, introduce the Player Characters to these contacts if that would help any of his own agendas or save his life.

Encouraged by his demonic patron, Pentheus has a plan to enslave Lady Livia with magic and use her to re-introduce him into noble society. Ultimately, he plans to ensnare a member of the royalty in order to either regain his barony or to actually move into royal ranks. He believes (erroneously) that Lady Livia and her father hate him and are planning to have him beheaded, so he finds his plan particularly delicious.

**Medium Human (Nemedian)**  
**12<sup>th</sup> Level Scholar / 1<sup>st</sup> Level Soldier**

<b>Hit Dice:</b>	9d6+1d10+13 (49 hp)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+6 (+2 Dex, +4 Reflex)
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft usually, 25 ft in armour
<b>Dodge Defence:</b>	16 (+4 class, +2 Dex)
<b>Parry Defence:</b>	14 (+4 class, +0 Str)
<b>DR:</b>	10/11 (+9 superior mail hauberk and superior breastplate, +1/+2 visored helm)
<b>Base Attack/Grapple:</b>	+10/+10
<b>Attack:</b>	Akbitanan Greatsword +10 melee (2d10, 17-20/x2, AP 6)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Akbitanan Greatsword +10/+5 melee (2d10, 17-20/x2, AP 6)
<b>Magic Attack:</b>	+9 (+6 base, +3 Cha)
<b>Power Points:</b>	10
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft/5 ft
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	Spells
<b>Special Qualities:</b>	Hyborian qualities, title, background (pact), knowledge is power, increased maximum power points (triple)
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +14
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 10, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 17, Wis 18, Cha 16
<b>Skills:</b>	Bluff +12, Craft (alchemy) +20, Craft (scarecrows) +21, Craft (herbalism) +20, Decipher Script +18, Diplomacy +5, Gather Information +11, Handle Animal +13, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (arcana) +20, Knowledge (nature) +18, Knowledge (nobility) +18, Listen +12, Perform (ritual) +18, Perform (wind instrument) +10, Ride +4
<b>Feats:</b>	Noble Blood, Iron Will, Steely Gaze, Permanent Sorcery, Loathsome Weapon, Craftsman, Craft Magic Item, Craft Aberration, Improved Critical (Greatsword), Combat Expertise
<b>Possessions:</b>	Akbitanan greatsword, superior mail hauberk, superior breastplate, Nemedian cloak, Nemedian noble outfit
<b>Corruption:</b>	5 (Delusion (the city of Numalia as a whole hated him and his family); he cannot remember many heinous acts he has committed at the request of his demonic patron; he is also quite paranoid.)
<b>Reputation:</b>	20 (Coward) (He may add a +3 bonus to his Bluff and Gather Information checks, but must add a -3 penalty to Intimidate checks); or, as Sir Fedor, 12 (brave) (He may add a +2 bonus to his Bluff and Intimidate checks)
<b>Obsession:</b>	Regaining his peerage (1 point)
<b>Spells:</b>	Cosmic Sorcery - <i>the time is right</i> ; Hypnotism - <i>entrance, ranged hypnotism, hypnotic suggestion, domination, enslave, illusion</i> ; Necromancy - <i>raise corpse</i> ; Prestidigitation - <i>conjuraton, telekinesis, greater telekinesis, animate swords, animate statue, magic builder</i> ; Summonings - <i>demonic pact, summon demon, form demon, incantation of Amalric's witchman.</i>

## TEOTLAMATL, THE DEMON OF THE NIGHTED GULFS (BLACK FIEND)

Teotlamatl is an elite black fiend with levels in scholar. At a distance or in the dark – his favoured environment in any case – he could pass for human, being of a similar size and general build. Up close, his vile demonic features, horns, and pointed ears make their true nature clear. He enjoys setting up cults either in his name, or in the name of some other alias. He taught Pentheus his sorcery and has mentored the young sorcerer since. Teotlamatl continually raises the price for his services, requiring worse and worse acts on the part of the sorcerer, who often does not remember doing them. Teotlamatl has been the subject of a *form demon* spell and is no longer subject to dismissal by *master-words and signs* or *banish outsider*. Like other black fiends, he speaks Demonic, Old Stygian, and Acheronian. He also has learned Nemedian. He actively avoids silver and never permits those who enter a pact with him to keep any around. He is currently annoyed at Pentheus and his obsession with rank and title but has decided to use Pentheus further. He has encouraged Pentheus to kidnap young Lady Livia. Teotlamatl wants Lady Livia for himself, intending her to become his next apprentice. He intends to sacrifice Pentheus, believing his obsessions to be overwhelming to the point of potential rebellion. Thus, he is not unwilling to aid the Player Characters – either with or without their knowledge or permission – in their pursuit of the noble-born sorcerer.

Teotlamatl can be summoned with a summon demon spell (his initial appearance forces a Will DC 15 save against Terror), and is always willing to enter into a demonic pact spell. He can cast spells from the following styles: Summoning, Hypnotism, Necromancy, and Prestidigitation. He has knowledge of (though not the ability to cast) Nature Magic, Cosmic Sorcery, Curses, Divination and Oriental Magic. He can teach any Summoning spell, however, even if he does not have the ability to cast it himself.

Medium Outsider (demon)	
10 <sup>th</sup> Level Scholar	
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	6d8+4d6+18 (59 hp)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+12 (+4 Dex, +8 Reflex)
<b>Speed:</b>	40 ft
<b>Dodge Defence:</b>	22 (+4 Dex, +1 Dodge, +4 natural, +3 class)
<b>Parry Defence:</b>	16 (+3 Str, +3 class)
<b>DR:</b>	-
<b>Base Attack/Grapple:</b>	+13/+16
<b>Attack:</b>	Gore +16 (1d8+3, AP n/a) or heavy mace +16 melee (1d10+3, AP 7)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Gore +16 (1d8+3, AP n/a) and heavy mace +16/+11/+6 melee (1d10+3, AP 7)
<b>Magic Attack:</b>	+16 (+3 natural, +5 class, +8 Charisma)
<b>Power Points:</b>	19
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft/5 ft
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	Spells
<b>Special Qualities:</b>	Immunities, background (demon), knowledge is power, increased maximum power points (triple)
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +10, Ref +12, Will +20
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 17, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 14, Wis 23, Cha 27
<b>Skills:</b>	Bluff +18, Craft (herbalism) +11, Craft (alchemy) +3, Diplomacy +12, Hide +21, Intimidate +18, Knowledge (arcana) +21, Knowledge (nature) +12, Knowledge (the planes) +12, Move Silently +21, Perform (drums) +16, Perform (ritual) +18, Sense Motive +16, Sleight of Hand +10
<b>Feats:</b>	Dodge, Multiattack, Steely Gaze, Iron Will, Ritual Sacrifice, Tortured Sacrifice, Striking Cobra
<b>Possessions:</b>	Ornate heavy mace
<b>Spells:</b>	Hypnotism - <i>entrance, hypnotic suggestion, domination</i> ; Necromancy - <i>raise corpse, black plague</i> ; Prestidigitation - <i>conjunction, telekinesis, greater telekinesis, animate swords, animate statue, magic builder</i> ; Summonings - <i>master words and signs, summon demon, summon elemental</i> .

Teotlamatl currently resides in a tower he constructed magically not far from Numalia. It was built in ten hours, and has a construction value of 1,000 golden lunas, making it comparable to a manor house.

Like other black fiends, Teotlamatl is at home either in direct combat, sneaky assassinations, or the use of sorcery to get the job done. He often wields a black heavy mace decorated with designs of nude women facing and holding each other, their hair forming the flanges of the

mace and their combined legs forming the grip. With his Striking Cobra feat, he is often aggressively surprising at the start of combat. He uses his Steely Gaze feat on whoever is closest or has struck him each round, whether they used a silvered weapon or not.

**Immunities (Su):** Black fiends are immune to all physical damage, except that dealt by either fire or objects made from silver.

	<b>Medium Human (Kushite)</b> <b>6<sup>th</sup> Level Barbarian</b>
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	6d10+12 (33 hp)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+7 (+2 Dex, +5 Reflex)
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft
<b>Dodge Defence:</b>	16 (+4 level, +2 Dex)
<b>Parry Defence:</b>	15 (+2 level, +3 Str)
<b>DR:</b>	-
<b>Base Attack/ Grapple:</b>	+6/+9
<b>Attack:</b>	Tulwar +9 (2d8+4, 18-20/x2, AP 6) or unarmed strike +9 (1d3+3 nonlethal)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Tulwar +9/+4 (2d8+4, 18-20/x2, AP 6) or unarmed strike +9/+4 (1d3+3 nonlethal)
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft/5 ft
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	Crimson mist
<b>Special Qualities:</b>	Kushite traits, fearless, versatility (-2 penalty), bite sword, uncanny dodge, mobility, trap sense +2
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +2
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 17, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 9
<b>Skills:</b>	Climb +12, Jump +12, Hide+11, Move Silently +11, Spot +6, Survival +9
<b>Feats:</b>	Track, Endurance, Diehard, Power Attack, Cleave, Improved Sunder, Greater Sunder, Brawl
<b>Possessions:</b>	Tulwar, loincloth
<b>Corruption:</b>	5 (Excessively cruel)
<b>Reputation:</b>	5 (Cruel) (He may add a +1 bonus to his Bluff and Intimidate checks, but may only apply it to Intimidate when dealing with authority figures)

## ASHANAFE

Ashanafe was born into a life of slavery in the dark kingdom of Kush. At the age of five he was to be sacrificed on the altar of Dagon by fanatical followers of that cult. Teotlamatl exchanged some of his dark knowledge for the release of Ashanafe and raised him to be his guardian. Ashanafe is over 110 years of age, but to the average person he looks barely over 30. Teotlamatl's dark arts have prolonged Ashanafe's life and his youthful appearance. However, when Ashanafe eventually dies, his body will immediately rot and crumble and his soul will be forfeit to some unnameable demon entity that will torture him for all eternity. Ashanafe never leaves the tower or Teotlamatl's side and his skills as a warrior are somewhat weak compared to his actual age.





# MY BROTHER'S FEAST

A Gloranthan scenario by Nick Robinson

## Background

Amongst the Runelords of Kyger Litor, the mother goddess of the troll species, there is a religious obligation to eat a relative on every seasonal holy day. These trolls take this duty *very* seriously indeed and it is not normally an issue where the Runelord is a member of a large clan (who will all be related in some way, if distantly in many cases) or settlement, especially since there will be a number of deaths throughout the year and multiple Runelords are permitted to share. It has been known for the bodies of deceased clan members to be dug up, but more usually if there is no recent fatality amongst the clan a weak or uppity trollkin is usually given the 'honour' of fulfilling this holy rite.

The frequency of these religious rites varies from sect to sect and tribe to tribe, although it has been noted that amongst trolls with very large numbers of trollkin available the practice is far more frequent. In some areas the rites only occur on the high holy day of Kyger Litor's cult, and trollkin are quickly adopted into the family of the feasting troll, rather than being blood-relatives.

For trolls away from their homelands this duty can be a lot more problematic, and in this case a pair of exiled brothers, far from their native lands and not adopted

into the local clans due to their argumentative nature (even for trolls) have a problem. For the older brother he has but one meal left for his duty. For the younger he is that meal!

Fortunately for him the pair did have a fair number of related trollkin when they fled from their homelands in the east, and although the numbers of these have been eaten into (so to speak) since arriving in their current locale there are still quite a few of these trollkin available. Unfortunately for the younger sibling they all escaped a while ago and are currently in hiding in an area it is taboo for trolls to enter. As such he needs a group of mercenaries to go after the trollkin and round up as many as possible. Ideally, he needs one for eating and a pair to breed more.

The player characters are the ones that this troll approaches for the deed. The actual area the trollkin inhabit is an ancient dwarf outpost that was over run and destroyed early in the First Age. However it has very effective and deadly defences, even now, that can strike down trolls. These defences do not recognise the trollkin as trolls due to their stunted forms and the fact they did not exist when the defences were created.

The scenario introduction is written with the idea that the player characters all belong to (or associate with) a

Heortling tribe in the Holy Country, and the terms of their acting as mercenaries for the trolls will be dictated by the clan leaders. The clan will have had many conflicts with trolls in the past so it will be unusual (but not totally unheard of) to be making deals with a troll instead. The background can be altered to suit the Games Master's own campaign, as the entire adventure only requires the player characters to be in an area where trolls are present in at least some numbers. The level of reward in this scenario is generous, and Games Masters are encouraged to reduce the payment in their own campaign if they feel that the rewards are too great.

The dwarfen defences against trolls and elves no longer function and they will not be destroyed when they enter the (still taboo) area, but the players have no way of knowing this.

## Player Introduction

*It is a warm day when the trolls first appeared on the horizon – something important must have dragged them from their darkened caves while the sun is high. For once, the trolls are not a raiding party eager for war but a trader and his guards, and he set up a little market outside the clan's borders. Many came to see him and he said he wanted to speak and trade with the clan ring first.*

*Elka went to him to find out what he wanted. He offered a great trade. So now you are sent to do a task for the troll, Oombalong.*

*'I needs you to catch me some trollkin. Some specific enlo, mind, not the average wild frash enlo that infest the hills. These are almost smart; they is my brothers. See it is near the holy day for my brother and he has his cult dues. Now me - I am his only free kin round here, as we are not from here but from the east. Rest of our kin are back there or already ate. Although we had some enlo escape a while back that were kin.'*

*'If you do not get enlo I get served up on my brother's platter for his cult, our mother says so. Bad magic if he does not - so I must get some of these enlo who escaped. I give good deal for these, so your people happy. Now you must catch enlo who hide in bad place where soul eater lives. You okay - though - all uz know you man have no real soul, too weak. But bad magic for me to get them, so I get you to goes instead.'*

*'I wants at least five, but I pay for a dead ones too, if you must. But must be one of the enlo I wants, not just any enlo hiding in the Soul Eater's Hill. So you go. I give a good gift, powerful gift, plus other things for your clan. Good deal. And you no worry, enlo even weaker than you. And remember - you no have proper souls so you be safe!'*

The payment will be generous (after all, the troll will end up on the dinner table if the characters do not come up with the goods), he will offer a rune for every two live trollkin caught (rounded up – so 3 trollkin would earn two runes, for example) and 250 silvers worth of trade goods for any dead one. Over a dozen of the trollkin that live in the lair are related to him (including juveniles) and he will pay up honestly for

the ones caught or killed. If the characters are especially efficient he will be really pleased and invite the party to join the feast as honoured guests (not as another course).

Oombalong can recognise the trollkin that are related to him through family resemblance, although non-trolls can only see the similarities with close inspection and are still at –10% on Perception tests to see it.



To encourage the party to check the entire area the clan ring could also ask them to take the opportunity to fully investigate the trollkin lair to see what else is there which might be of interest to the clan, saying that they believe that there could be some ancient magic within.

## The Hills Have Enlo

The trollkin lair in an underground complex, from which they raid the local area. Being mere trollkin they try to steal stray herd animals, and will forage what other foods they can. Knowing they are both physically weak and ill equipped with little in the way of magical support they realise there is no way they can hope to withstand a determined assault by any of the local human clans, and know that if caught away from their lair by any trolls they will be shown no mercy.

They do have scouts out and about near their lair and the players will most likely encounter a small group of these, giving them the first taste of the action to come.

Once the lair has been located (most expedient method is to follow any fleeing trollkin scouts that they players had already driven off) the characters can go about rounding up the trollkin and exploring the ruins. There are a few areas that the trollkin do not enter due to the danger this involves and these provide the opportunity for more danger and loot.

## Catching Trollkin

The ever-resourceful players will no doubt come up with a variety of solutions to this. Popular ones could include:

### Lassos

Good luck with this. None of the characters will likely be trained in the skill and after some practice they will have enough ability to throw a lasso (at the basic throw chance). However trollkin caught this way will try to cut the ropes if they are able. On scoring a hit a lasso will entrap up to three areas. Roll location three times, the first is where it lands, if subsequent locations hit are adjacent these areas are pinned also (the legs count as

adjacent). So it is possible to pin arms to a chest, or just throw the rope around a trollkin's neck...

### Grappling

Trollkin are small and weak so this should work. Of course it would be easier if the trollkin were not trying to stab the character doing the grappling!

### Non-Lethal Damage

Attempts to knock out trollkin could be problematic.

### Lethal Damage and Healing

Better be quick with the first aid/healing spell. A dead trollkin is of relatively little worth.

### Magic

It is possible that a regular party will have access to magic spells that can be used to catch a trollkin without inflicting harm.

## To The Lair

Oombalong is quite happy to lead the players to where he knows the trollkin are hiding out. He will go fairly close before stopping and pointing them in the right direction (because of the taboos on the area he will not go any further than this). His great troll guards (he has several) should prevent even the most foolhardy troll hater from attacking him. If one player insists on making his character act in a suicidal manner make it quick and painful for him. If the entire party decides to act against the wishes of their clan in this way feel free to kill one or two, and then have the trolls offer a truce – the players fulfil the deal and the trolls will not kill them all.

The troll leads the party to Bad Smell Woods, an area that happens to be shunned by the local humans as well. This is due to the awful stench that comes from the wood for most of the year. A well-known local plant, Stenchweed, grows rampantly throughout the wood, making survival there an unpleasant prospect until the nostrils adjust (which takes weeks). No domestic animals will enter the woods willingly. The ones that live there have become immune to the stench and ignore it.

With a successful Lore (regional) skill test, a character is aware that deep within the Bad Smell Woods there is rumoured to be a haunted hill, where the souls of those slain there can turn a man insane. This is not quite true. The ghosts are there all right, but they are trapped in a dwarfen prison and essentially harmless.

## The Edge of the Woods

*Oombalong stops. 'Hah – we are here now. I wait, you go and catch my brother's dinner. You follow trail and find hill of the Soul Eater and catch those trollkin. I knows you can beat them enlo real easy.' He points down a trail leading deep into the Bad Smell Woods. A perfect hiding place for thieving trollkin, to be certain.*

Once the party has entered the wood they can follow the trail for about twenty minutes or so before they encounter the trollkin scouting party. If the party are making no effort to be quiet then they will face an ambush (if a somewhat half-hearted one). If they are trying to sneak let them make their rolls. As long as no one fumbles their roll they will get the opportunity to spot the ambush just before it commences (Perception tests). If the entire party makes the sneak roll then they get a chance to ambush the trollkin if someone

in their group makes their Perception roll. If they fail Perception rolls at this stage then the two groups stumble into one another.

There are four trollkin in the group, one will rush headlong back to the lair as soon as any attack starts, the others are marginally braver and will wait two rounds after any fight or ambush starts before making a break for it. Two of the group are related to Oombalong.

The PCs may have prisoners they can interrogate (the trollkin will blurt out all they know and give directions if the players succeed in overcoming their Resistance tests). Otherwise they can chase fleeing trollkin (will need to make two Athletics rolls to keep up, if a character does they will see the trollkin disappear into the complex entrance), or track their way there (a single Tracking roll will suffice).

If the players manage to screw up in all these options then they will blunder around the woods for several hours, encounter a very ill tempered (but small) bear before stumbling out into the hill's clearing. By this time the trollkin will be expecting trouble, and any trollkin encountered from this point on will be fully equipped (as little as that means) and have all appropriate spells ready.

## The Haunted Hill

*You come across a small clearing in the woods. Within the clearing there is not a single sign of life. No plants, animals, birds or insects are visible, and it appears that this has been the case for a very long period of time. At its exact centre is a barrel knoll. You can see a small entranceway on this side that looks as though it has been carved into the rock.*



The Trollkin Lair

The clearing is devoid of foliage due to the ancient Mostali enchantments on the place, ensuring that their ancestral enemies could not easily approach the place. However the characters will be unaware of this and are likely to be very concerned when approaching the lair of the trollkin. It also means they have no cover as they cover the ground to the entrance.

There are only a small number of keyed locations within the lair.

## 1. Entrance Area

*A small passage into the side of the hill is readily apparent. You think you can see some movement in the darkness just beyond the entrance.*

A pair of trollkin lookouts will take pot-shots at any approaching party (they have a very clear line of vision) before fleeing if they get too close. They are armed with slings and the cover they have will protect them from any hits to their abdomens or legs. Both are fully equipped whether or not the party is expected.

## 2. Hall of the Souls

*This large chamber is full of shimmering crystals in the walls and ceiling. Darting from crystal to crystal are short streams of smoke, some are black, others green. Whenever one of these streams of smoke strikes a crystal another stream shoots out towards yet another crystal. You feel there is no way you can cross the otherwise empty chamber without being struck by the smoke multiple times.*

It is here that the Soul Eater of legends resides. In fact it is a very cleverly constructed dwarf trap that attacks the spirit of any troll or aldryami that enter this place. There are small crystals in the walls and streams of green and

black shoot from wall to wall. These are the spirits of those poor beings trapped by the dwarfen magic of the place. There are crystals in the walls where the souls are stored, but there are too many souls (especially black ones, troll spirits) for the number of crystals, so these are juggled between the crystals, being permanently shuffled from one crystal to the next, for centuries. Safe to say the spirits are not exactly sane anymore. For non-trolls (including trollkin) and non-aldryami this place is worrying, but essentially harmless.

It is well beyond the capabilities of the characters to damage the crystals/block the progress of the souls from one crystal to the next or even disarm the device. They can do nothing about the trapped souls at all. What they really need is a rogue dwarf willing to free ancient enemies for some reason, well beyond the scope of this scenario.

## 3. Main Defence

*Ahead is a chamber in which you can make out small humanoid forms, they appear to be armed trollkin. There appears to be a large amount of trash scattered around the floor of the place, because of the trash you can not get a clear line of sight to the trollkin unless you enter the room.*

The trollkin make their main defence here. There are eight properly equipped warriors, the best of their number, who will fight ferociously. These eight are brave and fear defeat (and its consequences) more than death and they are dangerous opponents. However only half of them will be in armour unless the party has taken its time to get here and the complex is alerted.

The room in which they lair is used by these trollkin as a kind of barracks. There are straw sleeping pallets



for these eight, the two guards at the complex and the scouts encountered outside (14 in total). The trollkin will allow intruders to enter their room so that they can use their superior numbers to the maximum effect.

## 4. Last Line of Defence

*This room appears to be a food storage area; although from the unhygienic nature of the trollkin you cannot be sure if this is a rubbish dump instead. There are dead animal carcasses, all giving off a ripe, rotting stench, and piles of dead vegetation that smell almost as bad. Large beetles, maggots and rats scurry about this room and over the meat.*

Here another eight trollkin (plus any survivors from earlier encounters) will make a stand of sorts, although they will collapse and plead mercy if any damage is

inflicted on them. Once half their number have surrendered or been struck down the others will try to escape into the secret areas beyond the main living quarters.

This is also used as a living area with eight more straw pallets. Whereas the previous area was relatively clean this place has trash scattered all about.

## 5. Main Living Area

*It is clear from the awful stench that you have reached the main trollkin lair. A dozen or so wretched forms cower in the corners of the room, flinching from the paltry light from your torches. Amidst the piles of trash around the room are what appear to be nests, no doubt where the pitiful creatures sleep.*

Here there are two infirm trollkin and a dozen trollkin children. These will grovel and plead mercy and hence are easy for the party to round up. This room also smells worse than even the woods outside (trollkin are barely housetrained to begin with and this is where the trollkin children live).

## 6. Treasury

*Another room with trash scattered around, there are some flimsy benches around the walls and a mouldy smell coming from a pile of furs in one corner. A small sack lies underneath one of the benches.*

Here is stored the paltry wealth of the trollkin. A few mouldy furs, some crude wooden benches (which cannot bear the weight of anything larger than a trollkin), a decent sack containing a short piece of rope (about 3 metres long) and a stick that wiggles on its own when held. It is magical but has no other function

other than it wiggles when held. A little like a snake if held by the tail. The trollkin value it greatly, and Player Characters are highly likely to do so as well. There are also 5 silvers, 3 clacks and 22 bolgs. A vast haul!

## 7. Secret Passage

The trollkin avoid entering this area if possible, fearing the dwarfen contraptions beyond. However, they may well fear the Player Characters even more and flee this way in desperation.

## 8. Hall of the Machine

*Some huge stone contraption stands here, taking up much of the floor. It is carved with a wide variety of runic marks, but is clear it is damaged from the large chunks of rock that have come away from it over the years.*

Any free trollkin will make their last stand here; they are in such a state of absolute terror that they will not surrender. What they will not do in any circumstance is go willingly into the room beyond this.

It is plausible that players will see the machine as having something to do with the room holding the spirits, and they would be right. However it is broken so no new souls can be trapped and the already captured souls can not be easily rescued from their fate.

## 9. The Guardian

*A single dwarfen construct stands here, a lone survivor from when there were dwarfs in this place and a testament to the skills of its builders. There is a pile of crushed trollkin bones in a pile before it. As you watch, you think you see it move...*

The bones of a long dead trollkin indicate the fate of an over-adventurous fellow and the source of the fear the trollkin have for this place. The guardian prevents all non-dwarfs from passing by attacking anyone who enters the chamber. It will not leave the chamber, but has enough rudimentary intelligence to take cover if it comes under attack from outside the doorway.

Beyond it is a collapsed tunnel which used to lead for many miles underground towards dwarfen territory. It collapsed long ago due to the actions of a long forgotten priest of Krasht. It has collapsed for many kilometres so there is no way that the characters could clear it in their lifetime.

The guardian has a small cavity in its chest that can be reached by opening a small latch when a door there will open. Inside are three gemstones worth 500 silvers each (these were integral to the magic powering the construct). It will take a Mechanics roll to open the cavity after it has been defeated.

## Endgame

It is safe to say that Oombalong will greet the players very enthusiastically if they return with a load of trollkin (both dead and alive – the more they have the happier he will be). He will keep his end of the bargain, rewarding them with both runes and silver, and invite them to join his brother, servants and himself at his brother's feast. A well prepared trollkin is a real treat!

## The Guardian

The construct is a rough humanoid shape hewn from stone and cunningly assembled to grant it free movement. It was not built to look attractive. Its features are poorly defined and although there are eye sockets there are no eyes.

### Characteristics

STR 25  
CON 25  
DEX 10  
SIZ 10  
INT 8  
POW 13  
CHA 8

### Guardian Hit Locations

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-3	Right Leg	4/6
4-6	Left Leg	4/6
7-9	Abdomen	4/7
10-12	Chest	4/8
13-15	Right Arm	4/5
16-18	Left Arm	4/5
19-20	Head	4/6

### Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage
Fist	45%	1D6 + 1D4

### Special Rules

<i>Combat Actions:</i>	2
<i>Strike Rank:</i>	+8
<i>Movement:</i>	4m
<i>Traits:</i>	Dark Sight, Earth Sense
<i>Skills:</i>	Athletics 40%, Dodge 30%, Persistence 60%, Resilience 65%
<i>Armour:</i>	4 point skin (no penalty)

## Trollkin Scouts and Entrance Guards

### Characteristics

STR 8  
CON 10  
DEX 15  
SIZ 8  
INT 12  
POW 10  
CHA 8

### Trollkin Scout Hit Locations

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-3	Right Leg	1/4
4-6	Left Leg	1/4
7-9	Abdomen	1/5
10-12	Chest	1/6
13-15	Right Arm	1/3
16-18	Left Arm	1/3
19-20	Head	1/4

### Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage / AP
Spear	45%	1D8 - 1D2 / 2
Sling	35%	1D6 / 1

### Special Rules

<i>Combat Actions:</i>	3
<i>Strike Rank:</i>	+13
<i>Movement:</i>	4m
<i>Traits:</i>	Dark Sight, Earth Sense
<i>Skills:</i>	Athletics 45%, Dodge 55%, Perception 60%, Persistence 35%, Resilience 45%
<i>Armour:</i>	1 point skin (no penalty)

## Trollkin Warriors

### Characteristics

STR 10  
CON 10  
DEX 12  
SIZ 11  
INT 8  
POW 11  
CHA 9

One of the trollkin warriors has the Metal Rune integrated and knows Bladesharp 1 with a 60% chance of successfully casting the spell. He has 11 Magic Points.

### Trollkin Warrior Hit Locations

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-3	Right Leg	1 or 3 / 5
4-6	Left Leg	1 or 3 / 5
7-9	Abdomen	1 or 3 / 6
10-12	Chest	1 or 3 / 7
13-15	Right Arm	1 or 3 / 4
16-18	Left Arm	1 or 3 / 4
19-20	Head	1 or 3 / 5

### Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage / AP
Spear	55% (67%)	1D8 / 2
Sling	18% (30%)	1D6 / 1

### Special Rules

<i>Combat Actions:</i>	2
<i>Strike Rank:</i>	+10
<i>Movement:</i>	4m
<i>Traits:</i>	Dark Sight, Earth Sense
<i>Skills:</i>	Dodge 55% (62%), Persistence 40%, Resilience 55%
<i>Armour:</i>	1 point skin (no penalty) or 2 point leathers and furs (-12% skill penalty)

## Trollkin Rabble

### Characteristics

STR 8  
CON 8  
DEX 13  
SIZ 8  
INT 8  
POW 9  
CHA 5

### Trollkin Rabble Hit Locations

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-3	Right Leg	1/4
4-6	Left Leg	1/4
7-9	Abdomen	1/5
10-12	Chest	1/6
13-15	Right Arm	1/3
16-18	Left Arm	1/3
19-20	Head	1/4

### Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage / AP
Spear	25%	1D8 - 1D2 / 2

### Special Rules

**Combat Actions:** 3  
**Strike Rank:** +10  
**Movement:** 4m  
**Traits:** Dark Sight, Earth Sense  
**Skills:** Athletics 25%, Dodge 40%, Perception 20%, Persistence 25%, Resilience 35%  
**Armour:** 1 point skin (no penalty)



## Bear

### Characteristics

STR 23  
CON 12  
DEX 11  
SIZ 22  
INT 5  
POW 10  
CHA 5

### Bear Hit Locations

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-2	Right Rear Leg	3/7
3-4	Left Rear Leg	3/7
5-7	Hindquarters	3/8
8-10	Chest	3/9
11-13	Right Front Leg	3/6
14-16	Left Front Leg	3/6
17-20	Head	3/7

### Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage
Bite	50%	1D8 + 1D8
Claw	40%	1D6 + 1D8

### Special Rules

**Combat Actions:** 2  
**Strike Rank:** +8  
**Movement:** 6m  
**Skills:** Athletics 25%, Dodge 30%, Perception 50%, Persistence 45%, Resilience 55%, Stealth 15%, Survival 60%, Tracking 30%  
**Armour:** 3 point hide (no penalty)



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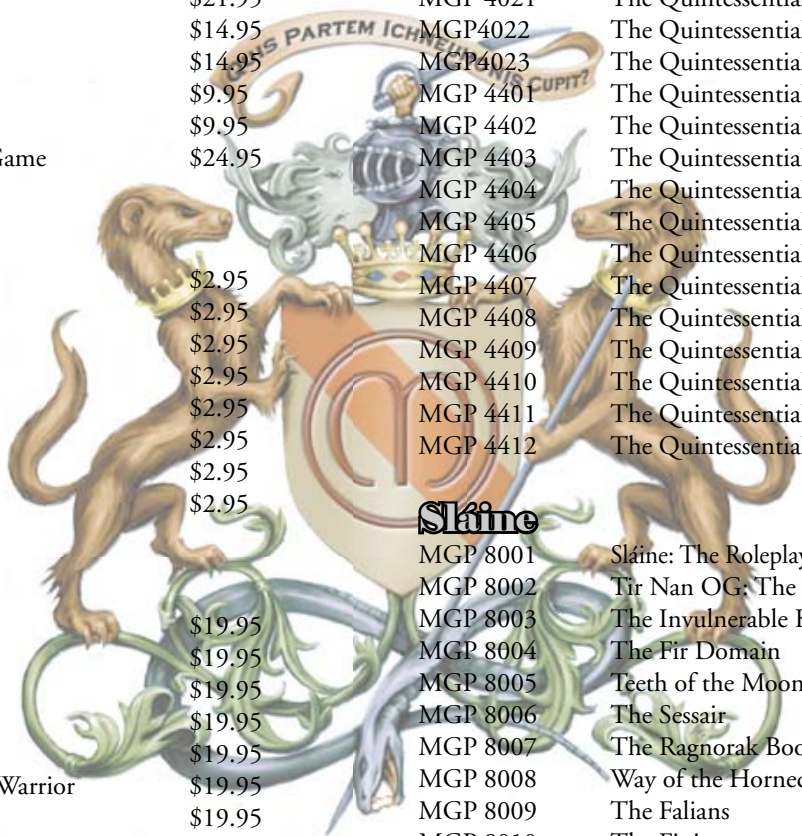
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