

MONGOOSE PUBLISHING PRESENTS



# Signs & Portents

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We make it easy to kill people – in Spycraft

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Say hello to my not-so-little friend

## The Ichthus of Life

Part one of an adventure for *Hawkmoon the Roleplaying Game*

Plus criminal goings-on in Conan, criminal goings-on in Babylon 5, definitely-no-crimes-here-no-way in Paranoia, and more...

S&P Roleplayer 52

January 2008

MGP 5552R

[www.mongoosepublishing.com](http://www.mongoosepublishing.com)

Happy new year!

When you read this, it'll be 2008 – among other things, the year Bill Gates is scheduled to step down from heading Microsoft, an Olympic year (China hosting) and the International Year of the Potato. I kid you not. The United Nations has declared 2008 to be a special potato-related year, coinciding with Peru's *National Year of the Potato*\* and generally spreading tubery goodness. To show my unequivocal support for the International Year of the Potato, here is a spotter's guide:

You might see a spread like this in Germany, where per capita potato consumption is the highest in the world.



World potato production is around 320 million tonnes every year. Which is a lot of potatoes.

The Moche culture of Northern Peru used to display anthropomorphic potatoes in their works of art.

Wild potatoes are actually *toxic*, and share a biological family with deadly nightshade!

Chris

\*So those lucky Peruvians get double-potato goodness for a whole year!

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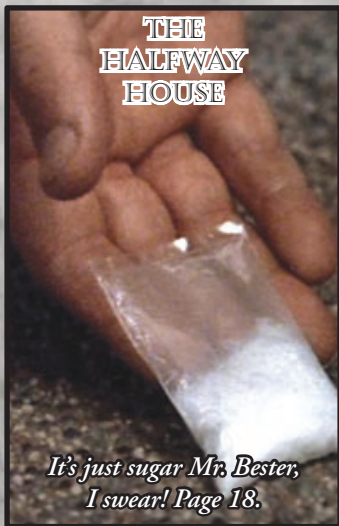
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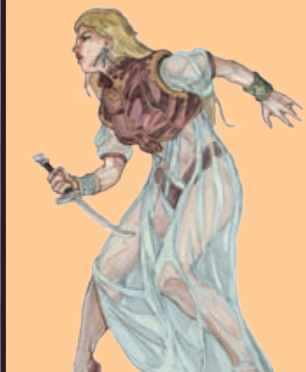
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# CAMEL SPIDERS

A quick one-page creature feature, by Laszlo Cook.

Many old and forgotten things lurk in the deserts of the world, long-buried by the sands until some careless explorer disturbs the wrong rock. Haunting these forsaken places are a wide variety of dangerous beasts – some natural, some magically created, some a mixture of both. Some of these are intentional guardians, some are just animals looking for a home. It is not known which of these categories the camel spider falls into, but since the first reports of these vicious arachnid predators have reached the ears of desert settlements, they seem to be spreading with remarkable speed.

The camel spider is a spider approximately twelve to eighteen inches across with a supernatural turn of speed and an anaesthetic venom. They lay their eggs in living creatures, which wander far and wide before the young finally chew their way out to the terminal detriment of the host.

## Characteristics

STR	1D3+2	(4)
CON	2D6	(7)
DEX	2D6+6	(13)
SIZ	1	(1)
INT	8	(8)
POW	2D6	(7)
CHA	2	(2)

Camel spiders are too small to need Hit Locations – treat them as having a single ‘Chest’ Hit Location with 4 Hit Points and no armour.

## Weapons

Type	Skill	Damage
Bite	50%	1 plus poison <sup>1</sup>

## Special Rules

Combat Actions:	3
Strike Rank:	+10
Movement:	18m
Traits:	Poison, Howl, Egg-laying
Skills:	Dodge 50%, Perception 50%, Persistence 25%, Resilience 25%, Stealth 75%

## Camel Spider Venom

**Type:** Injected

**Delay:** Instant

**Potency:** 65

**Full Effect:** The bitten Hit Location becomes totally numb. The Games Master keeps secret track of how many Hit Points that location has until the poison wears off.

**Duration:** 1D3 hours

## Howl

While running at top speed (close to 40 kph/25 mph) a camel spider can make an eerie, ululating howl like the scream of an approaching banshee. This often unnerves people and spooks animals, requiring Riding or Driving tests to keep control of steeds or draught beasts. Camel spiders often begin howling as they run away from the site of an attack, causing animals infested with their eggs to run away from the spider's chosen hunting ground.

## Egg-Laying

When a camel spider injects an enemy with poison it can also deposit eggs in the wound. A camel spider can only do this once every few days. If the venom takes effect there is no chance that the victim will notice the eggs without a serious cleaning of the wound. A successful First Aid or Medicine test can find and remove eggs from a wound.

Once implanted, the eggs grow to maturity over the next 1D10+20 days, causing one Hit Point of damage to the infested location every five days. These Hit Points cannot be recovered while the eggs remain – the infestation becomes obvious if the affected Hit Location reaches 0 or fewer Hit Points. When the baby spiders burst forth (treat as large, but otherwise normal spiders) the Hit Location suffers an automatic Major Wound.

# MAINTAINING MORTALITY

The winner of our COLOUR SLAINE competition – an article about how to keep d20 games down to earth at higher levels, by Sevyia Edmiston.

I have been playing *Dungeons & Dragons* for a very long time. I started with *First Edition Advanced Dungeon & Dragons*, watched the modest improvements to Second Edition, the huge leap forward to Third, and the fine tuning into 3.5. The game has come a long way, and is now (in my opinion) the best level-based role playing game ever written. There is, however, one element that has bothered me throughout the long evolution of D&D: hit points.

The problem, more specifically, is the rapid increase of hit points as the character gains experience. Most first level characters are in mortal danger from two or three swings from a longsword. By fifth level, however, the same character can usually take three times the punishment! And she keeps getting tougher at this rate through her entire career. Wounds that should cripple her in pain are shrugged of with a dismissal of, 'It's only 20 hit points.'

Over the approximately 30 years of D&D history, there have been numerous explanations and justifications for the way hit points work. These have been countered, and counter-counter, and so on. There have also been several attempts to modify the hit point system to more closely match the authors' various perceptions of reality. In the end, it really comes down to the personal choice of the Games Master and the players. The system I have seen and like the best is the one presented in *Starship Troopers*. In this article, I present a method to convert other d20 RPG's to use this system.

At first level, a character has hit points equal to his Constitution score. Each level after that, he gains a set number of hit points based on his class. There is no Constitution bonus applied to these hit points. To determine how many hit points he gets, look up the type of die used to roll hit points in the system you are using on the included table. This will give you the number for that hit die type. Note that 1d4 produces a loss of hit points for prestige classes, while is at zero for core classes. Any class that uses 1d4 for hit points places little to no emphasis on physical toughness, but losing a hit point every other level is too big of a penalty to apply to a core class.

*Example: Olena is a Zamoran Thief in Conan the Roleplaying Game. Her Constitution is 14. At first level she has 14 hit points. As a thief, she would normally gain 1d8 hit points per level. Looking up 1d8 on the table, we find that she gains 1 hit point per level. So, at second level, she has 15 hit points. This climbs to 16 at third, and 17 at fourth. At fifth level, she gains +1 to all attributes, as all characters in Conan do, so her hit points are now 19 (Constitution is now 15 +4 levels of thief). At sixth level, she chooses to take a level in Soldier. As soldiers normally get 1d10 hit points per level, Olena gains 2 this level, bringing her to 21.*

With the characters having significantly fewer hit points, the damage of spells needs to be addressed. Any spell that does an amount of damage based on caster level now causes that much damage per spell level. This includes the number of missiles fired with a

*Magic Missile* spell. For example, a fireball now causes 3d6 damage. To allow higher level casters to do more damage, I am including the following feat:

## INCREASE SPELL LEVEL [METAMAGIC]

You are able to make your spells more potent.

**Benefit:** You may cast a spell using a higher level of slot than is normally required. This will increase the damage as though the spell were the level of the slot used. The spell slot used cannot be of a level to which the caster has no access. Prepared casters must prepare the spell at the level to be used; spontaneous casters may make the decision to use this feat at the time of casting.

Generous GM's will probably want to allow this as a free ability, making it an inherent part of spell casting rather than requiring a feat be used.

In *Starship Troopers*, non-human monsters do not use this system; they have hit dice like monsters in any other D20 system. This is probably the easiest way to handle monster hit points. Some may wish to use the system presented here for monsters, feeling that it maintains balance or continuity. If you so choose, simply replace the first hit die with the monster's Constitution. All other hit dice are found on the table by die type, and appropriate bonuses are applied. For monsters with no Constitution, such as undead or constructs, use 20 or its Strength, whichever is higher. These monsters tend to be pretty tough.

*Example: There is to be a Greater Son of Set in a temple that Olena is plundering. The GM in this game chooses to convert the hit points of this monster, feeling that the same system should be used for everything in the campaign. A Greater Son of Set has a Constitution of 21, and 44d8 hit dice. The first hit die is replaced with 21 hit points (its Constitution score). The other 43 hit dice provide the beast with 1 hit point each according to the table. This gives a total of 64 hit points.*

One type of monster that should always use this system for hit points is humanoids. Ordinarily this isn't a problem; the procedure above will apply. However, sometimes there will be a monster with multiple hit dice *and* a few levels of character classes. In this case, work through the hit points for its species first, then apply hit points for each level (including the first one) according to the table.

*Example: Olena's GM has decided that her life is too easy, and wants to place an Man-Ape trained to the equivalent of a level two soldier. First, the Man-Ape has a Constitution of 14, and 6d8 hit dice. This is 19 hit points (14 for its Constitution+5 for the other 5d8 hit dice). Then for its two levels of soldier, it would get 2d10 hit points in normal Conan, so it gets 4 more hit points in this system (2 levels at 2 hit points each), totaling 23.*

Before adopting this system, you should carefully consider the effect it will have on your campaign. Weaker monsters will be on a more even footing with the player characters. The players will tend to fare a little better against weak traps. As levels increase, combat becomes more deadly. It will keep the characters' mortality more on the minds of the players. If the game you are playing includes Challenge Ratings you may find that they need a bit of adjusting to maintain the intended balance.

This system is not appropriate for all campaigns. If you and your players enjoy the heroic feel of higher-level D20 characters, then by all means file this article away as an interesting diversion. However, if you and your players prefer to have characters who feel more mortal, even at higher levels, then I encourage you to give this system a try.

Hit Die Type	Hit Point Bonus
1d4	0*
1d6	0
1d8	+1
1d10	+2
1d12	+3

\*Prestige classes that use 1d4 for hit dice lose 1 hit point every second level.



# TARGET SIGHTED!



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# THE RIGHT TOOLS FOR THE JOB: WETWORKS

MISSION GEAR PACK-OUTS FOR FIVE COMMON CHARACTERS, BY MARK NEWMAN.

*Spycraft 2.0* is a game of tense drama and fast cinematic action, so it makes sense then that the system for choosing your gear for each mission should be quick and simple. It just doesn't do to spend a whole gaming session choosing equipment when you could actually be playing. It is, then, convenient that *Spycraft 2.0's* default, mission-oriented gear system is located entirely within one chapter. This is great for speeding through a tricky phase of play, doing away with the need to track a character's bank balance and basing equipment selection on a simple, versatile 'pick' system.

The rules rely on three main elements. Possessions, which have been covered in a previous *Signs & Portents* article, represent a character's personal items — the things he's likely to have with him at all times. Mission gear, however, represents the toys that the agent's employers or supporters provide at the start of each mission to help him complete his current objectives, which makes it's easy to customize them for the task at hand. Also, a character gains a limited number of Common Items, covering all those seemingly trivial items he might have, like duct tape and zippo lighters.

Mission gear, the focus of this article, is determined by two factors: a character's classes and whether he's a Faction or Freelance operative (each affiliation grants slightly different picks, so the distinction is important). Given the diverse selection of base and advanced classes in *Spycraft*, it really wouldn't be feasible to recommend picks for every possible combination of those, so here we'll offer examples of gear that might work in the Faction and Freelance slots of five common character archetypes faced with each of five common mission types.

The amount of Faction or Freelance gear a character gains is based on his Charisma modifier, and the gear categories from which he can choose these picks is determined by his affiliation. A Faction agent picks from the Gadget, Resource, Tradecraft, and Vehicle categories, while a Freelancer picks from the Electronic, Security, Vehicle, and Weapon categories. Certain class features and feats can change this, but for argument's sake we'll assume that no such rules are in play here.

Now, looking at these lists of bonus picks, you might assume that Faction agents are at a disadvantage without their Charisma modifiers generating Security and Weapons picks. Not so! Carefully chosen Resources and Tradecraft picks can often alleviate the need for weapons and armour altogether, and combat gear can be incorporated into Gadgets just like other picks — plus they're usually smaller and slicker to boot! In the event that a character absolutely *has* to have a gun and a flak jacket, there's always Possessions and class picks.

It's important to note that gaining a Caliber V pick doesn't mean the player has to choose a Caliber V item. Any pick can be used to choose a lower Caliber item, and it's often it is a wise move for certain situations, as we illustrate in the following examples. The *Spycraft* system makes switching items as easy as replacing one item with another in an eligible category of up to the mission's current Caliber. So when you want to use one of the following pack-outs but aren't sure about an item or two, just flip to the right table and make another choice. It really is just that simple.

Hopefully these suggestions let you speed up your next Intel phase!

## THE WETWORKS MISSION

'Networks' is a term used by military and espionage groups to refer to missions where a target individual has to be killed. Other such terms include 'liquidation,' 'sanctioning,' and 'termination.' The gear required ranges from poison to explosives to that perennial favourite: the handgun.

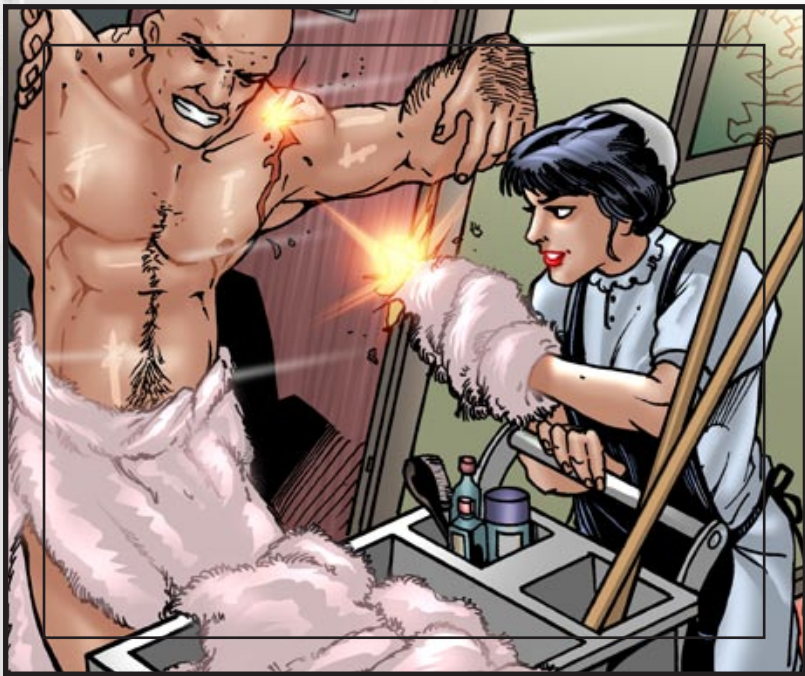
## THE RANGED COMBATANT

If there's one mission that a ranged combatant excels at, it's networks. Dropping a target from over a mile away is a talent precious few can master, and those few are in high demand in the intelligence game. This character often uses mission gear to cover gaps in his skill set, or to acquire specialty items he doesn't carry in his Possessions.

## FACTION PACK-OUT

**Caliber I:** The bag full of guns Resource is available at any Caliber and makes an excellent first pick for the ranged combatant. If it's available, a wise second pick is the unmarked weapon Resource for one of the team's handguns, making it safe to throwaway. At lower levels your target often has a low profile and a dossier Tradecraft pick can provide much needed information about him. You can also devote a pick to obtaining additional ammunition (on a networks run, few things are more inconvenient than running out of ammunition!). As a final thought, hope for the best, but plan for the worst; a medical assistance Resource pick





is good for patching up anyone who takes a hit, and it also lets you avoid spending precious skill points on the Medicine skill.

**Caliber II:** Who cares if you can't requisition Weapon picks? At Caliber II, a briefcase makes the ideal housing for a Proteus gadget, letting it transform into a Steyr AUG Para assault rifle or a 20 gauge Saiga 12k semi-automatic shotgun. Don't forget that the unmarked weapon Resource can also be applied to your nifty new gadget weapon, and you can load it with flechette or gas ammunition if you need to remove impediments quickly and quietly.

**Caliber III:** Our Proteus briefcase gadget now nets us better weapons — an H&K G36 assault rifle or a 12 gauge shotgun. An indirect strike Resource isn't always the quietest option, but it can wreak bloody havoc on a location if the target's hiding out and you don't mind

some collateral damage. The previously mentioned medical assistance pick can also be upgraded, and since we have an unmarked weapon to throw away, we can request a random corpse to go with it. Might as well throw the forensic investigation even further off your tail, right?

**Caliber IV:** When you're tackling a mission this important, your enemy is often too tough for the team to engage directly without suffering serious injury. Sure, the trusty medical assistance Resource comes in handy, but by swapping out our briefcase gun for an H&K G3 SG/1 or Colt M4 SOPMOD assault rifle you gain access to some highly effective, multi-purpose weapons that serve really well in a sniper role. Also at this Caliber, the indirect strike starts to offer some fairly scary support weapons, which can cover your exit after you get the deed done. Lastly, Caliber IV turns that convenient corpse into a convincing body double, which can provide the perfect alibi if you're caught.

**Caliber V:** At the pinnacle of operational funding, the factional ranged combatant can request the AI AW50, a nasty bolt-action rifle that makes an excellent Proteus option. Alternately, with a Medium Housing, you could upgrade to the Barrett M82A1 semi-automatic rifle, though it's harder to hide and transport. Clones also become available here, which you could throw to the wolves as you escape. Afraid it might rat on you and your team? No problem! Put a bullet in its brainpan before you leave it behind.

### **FREELANCE PACK-OUT**

**Caliber I:** As a Freelance operative, you can directly requisition weapons and body armour. As a

first recommendation, take a look at the MAC M11 light submachine gun. It's cheap and versatile, can fire in bursts, and its low recoil and retractable stock allow you to take full advantage of these qualities. The M11 also has plenty of ammo and comes with four extra clips, though it does use up ammunition rather fast so an extra pick or two could be spent on more. Next, consider protection. A tuxedo liner is light and discreet, but if you already have armour of your own then you could use the pick to upgrade it, adding knee/elbow pads, Nomex underwear, and personal tailoring. Think about picking up a grapple gun as well; it takes up less space than a climbing kit and it's a lot quicker to set up (just point and shoot!). A headset radio is another grand call. You could get one as a Common Item, but the pick version has a higher Power Rating and better range. Remember that despite the solitary nature of your work, coordinating with your team is just as important as the weapon you use to complete it.

**Caliber II:** Here you gain access to some of the best weapons in the game; they're versatile and easy to replace. Your body armour gets a boost at this Caliber as well, up to a tactical vest. Personal tailoring is a great upgrade for this armour as wearing it isn't naturally all that discreet. Also at Caliber II, you gain access to some nice Electronics picks; the commercial GPS unit, for example, is good for long-range missions — and it's a bit more compact than a great big map.

**Caliber III:** At Caliber III you can bet that your target will have plenty of protection or be quite capable of defending himself. Fortunately, you can finish your mission at range, and therefore out of his clutches, with an RSA Dragunov SVD bolt-action rifle. A tactical jacket with personal tailoring offers a bit more protection if the enemy gets too close and a commercial GPS system can provide useful information about the area around a target without the need to trudge through it ahead of time. The grapple gun gains a winch now (highly useful for finding good sniping spots!), and your radio cranks

TABLE 1: THE RANGED COMBATANT NETWORKS GEAR

Caliber	Faction Gear	Freelance Gear
I	Additional basic ammunition load (×2), bag full of guns, dossier, medical assistance (PR 1), unmarked weapon	Additional basic ammunition load (×2), grapple gun, headset radio (PR 2), MAC M11 light submachine gun, tuxedo liner or knee/elbow pads, Nomex underwear and personal tailoring for your own armour
II	Dossier, flash/bang grenades (×3), medical assistance (PR 1), Proteus gadget (Housing: briefcase, transforms into a 20 gauge Saiga 12k semi-automatic shotgun or Steyr AUG para assault rifle), unmarked weapon	Commercial GPS unit, grapple gun, headset radio (PR 2), Saiga 20 gauge 12k semi-automatic shotgun or Steyr AUG para assault rifle, tactical vest (personal tailoring)
III	Body (corpse), guided/indirect strike, medical assistance (PR 3), Proteus gadget (Housing: briefcase, transforms into an H&K G36 assault rifle with a 100-round drum magazine and integral advanced combat sight or a 12 gauge Saiga 12k semi-automatic shotgun), unmarked weapon	Commercial GPS unit, grapple gun (winch), headset radio (encrypted, PR 5), RSA Dragunov SVD semi-automatic rifle, tactical jacket (personal tailoring)
IV	Body double, guided/indirect strike, medical assistance (PR 4), Proteus gadget (Housing: briefcase, transforms into a Colt M4 SOPMOD assault rifle or an H&K G3 SG/1 assault rifle), unmarked weapon	Grapple gun (winch), H&K PSG-1 semi-automatic rifle (8.1–16× day/night sight, custom grip, ergonomic stock), headset radio (encrypted, PR 5), military GPS unit, riot gear (camouflage)
V	Body (clone), guided/indirect strike, medical assistance (PR 5), Proteus gadget (Housing: briefcase, transforms into an AI AW50 bolt-action rifle), unmarked weapon	Barrett M82A1 semiautomatic rifle, barrel upgrades (8.1–16× day/night sight, custom grip, ergonomic stock), headset radio (encrypted, PR 7), military GPS unit, riot gear (camouflage, knee and elbow pads, weight reduction)

up to a Power Rating of 5 with a Range of 10 miles. Now you can roam free but never lose touch with your team.

**Caliber IV:** At Caliber IV a lot of picks don't change so much as improve. The H&K PSG-1 replaces your Caliber III sniper rifle and you can don a set of riot gear if you like, perhaps with the *camouflage* upgrade so you can manoeuvre a bit without being spotted. Also, you can grab a military GPS unit, which is far more accurate, and at better range, than its predecessor.

**Caliber V:** Welcome to the ultimate sniper's weapon: the Barrett M82A1. This monster isn't even

technically a sniper rifle — it's an anti-materiel rifle and can be used to take out light vehicles as well as people. Mounting a telescopic sight lets you ignore range increments and attack penalties, and the custom grip/ergonomic stock combination offers a nice bonus to attack checks when aiming. If you're taking previous suggestions, modifying your riot armour with weight reduction and knee/elbow pads can help with a hasty retreat if it becomes necessary, and your headset radio can grow to a whopping PR 7 with a range of 50 miles and 8 hours of battery life!

## THE BQE (BREAKING AND ENTERING) SPECIALIST

This character is usually a master of stealth and rarely the team's most skilled combatant, so during a networks mission it's best for him to concentrate on the silent kill. Silencers, subsonic ammunition, bladed weapons, and garrottes are the order of the day, along with gear that makes the character harder to notice.

## FACTION PACK-OUT

**Caliber I:** A B&E specialist's main goal is often to get the rest of the team into a mission area, and he's rarely expected to do the killing himself. Still, every character should equip as if he's going to have to complete the mission objectives on his own. A fiberscope lets you check rooms for guards before entering, and it should always be a part of your kit during any mission when security could be present. A silence Gadget housed in your shoes makes it much harder for anyone to hear your passing, and a little legal help like a warrant can be great for tripping up official authorities. A basic neurotoxin can be slipped into a guard's drink or applied to your weapon of choice, and a miniature survival knife Gadget can be hidden in the back of your glove.

**Caliber II:** Here we can do away with the fiberscope and swap it for a cover identity to go with the warrant,



making for a very convincing combination. We can keep the silence gadget — it's generally useful and supports your role on the team. The poison can be swapped for a basic knockout drug that's better for slowing down guards and dispatching them without drawing attention, and the knife gadget can go for a garrotte to increase your chances of a muted kill.

**Caliber III:** Once you start taking serious jobs you can drop the silence gadget and replace your fiberscope with a wondrous little item: x-ray goggles! Your cover identity increases in power here and you can also enhance your garrotte with the deadly precision and wicked qualities, turning it into a lethal assassin's weapon.

**Caliber IV:** With a solid group of core picks, you should start thinking about upgrading them. Your x-ray goggles and cover identity are prime candidates, but any of your gear can see substantial improvement in a mission of this Caliber.

**Caliber V:** High-powered missions are a great chance to show off flashy gadgets, and you can take full advantage of that fact by adding an incorporeal Mechanism to your arsenal. If you need to free up a pick to make this happen, you can trade in one Caliber V pick for two Caliber III ones — enough for the x-ray vision and miniature garrotte.

## FREELANCE PACK-OUT

**Caliber I:** After you've made an area safe for entry, you'll need to signal your team to move in. A headset radio with a decent range obviates the need for line of sight and helps with the fact that you'll probably be working in the dark. Acid is great for breaking open locks that you can't force, and a

parabolic microphone gives you the chance to listen in on guard conversations from a distance. The last two items you need to look at are a survival knife for a little intimate violence and a tuxedo liner for some protection without encumbrance.

**Caliber II:** Keeping your ever-useful radio headset, you can upgrade your acid and swap out the parabolic microphone for a laser microphone, letting you listen in on conversations beyond windows. Also at this Caliber you can trade your survival knife for a slightly more useful garrotte, letting you silently take out guards, and you can exchange your tuxedo liner for some low-profile armour with knee and elbow pads — just in case you accidentally fluff an important Acrobatics/Jump check.

**Caliber III:** Again you should consider a headset radio and an upgrade for your acid, but now rather than taking a microphone you can focus on some slightly more impressive armaments. Taking a Caliber III garrotte pick also yields two upgrades, which you can use to add deadly precision (activate a critical threat for free once per session) and wicked (make them bleed!). Other picks include tear gas grenades, which can slow down pursuers and render corridors largely impassable, a gas mask to make you immune, and Nomex underwear as a layer of added insurance against fire, should you need to burn a location down to relieve a target of his misbegotten life.

**Caliber IV:** Continuing the theme, your acid and headset radio (now encrypted) both become stronger. Stick to the garrotte as your weapon of choice, but do away with the tear gas grenades so you can take a laser microphone and listen in on guards' conversations — or even the target's. The gas mask goes with the grenades, so you can upgrade your armour with ballistic glasses, gaining a little extra protection against flash in close quarters.

**Caliber V:** Here you finish upgrading the acid and encrypted headset radio, and add a GPS system for coordinating the team's movements. You might not be

TABLE 2: THE B&E SPECIALIST NETWORKS GEAR

Caliber	Faction Gear	Freelance Gear
I	Basic neurotoxin poison (×3), fiberscope, legal help (warrant, PR 1), silence gadget (Housing: shoes, PR 2), survival knife miniature gear pick gadget (Housing: glove)	Headset radio (PR 2), mild acid (PR 1), parabolic microphone, survival knife, tuxedo liner
II	Basic knockout poison (×3), cover identity (PR 2), garrotte miniature gear pick gadget (Housing: watch), legal help (warrant, PR1), silence gadget (Housing: shoes, PR 3)	Commercial acid (PR2), garrotte, headset radio (PR 2), laser microphone, low-profile armour (knee/elbow pads)
III	Basic knockout poison (×3), cover identity (PR 4), garrotte miniature gear pick gadget (Housing: watch, with deadly precision and wicked qualities), legal help (warrant, PR 4), x-ray vision gadget (Housing: goggles, PR 2)	Corrosive acid (PR 3), garrotte (deadly precision and wicked), headset radio (encrypted, PR 5), low-profile armour (gas mask, knee/elbow pads, Nomex underwear), tear gas grenades (×3)
IV	Cover identity (PR 6), garrotte miniature gear pick gadget (Housing: watch, with deadly precision and wicked qualities), improved knockout poison (×3), legal help (warrant, PR 6), x-ray vision gadget (Housing: goggles, PR 3)	Commercial GPS unit, concentrated acid (PR 4), garrotte (deadly precision and wicked), headset radio (encrypted, PR 5), laser microphone, low-profile armour (ballistic glasses, knee/elbow pads, Nomex underwear)
V	Cover identity (PR 8), garrotte miniature gear pick gadget (Housing: watch, with deadly precision and wicked qualities), improved knockout poison (×3), incorporeal gadget (Housing: belt), legal help (warrant, PR 8), x-ray vision gadget (Housing: goggles, PR 2)	Garrotte (deadly precision and wicked), headset radio (encrypted, PR 7), industrial acid (PR 5), long knife (ceramic and holdout sheath), low-profile armour (ballistic glasses, knee/elbow pads, Nomex underwear), military GPS

able to take down a Caliber V target with just a garrotte due to pesky inconveniences like security sensors, so a ceramic knife in a hidden sheath makes an effective backup. Don't forget to seriously consider better armour, either; you probably don't have the largest pool of vitality points on the team, so you should think hard about protecting the ones you've got.

## THE INTEL GATHERER

This character's job rarely extends to the actual kill. It's more likely that he'll be assigned to track the target, monitor the mission area, and listen carefully to local police reports. His work as the team's eyes and ears is vital to the mission's success and not to be overlooked. Though it never hurts to carry a weapon if one can be

slotted into the character's Possessions, the bulk of the intelligence gatherer's mission gear serves a more focussed role.

## FACTION PACK-OUT

**Caliber I:** A mobile headquarters is essential for you, as you have to be within signal range of all your neat toys to retain their benefit. Your garden-variety delivery van is ideal, and the skill training Resource can enhance your Drive skill, or lack thereof. Next, a recon drone that's small and easily stored, which unlike your bugs will provide a mobile point of view. Supplement with a consumer-grade video camera and a set of field glasses. Perhaps a cover identity pick, like a fake police uniform so you can arrest the target and take him somewhere

quiet to be whacked, or a dossier to put you squarely on the target's trail.

**Caliber II:** Enhance your base of operations with a full-sized semi-truck complete with trailer — it's big enough to house your whole team and another vehicle as well! Add a broad reconnaissance surveillance Resource so you can stay on top of the target area and its surroundings, and maybe use that vehicle space for a mid-range UAV (Unmanned Aerial Vehicle). It's airborne, making it more versatile than the recon drone, and you can replace it with an ROV for aquatic missions.

**Caliber III:** Consider an observation helicopter, which offers a significant advantage in chases and can augment the utility of many of your most basic devices, such as laser microphones. Another option is a tilt-rotor

TABLE 3: INTELLIGENCE GATHERER NETWORKS GEAR

Caliber	Faction Gear	Freelance Gear
I	Consumer-grade video camera, delivery van (full size with security package I), field glasses, recon drone, skill training (drive, PR 1)	Delivery van (full size with security package I), laptop computer (PR 1), lodging (1-star hotel), police scanner, recon drone
II	Consumer-grade video camera, mid-range UAV, reconnaissance (broad), skill training (drive, PR 2), tractor trailer (sleeper cab + 1 semi-trailer with security package I)	Laptop computer (PR 2), lodging (2-star hotel), mid-range UAV, police scanner, tractor trailer (sleeper + 1 semi-trailer with security package I)
III	Commercial-grade video camera, observation helicopter, reconnaissance (broad), skill training (drive, PR 4), tilt-rotor UAV	Laptop computer (PR 3), lodging (3-star hotel), observation helicopter, police scanner, tilt-rotor UAV
IV	Commercial-grade video camera, observation helicopter, reconnaissance (narrow), skill training (drive, PR 6), tilt-rotor UAV	Class IIIA duty vest (personal tailoring), lodging (4-star hotel), observation helicopter, observation helicopter upgrades (2 extra full loads of fuel, security package I, 'technical' conversion with 25mm cannon), tilt-rotor UAV
V	High-altitude recon plane, professional-grade video camera, reconnaissance (narrow), skill training (drive, PR 8), tilt-rotor UAV	Attack helicopter, class IIIA duty vest (personal tailoring, tactical glasses, trauma plates), jammer, lodging (5-star hotel), tilt-rotor UAV

UAV, which is highly manoeuvrable and can hover in place. Remember that when selecting the skill training Resource, you can actually split the points between up to three different skills, so you can enhance more than just Drive. Also, you might pick up a better video camera, improving its grade to commercial and thereby raising your result cap when using the item by 5.

**Caliber IV:** Your Caliber III picks are still strong, but they can improve. Your broad reconnaissance becomes narrow, for instance, letting you focus on a smaller area and raising your potential check result so your team won't encounter any surprises when they head in.

**Caliber V:** It may have been recently decommissioned, but the Lockheed SR-71 Blackbird is still an excellent piece of kit. High altitude recon planes let you take high-quality photographs from well above the enemy's radar ceiling, ensuring that countermeasures can't touch you. On the ground, you can grab a high-quality, professional-grade video camera, which increases your result cap by 10.

### FREELANCE PACK-OUT

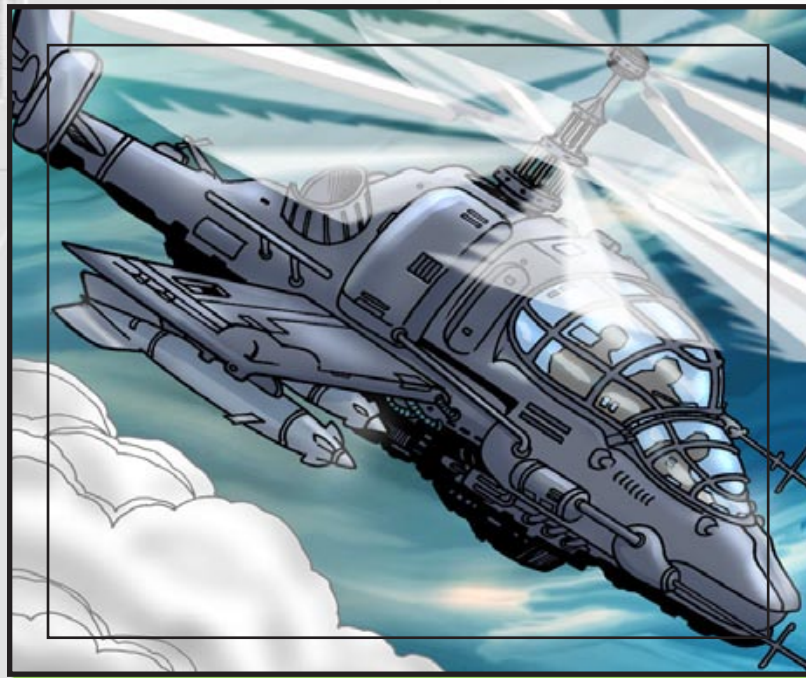
**Caliber I:** When putting together mission gear for a networks op, the Freelance intelligence gatherer shares several common gear choices with his Faction counterpart. A delivery van to be used as a mobile base of operations is a good idea, but another option is somewhere you can go to ground, like a cheap one-star hotel room. Remember, some missions take more than 24 hours! A recon drone is another good crossover item, and you'll have an easier time getting hold of a laptop you can use to monitor it and record data from those bugs that are probably part of your Possessions. Last but not least, a police scanner offers fantastic utility, especially when making sure the more enthusiastic members of your team don't get caught making too much noise.

**Caliber II:** You can upgrade your mobile HQ here, or you could spice up your hotel room with some (relative) luxury. Upgrade to a mid-range UAV, but keep the laptop computer and police scanner.

**Caliber III:** During mid-range missions you can requisition an observation helicopter or tilt-rotor UAV, and you can also set your team up in reasonably comfortable digs when the need arises.

**Caliber IV:** It's at this Caliber that you really start to see the difference between Faction and Freelance networks missions. Beyond the Caliber III vehicle choices, you might put in a request for a class IIIA duty vest. It's light enough to offer freedom of movement and thick enough to offer protection against most small-arms fire. Personal tailoring will lighten it up even more and help mitigate those pesky Occupant damage results if your helicopter takes an unfortunate critical hit. You could also upgrade the helicopter itself, perhaps with a security package and 'technical' upgrade to add some much-needed protection and firepower.

**Caliber V:** Who needs an upgraded observation helicopter when an attack helicopter does the same job *and* comes equipped with a 25mm machine gun? The tilt-rotor UAV is still an excellent pick for those discreet



jobs — because after all, an Apache gunship isn't very quiet, is it? The class IIIA duty vest makes a great third option, and at Caliber V you can add trauma plates for protection against heavier weapons and tactical glasses to guard against flash damage. A jammer is another fine option when you think you might run into your counterparts in the enemy ranks, or it can be used to sever the target's communications just before your team strikes. Finally, Caliber V offers the very best in five-star accommodation — for those teams that like to travel in style!

## THE SUAVE SOCIALITE

Often, the best candidate for a networks mission is the character who can blend in, getting close to the target before he realizes anything is wrong. The suave

socialite's unflappable charisma and concealed weapons skill can be a deadly combination, especially when equipped with easily hidden weapons.

### FACTION PACK-OUT

**Caliber I:** As a Faction socialite, you suffer a distinct disadvantage — you can't requisition invitations using bonus picks. You can, however, fall back on some pretty nifty Gadgets, like hidden compartments where you can hide a few doses of basic lethal poison, or a miniature dart gun hidden in a glove. You can even hide a tuxedo liner in a snazzy dinner jacket. Shifting to other categories, you can acquire a cover identity to get close to the target, or study your target with a dossier, which can provide a brisk mechanical advantage during a manhunt or brainwashing Conflict.

**Caliber II:** Trade in your miniature dart gun for a chemical transfer gadget, still in the same Housing. Naturally you'll need to request the poison to go with it, but now your dossier and cover identity can be used to get close enough to deliver a deadly handshake — just one, mind you, but with a firm grip that'll be plenty. Even if it only weakens the target it'll give your team a chance to finish him off. And of course, don't forget that getting closer to the target demands better armour — a trendy low-profile set hidden inside normal clothing should do just fine.

**Caliber III:** Trading in a single Caliber III Gadget pick for two Caliber I picks yields a miniature dart gun *and* a hidden compartment. That should free up a pick so you can request some more poison. Now you can shoot them *and* poison their food or drink (just to be absolutely sure)!

**Caliber IV:** Stick with your previous picks and add a second hidden compartment — a backup just in case. Don't forget to request improved poison instead of basic, and upgrade your cover identity and dossier as well.

**Caliber V:** One final item completes your repertoire: an attack gadget. This vicious little item is easily hidden inside something as innocuous as a tooth, and does a hefty 7d6 damage across a cone-shaped area, easily dropping the hardest civilian and doing severe damage to tougher enemies. As an added bonus, you can personalise the attack as you like. We recommend a fine mist you can puff across a room; you can cover the dispersal as a cough or blowing a flirtatious kiss.

### FREELANCE PACK-OUT

**Caliber I:** As a Freelance operative, you're often forced to be somewhat more direct, mainly due to the gear picks you're afforded. You can still choose a dart gun and a tuxedo liner, though in their ordinary forms. You can also add a stun gun to your arsenal, an item that's easily explained as self-defence. The Faction character's cover identity becomes a flashy sports car, which is helpful since its *hot* quality helps with bluffing your way past people asking awkward questions. Finally, many socialites overlook the simple audio bug, which allows your team to carefully monitor your progress during the early stages of the mission.

**Caliber II:** Here you start to demonstrate the advantages of your Freelance status, requesting invitation picks and upgrading your vehicle to a luxury sports car (never underestimate increased performance should you need to make a hasty exit). You can trade in your tuxedo liner for trendy low-profile armour with the added protection of a briefcase shield (which can also store your dart gun), and you can boost your audio bug's power too.

**Caliber III:** The main differences here lie in your protection and your transport. Your low-profile armour

TABLE 4: SUAVE SOCIALITE NETWORKS GEAR

Caliber	Faction Gear	Freelance Gear
I	Cover identity (PR 1), Disinject Model 35 handgun miniature gear pick gadget (Housing: gloves) with basic lethal poison (12 doses), dossier (PR 1), hidden compartment gadget (Housing: watch), tuxedo liner miniature gear pick gadget (Housing: jacket)	Audio bug (PR 1), Disinject Model 35 handgun with basic lethal poison (12 doses), sports car, stun gun (melee), tuxedo liner
II	Basic lethal poison (3 doses), chemical transfer gadget (Housing: gloves), cover identity (PR 2), dossier (PR 2), trendy low-profile armour miniature gear pick gadget (Housing: jacket, with Nomex underwear)	Audio bug (PR 2), Disinject Model 35 handgun with basic lethal poison (12 doses), invitation (local gathering), luxury sports car, trendy low-profile armour (briefcase shield)
III	Basic lethal poison (3 doses), Caliber III gadget (Disinject Model 35 handgun miniature gear pick gadget (Housing: gloves) with basic lethal poison (12 doses), hidden compartment gadget (Housing: watch)), cover identity (PR 4), dossier (PR 3), trendy low-profile armour miniature gear pick gadget (Housing: jacket, with Nomex underwear, personal tailoring and weight reduction)	Audio bug (PR 4), Disinject Model 35 handgun with basic lethal poison (12 doses), invitation (local gathering), light business jet, trendy low-profile armour (briefcase shield, Nomex underwear, personal tailoring)
IV	Caliber IV gadget pick (Disinject Model 35 handgun miniature gear pick gadget (Housing: gloves) with basic lethal poison (12 doses), hidden compartment gadget (Housing: watch), hidden compartment gadget (Housing: shoe), cover identity (PR 6), improved lethal poison (3 doses), dossier (PR 4), riot gear miniature gear pick gadget (Housing: jacket, with Nomex underwear)	Audio bug (PR 6), Disinject Model 35 handgun with basic lethal poison (12 doses), heavy business jet, invitation (regional gathering), trendy low-profile armour (briefcase shield, Nomex underwear, personal tailoring)
V	Attack gadget (Housing: tooth, PR 7 cone), cover identity (PR 8), dossier (PR 5), improved lethal poison (3 doses), riot gear miniature gear pick gadget (Housing: jacket, with Nomex underwear, personal tailoring and weight reduction)	Audio bug (PR 8), Disinject Model 35 handgun with basic lethal poison (12 doses), invitation (regional gathering), private suborbital spacecraft, trendy low-profile armour (briefcase shield, Nomex underwear, personal tailoring)

now offers 2 more upgrades, which you can use to add Nomex underwear and a little personal tailoring for added discretion. Your luxury sports car isn't really going to impress a serious villain, but you can now request a light business jet with all the amenities of the casual sting.

**Caliber IV:** With a good set of mission gear sorted out, you can focus on the bigger picture. Your invitations

now get you into regional soirees, and you can now score a full-size business jet.

**Caliber V:** Private plane? Not today! Arrive in your very own private suborbital! The team's intelligence specialist will thank you for the chance to take surveillance pictures from the crystal clarity of near-orbit!

## THE WIRED WARRIOR

Radio-controlled bombs, remote activated sentry guns, drones, computerized lift controls — all these are reasons why the wired warrior is vital to many modern teams. He offers many of the same benefits of an intelligence gatherer with the added benefit that electronic components just leap to his attention. Give him wi-fi access and you've got yourself a truly terrifying mission resource.

## FACTION PACK-OUT

**Caliber I:** As was mentioned in the previous gear article, it's often poor economy to choose software as part of your Possessions. When deciding on your mission picks, however, it's time to talk programs, and a probe is the perfect candidate, helping to acquire the target's details. Sticking with the theme of cool toys, a retro cell phone makes a good Housing for a Proteus CZ Skorpion light SMG, a nasty surprise for cocky minions who assume they're messing with an unarmed computer nerd! Codes can be useful for communicating with your Faction and sending information to your team, especially when they're out in the field and you're in your hideout, and a low-Caliber skill training pick can offer a nice boost if you're low-level.

**Caliber II:** Use the increased Caliber to acquire more powerful hardware and software. Your Proteus gadget becomes an IMI Mini Uzi and you can lose the skill training in favour of an EMP gadget to fry any electronic media within 5 ft. (make sure your own gear is well out of the way when you do!).

**Caliber III:** Your EMP gadget is more powerful here, but has a somewhat unpredictable blast radius of 4d6 ft, and our Proteus weapon ratchets up to the highly versatile H&K Mk. 23 service pistol. This great weapon comes with a variety of free attachments and upgrades, making it the perfect option for someone with no idea how, where, or even if they'll see combat.

**Caliber IV:** At 6d6 ft. your EMP blast is now a force to be reckoned with, and your desktop computer, code, and probe software all gain truly fearsome Power Ratings.

**Caliber V:** At the zenith of operational funding, most of your electronic gear has Power Ratings as high as 7 and 8, well beyond what any ordinary opponent can hope to match.

## FREELANCE PACK-OUT

**Caliber I:** Your primary advantage over a Faction wired warrior is your ability to request Electronics gear picks. Take advantage of this by choosing a robust software suite for your custom laptop. Probe is useful, but you should also consider taking a virus or two. Pick up a good headset radio to stay in contact with your team and call for help if you need it, and a CZ Skorpion and tuxedo liner for those times when the cavalry shows up late.

**Caliber II:** At this Caliber upgrading your software should be your first priority. Kick around upgrading your weapon to an IMI Mini-Uzi, as it's a stronger weapon in nearly every way and easier to conceal, too. Finally, bring along a raid jacket with knee and elbow pads.

**Caliber III:** Your headset radio is now PR 5 and encrypted, and your weapon improves to an H&K Mk.

23 service pistol. Adding a shoulder holster ensures easy carrying and concealability, and a clockwork action upgrade means that 50% of the time the GC won't even get the option of activating your errors. Last but not least, swap out the raid jacket for some modular tactical armour and you'll be the envy of your digital peers.

**Caliber IV:** Upgrading your software nets you PR 6 probe and virus picks, and you can modify your armour to include personal tailoring and weight reduction.

**Caliber V:** As your software and headset radio reach PR 7, your pack-out begins to truly shine. The rest of your mission gear is probably fine as is, though you could always go with a lighter set of armour if you like. Depends on whether you expect to be doing much running, which is a mildly pessimistic — though some would say prudent — attitude on a networks mission.



*(Beautiful women not typically available as gear picks – Ed.)*



TABLE 5: WIRED WARRIOR NETWORKS GEAR

Caliber	Faction Gear	Freelance Gear
I	Code (PR 1), desktop computer miniature gear pick gadget (Housing: briefcase, PR 2), probe computer software miniature gear pick gadget (Housing: briefcase, PR 2), Proteus gadget (Housing: retro cell phone, transforms into a CZ Skorpion light SMG), skill training Resource (PR 1)	CZ Skorpion light submachine gun, headset radio (PR 2), probe computer software (PR 2), tuxedo liner, virus computer software (PR 2)
II	Code (PR 2), desktop computer miniature gear pick gadget (Housing: briefcase, PR 3), EMP gadget (Housing: magnet, 5 ft.), probe computer software miniature gear pick gadget (Housing: briefcase, PR 4), Proteus gadget (Housing: retro cell phone, transforms into a IMI mini-Uzi heavy SMG)	Headset radio (PR 2), IMI Mini-Uzi heavy submachine gun (clockwork action, reworked action I), probe computer software (PR 4), raid jacket (knee and elbow pads), virus computer software (PR 4)
III	Code (PR 4), desktop computer miniature gear pick gadget (Housing: briefcase, PR 4), EMP gadget (Housing: magnet, 4d6 blast), probe computer software miniature gear pick gadget (Housing: briefcase, PR 5), Proteus gadget (Housing: retro cell phone, transforms into an H&K Mk. 23 service pistol)	Encrypted headset radio (PR 5), H&K Mk. 23 service pistol (clockwork action, shoulder holster), modular tactical armour, probe computer software (PR 5), virus computer software (PR 5)
IV	Code (PR 6), desktop computer miniature gear pick gadget (Housing: briefcase, PR 5), EMP gadget (Housing: magnet, 6d6 blast), probe computer software miniature gear pick gadget (Housing: briefcase, PR 6), Proteus gadget (Housing: retro cell phone, transforms into an H&K Mk. 23 service pistol)	Encrypted headset radio (PR 5), H&K Mk. 23 service pistol (clockwork action, shoulder holster), modular tactical armour (personal tailoring, weight reduction), probe computer software (PR 6), virus computer software (PR 6)
V	Code (PR 8), desktop computer miniature gear pick gadget (Housing: briefcase, PR 6), EMP gadget (Housing: magnet, 8d6 blast), probe computer software miniature gear pick gadget (Housing: briefcase, PR 7), Proteus gadget (Housing: retro cell phone, transforms into an H&K Mk. 23 service pistol)	Encrypted headset radio (PR 7), H&K Mk. 23 service pistol (clockwork action, shoulder holster), modular tactical armour (personal tailoring, weight reduction), probe computer software (PR 7), virus computer software (PR 7)

# The Halfway House

**An ever-traditional hive of scum and villainy, by Bryan Steele.**

This article details a little known gathering place of criminals, scum and general villains in the Babylon 5 galaxy nicknamed the Halfway House. Whether it is to bet on the illegal fights in the arena, or to find just the right slave for your personal needs, the Halfway House can help – if the credits are right.

With the information offered in this article, Babylon 5 Games Masters can add this colourful new port of call to their existing chronicles. It will allow for the Halfway House to lure spacefarers from all over the galaxy to new and darker wants...

## Introduction

Originally designated 'EarthForce Holding Facility 775.6', the moon-based starport became universally known as the Halfway House by smugglers, slavers and other criminals because they claimed it was '*Exactly halfway to hell and halfway to heaven.*' It was a military installation used to house nautical prisoners and governmental offenders, most of whom were captured deserters or insubordinate marines. It was a dangerous place that received very little in the way of funding and support from EarthGov, making it even more dangerous in regards to the men who ran it. No finer thieves and extortionists existed than the warden and his crew.

When the Earth-Minbari War threatened to wipe humanity off the face of the galaxy, the warden and his closest associates sent word on open

channels back to EarthGov that the starport was already overtaken. This would erase any existence of the starport from the record and hopefully avoid Minbari involvement. Although it would not have spared them, the Battle of the Line did, and no one thought about Holding Facility 775.6 any longer.

With the attachments to EarthGov severed, the warden and his direct allies turned to what they always did best – make a profit. Releasing the criminals into their own custody, they created a powerful labour force that would slowly be allowed to re-integrate into society as agents of the warden and his new secret business venture – the Halfway House.

## Location and Function

The Halfway House is located on the icy moon over Sinzar V on the outskirts of Earth Alliance territory. It is a grey speck on the otherwise white stretch of ice and snow roughly two kilometres square. It is a very small installation that is frequently covered by recent snowfalls and cloud cover, making it extremely difficult to find unless invited, or unless the visitor knows exactly where to go.

Ever since Warden Roberts turned the facility from a prison into a criminal haven, the Halfway House has become one of the finest places in Earth Alliance territory to find illicit goods, services and people to spend credits on. It is where humans and aliens alike are invited to come, bring their money, and hopefully

come away with more than what they came with. It is a gambler's paradise and a den of ill-gotten goods, and those who traffic in such things.

If it is illegal and someone will pay good money for it – Halfway House has got it.

## Schematic

Built around the idea of individual cellblocks, the Halfway House is designed as a series of five sections connected by defensible walkways. Each section connects to solely the main hub at the centre of the complex, which was once the main hall for the warden and the guards to live and work from. Each outer section is a three-hundred feet cube, while the main hub is twice that size. In order to keep all posted maps and direction information current, Warden Roberts kept the same names for the sections. It makes getting around in Halfway House confusing for the first few days, but frequent visitors learn it fast enough.

The main section of Halfway House is called the Office Hub. This is where Warden Roberts and his 'cabinet' run all of the operations of the starport. It is also where any and all commercial businesses that might want to set up 'officially-unofficial' offices. The Office Hub has a dozen different floors dedicated to the housing of starport employees and honoured guests of the warden. After five years of being open for business, Roberts managed to turn two of the Hub's floors into exact replicas of the Luxor II in New Vegas – his favourite casino hotel.

Sprouting off of the Hub are the five Blocks. Each Block is attached to a different floor access point on the Hub, a design that helped keep rioting Blocks from gaining control of the entire facility. This means that getting from one Block to another is a walk through the Hub, which is why those five levels are often riddled with kiosks and shops to attract the random passer by.

Alpha Block is where the external access to the starport docks with. It is where all security measures were once in place to monitor visitors and transfers, and now has become more or less one giant shuttle terminal. Although it has only enough room for three standard shuttles to dock *inside* the starport at any given time, but has room on the ice fields outside for brave pilots to land externally. There is no real form of customs or weapon registry to speak of in Alpha Block; the rule is simple – do not get caught.

Beta Block is where the most violent offenders were once placed. Thick cells made of starship-grade deckplate and transpariglass that once held prisoners now holds dangerous contraband that could prove hazardous to starport personnel. Explosives, chemical agents, exotic lifeforms and the like are *requested* to be stored in the super-max cells in Beta Block. The warden does not expect everyone to take these precautions, but those that do are often rewarded with better rates and occasional gifts from the management.

Ceti Block is where the mess hall, cafeteria and gymnasium once stood. Now it still serves the same purposes, but with sectioned eating areas, fast food kiosks and a gladiatorial arena. For twenty-five standard credits a patron could grab a MacBari with cheese, take a seat amongst their peers, and watch pugilists tear each other apart for fame and money. Most of the personal grievances in Halfway House are brought to the Arena; letting skill and luck decide who is right and who is *beaten*.

Gamma Block is home to the ‘finest prostitutes and drug dens on Sinzar V’, which is not to say it is home to the *only* open examples of those professions. There are dealers of chemicals and flesh all over the Halfway House, but they are centrally located and controlled in Gamma Block. Where there were once libraries and school facilities amidst the medium security cells there are barracks-style brothels and flophouses, where most patrons choose to stay if they cannot afford Office Hub prices. In 2252, Warden Roberts moved in almost two hundred ‘coffin sleepers’ that someone can rent for thirty credits for eight hours, if they can stomach who might have been sleeping in it before them.

Omega Block is where the Halfway House performs all of its hard line labours. Home to the original machine shops and work stations, Warden Roberts altered the plate presses and textile spinners to serve as barrel mills, plasma chargers and an assortment of other more useful industries. Now the Halfway House can recharge PPG caps, mill out gauss pistols, and stamp armour plates for nearly any size of body. Owned and operated by a dozen different investors, Roberts sits at the head of the board that keeps Omega Block running. So long as it produces goods to sell or barter, he and his fellows are happy.

## Arrival and Transit

Getting to Halfway House is a combination of foreknowledge, skill and a pinch of luck. With the starport basically off the official grid for travellers, it is not something that can randomly be found easily. It requires someone showing you where to look, and what to look for (Knowledge (Galactic Lore) DC 16). Hanging out in the right bars and transfer points can reveal its location too, if someone knows how to ask the right questions (Intrigue DC 15) to the right people.

When a pilot knows where to find the starport, he then has to get permission from the Office Hub to land at all.

No one openly affiliated with a governmental agency or police force can get anywhere near Halfway House unless they have a criminal organisation vouching for them such as the Martian Mafia, the Choshaka raiders, or something similar. Once Warden Roberts’ staff is satisfied the shuttle will not be a problem, they are given clearance to land in the adjoining ice fields – only VIPs get access to the terminal bays – which can be a test of a shuttle pilot’s skill to say the least.

It takes three separate Pilot skill checks at DC 12, 15, and 18 respectively to land without complications. The first check is to adjust for the sleeting winds that the moon is known for. The second check is to line up a proper landing pattern between the hills of snow and ice. The third and final check is to show whether or not the shuttle will land too hard upon the ice and slide, adding +5 to the Pilot check (base DC 14) required to take off again when the time comes.

Once landed, it is a cold and unpleasant five-hundred feet from the ice field to the doors at Alpha Block. Although there is high oxygen content on the moon, without proper environmental gear the short walk will inflict 3d6 nonlethal damage from frostbite and muscle fatigue.

Once inside Alpha Block there are no formal customs or security checkpoints but someone carrying in a crate marked ‘biohazard’ or ‘explosives’ will likely get detained and talked to by Halfway House Officers.

Transit around the starport is simple enough – you walk. It is not that large of an installation and although the layout is not the most conducive to meandering or quick transportation from one block to another, it has no other official modes of transit. Warden Roberts and his cabinet teams have access to external hatches and heated aircars that allow him and his men to go from one area to another in mere minutes.

## General Usage Procedures

Few would ever think of using the Halfway House as anything but a haven for their criminal wants and needs, especially the average spacefarer. It could serve as a good place to lay low or hide out for a short while from unwanted attentions, but it is not exactly a tourist attraction. Those who come to Halfway House are likely doing so because they have business to conduct that they do not wish to be public.

Everything that happens in Halfway House happens at Warden Roberts' discretion. If he does not like a certain smuggler or peddler, that person is soon asked to leave – or they are dealt with very harshly. Roberts learned that fear and hatred are just as strong emotions as love and respect early in his career as facility manager, but that they get far more results with the scum of the galaxy.

Anyone 'accidentally' finding the Halfway House is probably a trade marshal, bounty hunter or governmental agent as far as the patrons of the starport are concerned. New faces are distrusted because they could be working for anyone, making a simple stop at Halfway House a gruelling effort that could end up poorly for the uninitiated.

## Security

Warden Roberts keeps a stable of thirty Halfway House Officers at his beck and call at any given time, many of which are the old correctional officers that served with him in the 40s. They are paid to keep the peace between patrons at any cost, and are not squeamish about broken bones or PPG grazes to get their point across. When their stark blue uniforms come marching down the hall toward a problem, or toward someone that might have angered the warden, those who know better get the hell out of their path and look the other way until they are gone again.

Considering there is no actual set of laws or rules that the warden has ever truly instituted other than 'do what I say' and hundreds of criminals living within its walls, there is a great deal of interpretation when it comes to keeping the patrons safe from one another. Generally speaking, the Officers do not try to 'police' anyone – they simply keep individual arguments or problems from threatening those not involved. More importantly, they keep the starport itself from being damaged. They are, in practice, solely security for the warden's interests.

The following is a generic human member of the Halfway House Officer staff. In order to make a non-human version, simply adjust the statistics using the additions for that species, although they are very rare due to Warden Roberts' prejudices.

### 3<sup>rd</sup> level human Soldier/1<sup>st</sup> level Agent

**Hit Points:** 16

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

**Speed:** 30ft

**DV:** 15 (+2 Class, +2 Dex)

**Attacks:** +5 melee, +5 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Co-ordinated Unit +1

**Saves:** Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +1

**Abilities:** Str 14, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10

**Skills:** Appraise +3, Athletics +4, Bluff +5, Intimidate +6, Intrigue +4, Investigate +4, Notice +7, Profession (Blue Collar – Correctional Officer) +4, Sense Motive +8, Technical (Electronics) +4

**Feats:** Brawler, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Skill Focus (Sense Motive)

**Equipment:** Combat Knife, Snap Baton, Auricon EF-7 PPG w/3 caps, Armoured Uniform (DR 1), EA Standard Link

## Operations

Halfway House is run by one man and one man only – Warden Gerald Roberts. Warden Roberts keeps a six

member 'cabinet' as advisors to his decisions, but the final say in all things comes down to the old man himself. He lets his accountant Arthur Price deal with the funding and resource management of the starport, but all decisions have his signature upon them. He is the heart and mind of this soulless place, and with no family to speak of; the power vacuum when he dies will tear Halfway House apart.

## Gerald Roberts: Warden and Manager of the Halfway House criminal starport

*'I provide a place for the services that others are afraid to offer. Right and wrong are just the words, that's all. Are the people happy? That's what matters to me. That, and all the profit.'*

### 9<sup>th</sup> Level Officer (Ground)

**Hit Points:** 24

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

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 18 (+6 class, +2 Dex)

**Attacks:** +10/+5 melee or +11/+6/+1 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Rallying Call 2/day, Way of Command

**Saves:** Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +9

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

**Skills:** Appraise +5, Athletics +8, Bluff +12, Computer Use +8, Concentration +6, Diplomacy +8, Intimidate +13, Intrigue +10, Investigate +12, Knowledge (EA law) +11, Knowledge (Halfway House) +14, Notice +11, Operations (Systems) +10, Pilot +3, Profession (Blue Collar – Facility Manager) +12, Sense Motive +12, Stealth +4, Subterfuge +8, Technical (electronics) +6

**Feats:** Data Access, Fluency (Human, Dilgar, Sh'lassan), Improved Initiative, Lightning Reload, Martial Arts, Point Blank Shot, Spacecraft Proficiency, Surface Vehicle Proficiency, Veteran GROPOS, Weapon Focus (PPG Pistol), Weapon Proficiency (spacecraft weapons)

**Influence:** Halfway House (Criminal) 26, Earth Alliance (Criminal) 12, Martian Mafia 10, Centauri Underworld (Criminal) 8, Smuggler's Network 7, Spacer's Union 4, Choshaka 2

**Standard Equipment:** Armoured Uniform (DR 1), Secured EA Link, Auricon PPG pistol w/ 2 caps, Needler, 3 Morph Gas Grenades, Rebreather Mask

Never one to think of himself as a crime lord, Warden Roberts is a steel-haired soldier in his late 50s but still full of the same spit and vinegar that gave him the idea to turn his holding facility into a secret starport. He fought in the Dilgar War as a grunt GROPOS, earning him his 'cushy' position at the prison, but also teaching him a great deal about self-preservation and profiteering. He has never been much for aliens after seeing what the Dilgar did to the races of the League, thinking that all aliens must be just as ruthless. He has learned that some can be trusted enough to be as greedy as he is, but that they must all be watched for treachery.

The warden is unafraid of anything anymore, knowing that his enemies would be loathe to bring him down for fear of what sorts of contingency contracts he might have in place. In fact, he has not written a single word of his will, and he enjoys knowing that his creation will likely turn into a chaotic mess when he eventually passes away. If he cannot have it where he is going, he simply does not care if anyone else gets it afterwards.

### Roleplaying with Roberts

Warden Roberts is a hard man, born on Io but raised on Mars. He takes pride in his 'Marsie' heritage, and believes it is his non-Earthbound upbringing that has allowed him to so easily go against his own government and create Halfway House at its expense. He treats those he knows to be criminals or wanted men with great respect, feeling a definite camaraderie with them. Unknown faces or those he has not done enough

research upon to see if they are his enemies are instead treated with cold and calculated efficiency – the same kind of treatment he used to give the new inmates back in the 40s.

## Cargo and Commerce

Halfway House is a criminal haven for contraband and illicit services. An average grocery trip will likely be missing the essentials like protein paste or caffeine tabs, but untraceable PPGs or experimental nerve stimulants can be found peddled like meat at an open market. It is a seller's market in Halfway House, and bringing the right kind of goods to the table can result in huge profits.



Halfway House uses the standard credit as its preferred method of commerce, but anyone can use their own currencies if they wish to. All sales in Halfway House are very much final, must be cash transactions only, and cannot show any physical record of any kind – these are the laws of all commerce. Any arguments over sales are generally taken to the Arena, and anyone found making physical, *traceable* records of sales is sure to be standing in front of the warden.

Most of the starport's transactions take place in the various Blocks and hallways throughout the facility. Although there are several places where sellers and buyers meet on a regular basis, there is not a true commercial quarter in Halfway House. Transactions take place where they can, no matter what is being sold or traded.

## Low Life and Lower Life

The patrons of the Halfway House are constantly revolving; coming and going as they see fit. The people who frequent the station rarely stay longer than a few days at a time, making the population of the starport a mix of new faces every time someone comes to visit. There are always a few regulars around, mainly those who work for Warden Roberts and his cabinet, but even they continually shift and move around. After all, they never can tell when a new face visiting the starport could be the one that looks to try and bring the law. Even so, there are three main factions of people that seem to always be around the Halfway House.

### The Warden's Cabinet

From his accountant and private chef to his own personal assassin, Warden Roberts keeps his agents as close to him as he can with them still being able to perform their duties. They all wear blue armbands when in 'uniform' to designate themselves as cabinet members, giving them a higher degree of power while around Halfway House's populace. Only the short-lived or very foolish do not give a cabinet member what they want when they ask for it; their word means a lot to Warden Roberts, and if they feel someone needs to be dealt with they likely will be.

### Slavers' Principle

There are a surprisingly low number of individual slavers that call Halfway House their primary business centre, but they are powerful enough to have formed their own

unofficial union called the Principle. Led by a merciless Hurr named Tellid, the Principle helps would-be owners find the perfect living assets for their special needs by buying up captives and prisoners from other illicit sources and bringing them to the Halfway House to unload to special orders. It is said that Tellid is a multi-billionaire at this point, making well over half his fortune during the Narn slave-raids during the second Centauri occupation of the Narn Homeworld – and that the Narn have no love for the man because of it.

### Black Circle

Bounty hunters generally are not allowed anywhere near Halfway House as a rule. That is, except for those private hitmen that have given up the ways of the legal huntsmen and now simply work for private contracts that end in dead bodies. A group of ten assassins from all over the galaxy, the Black Circle formed in the wake of the Shadow War from various bounty hunters that all had one main employer in common that was suddenly no longer available to them – the Shadows. Finding profit in taking on any contract they deemed bloody enough, the Black Circle will eventually find a new set of employers when the Drakh rise up against the galaxy, each one earning their own Keeper and a high-profile target somewhere in the galaxy...

## New Influence – Halfway House (Criminal/Economic)

**Description:** The ability to not only come and go from the secret starport called Halfway House, but also the knack for getting its resources to work for someone is a tall order that few can boast. Someone who can call upon Warden Roberts or his allies to do something on their behalf can achieve amazing feats, if they do not mind breaking the law to do it.

**Obtained By:** Discovering Halfway House and making allies there, Performing illegal acts on the behalf of the Halfway House.

**Contacts:** Warden's Cabinet members, regular criminal patrons, contracted employees.

**Pressures:** Any Criminal, Earth Alliance (any).



Resources	DC
Arrange for a meeting with a cabinet member of the Warden	10
Arrange for internal docking for a VIP shuttle	12
Untraceable access to average illegal goods and services (drugs, blackmail, etc.); contact the Warden directly; allow an unwanted person (trade marshal, bounty hunter, etc.) access to Halfway House	15
Arrange for specific goods or services to be waiting when character arrives; arrange for physical offices in Office Hub	20
Untraceable access to highly illegal goods and services (weapons, slaves, etc.); arrange for someone in Halfway House to be harassed by House Officers	25
Arrange for any unprotected Halfway House patron or resident to end up in the Arena against a fighter of your choice; hire Black Circle hitman	30

# SUMMONERS

A different approach to magic, by Joshua Cole

This article presents a new magic system for your *RuneQuest* game: summoning. Summoning is based on the relationship between a subset of powerful monsters, called eidolons, and the humans who use mystical arts to bind the creatures to their will. Player characters, their rivals and foes can all potentially benefit from this power.

Games Masters can incorporate summoning magic into an existing *RuneQuest* campaign, including one based in Lankhmar or Glorantha's Second Age. Because it relies on a resource – eidolons – that the Games Master can make as limited as he likes, it can be relegated to a tiny, even forgotten corner of the world; it could even represent a unique bond between an eidolon, perhaps the last of its kind, and a single character.

Alternately, the Games Master can weave summoners and eidolons into his own campaign world from the outset, using them in addition to, or in place of, the other magic systems presented in *RuneQuest* products.

To make full use of this article, you will need the *RuneQuest* core book and the *RuneQuest Companion* (for the rules on spirit creatures), but provided you ignore the spiritual side of the eidolons, you can use it with just the *RuneQuest* core book.

## Summoners In The World

Summoners can have as large or small an impact on the Games Master's world as he wishes. In some settings, summoners are widely known and respected as the greatest heroes of the age; in others, they are feared and hated; in still others, their arts have vanished into the mists of history, remembered only by the eidolons themselves and perhaps a handful of isolated tribes and scholars.

The Games Master should decide how significant a role he wants summoners and eidolons to play before introducing them. Unless he intends their introduction as a surprise, he should discuss the issue with the players before incorporating the rules in this document.

## Summoners of Lankhmar

Compared to many settings for fantasy roleplaying, Lankhmar features little overt magic. Summoners, with their flashy elemental spells and ability to call forth gigantic monsters, greatly exceed the mystical might of traditional sword and sorcery heroes like Fafhrd and the Grey Mouser.

Nonetheless, pacts with strange creatures are hardly unknown to the setting! Games Masters who wish to incorporate summoners into Lankhmar may wish to

## A Note on Game Balance

*RuneQuest Summoners* presents a powerful alternative to Rune Magic and its alternatives. While the spells granted by this system are not more powerful, and are in fact potentially quite limited, the summoner's ultimate technique, in which she looses her bound eidolon upon her foes, is more powerful than all but the mightiest of spells. Not only is it powerful, it's also *impressive* – a summoner tends to take the spotlight when she looses her full power.

This is not necessarily a problem. The rules for summoning strongly discourage calling forth eidolons for anything less than a true emergency, and responsible players will furthermore avoid stealing the thunder of their companions.

If the Games Master feels summoning would put the spotlight too much on one character, he might consider having an all-summoner campaign; any player character can potentially become a summoner using these rules, just as any can use Rune Magic.

Another way to curtail excess summoning is to use *only* eidolons who give challenge before submitting to a summoner. This limits the summoner's power in two ways – first, it guarantees that the Player Character will never have access to eidolons more powerful than the party can defeat, and second, it should make a summoner very reluctant to loose his eidolons, lest he be unable to recapture them... or lest they turn on him.

make the eidolons considerably more sinister – instead of magnificent magical beings, they might be looming imponderables whose apparent dual existence is a reflection of their ability to transcend the limits of a sane reality. Those who truck with such creatures might never know if they are masters or slaves.

Games Masters may also wish to restrict bound eidolons to Non-Player Characters to keep them suitably mysterious and menacing.

### Summoner Bloodlines

Some settings restrict summoning magic to a handful of individuals who possess an inborn ability to bridge the gap between spirit and flesh. This is a good choice if the Games Master wants to restrict the amount of summoners in a setting without necessarily making eidolons rare, or if he wants to keep eidolon magic the province of Non-Player Characters.

One possible source of a summoner bloodline is interbreeding. Since the form of an eidolon is tied more closely to its powers than its ancestry – if, indeed, the creatures are not demi-gods existing without the need for propagation – some eidolons may even be able to mate with humans. The fruit of their union may have become the first summoners.

Alternately, the gods or the eidolons themselves may have chosen certain individuals from each generation to serve as their bearers in the mortal world. If this trait proved heritable, the descendents of those first champions would become the summoners of future ages. The greater powers might prevent this, however, choosing new bearers in each generation.

### Summoner Aristocracies

Whether summoners require a specific bloodline or not, their power is such that they could dominate mundane races in many settings. When this happens, a summoner aristocracy often results.

Summoner-aristocrats rule much like the knights and lords whose martial skill earned them their position, but using the magical power of eidolons in place of weapons and the skill to use them. Countries ruled by summoner-aristocrats usually keep tight reins on their eidolons – particularly if a summoner bloodline is not required to bind the creatures!

Summoner-aristocracies tend to value diplomacy and raw force in equal measure, since both are required to bind and loose eidolons. If they possess enough eidolons and summoners to lead their armies, they may become imperial powers by means of this combination of velvet glove and iron fist. If the numbers of one or both are few, they rely on their personal power to ward off stronger, more populous neighbours.

### Summoner Villages

Not all summoners are interested in, or powerful enough for, conquest and rulership. They guard their powers by hiding away from the world, not by seeking to control it. These circumstances often result in summoner villages.

A summoner village usually lies in a remote region, perhaps even one impassable to someone without the power of eidolons or mighty sorcery. Here, the summoners can hide the secret of their arts from prying eyes and themselves from those who would manipulate them.

Most summoner villages have only a single eidolon, which usually aids them willingly as guardian and god. Thus, even if all the villagers have the potential to become summoners, only the strongest of them can take up that mantle to defend the village or quest in the wider world. Rarely, a summoner village may have access to multiple eidolons or even an eidolon for every adult summoner; these exceptions usually result from some ancient pact between summoner and eidolon.

### Eidolon Lairs

Though weird and mystical compared to most monsters, eidolons are generally thought to be just another fantastic creature. As such, their haunts are as varied as they are.

Since most eidolons are strongly affiliated with elemental magic, they often dwell in regions closely affiliated to their element. Thus, eidolons tied to fire lair in burning hot deserts or active volcanoes, eidolons tied to water dwell in waterfalls, springs or under the sea, eidolons of earth dwell in deep caverns or rocky badlands, and eidolons of air dwell in the clouds or atop soaring spires.

If eidolons are instead a sort of lesser god or avatar, they are more likely to dwell in shrines or temples, or in semi-material realms all their own. Some may even exist in cities, the sworn protectors of an anointed king's castle or the guardians of a god's chief temple.

### Eidolon Planes

Humans and other intelligent but mortal creatures hunt eidolons to acquire or study their powers. Rival entities like demons or even gods seek to smite eidolons as challenges to their authority. Eidolons may even war among themselves.



Regardless of the reason, some eidolons use their powers to create homes for themselves separate from the mortal plane. The eidolons place extensive magical and mundane defences to ensure their privacy, not the least of which is the secluded nature of the magical gateways into their realms.

Eidolon planes cannot exist without the cooperation of multiple eidolons, who naturally expect to make their homes in the resulting sanctuary. Of course, the presence of many eidolons in a small area makes an eidolon plane a treasure trove of potential magic – and danger. Other intelligent creatures, if sufficiently confident of their powers, might attempt to storm an eidolon plane, shattering its magical wards and bridging the gap between realities to claim the power of the beings within. More often than not, they earn only the eidolons' undying wrath. Wiser mortals approach an eidolon plane in only the direst need, requesting aid and offering a respectful challenge.

## Summoning

The art of binding eidolons and drawing upon their power is called summoning. A summoner practices her trade by battling eidolons, either in vicious contests to the death or ritual contests, and, if victorious, adding the spiritual strength of the defeated entities to her own.

Summoning differs from divine magic and demonology in that the summoner usually meets the eidolon as equal at worst, master at best. Rather than offering supplication to a higher power, she impresses or dominates an entity that, while perhaps immortal, is yet no more than a match for she and her companions.

A summoner employs the Summoning skill to bind and loose eidolons. When she acquires eidolon magic spells through binding an eidolon, she also gains the skills associated with those spells (beginning at POW + CHA) and must advance them to increase her magical abilities.



## Summoning (POW+CHA)

This advanced skill allows the summoner to bind and loose eidolons. See the Binding An Eidolon and Summoning An Eidolon sections in this chapter for details on these uses.

In addition, at the Games Master's option, Summoning can be substituted for the appropriate Lore skill at a –20% penalty if the summoner wishes to recall information about eidolons in general or a specific eidolon.

## Binding An Eidolon

The first, and usually most difficult, step to using summoning is binding an eidolon. Even this can be an epic undertaking, particularly for summoners who dare to dream of mastering the most powerful eidolons.

To establish a bond with an eidolon, a summoner must either subdue the creature by defeating it or make some sort of contract with it.

## Subduing an Eidolon

The standard method of acquiring an eidolon's power is to defeat its physical form.

An eidolon is subdued when it fails a Resilience test to remain conscious. Unlike most creatures, however, it is neither slain nor knocked out when this happens; its physical body vanishes, leaving its spiritual form cognizant and with full (spirit) hit points.

An eidolon reduced to its spiritual state by falling unconscious cannot take any action until either 24 hours pass or a summoner (not necessarily the one who defeated it) attempts to bind it.

## Bargaining With an Eidolon

Unlike many other monsters, eidolons have no use for gold, jewels, or even food – although a few, with the curious obsessiveness of their kind, hoard wealth anyway. Most eidolons willing to bargain with a summoner expect some sort of service or favour for their troubles instead of treasure.

Once an eidolon is satisfied with a prospective summoner's gift or service, it causes its physical body to dematerialise exactly as if it had been subdued. However, it can still take actions if it wants, including

### Eidolon Bargains

Eidolons do not collect souls or treasure like other monsters; most have no real needs at all. Rather than allowing a player character to pay his way into an eidolon's favour, the Games Master should generally have the creature set a would-be summoner a task at least as difficult as defeating the eidolon itself.

manifesting its physical body; it will not do so except in the direst need, since this stops the summoner's attempt to bind it and violates its agreement. For example, it might manifest to drive off a rival eidolon or the summoner's enemies.

If a willing eidolon takes action before the binding process is complete, it almost always allows the summoner to try again the next day, circumstances permitting.

### Forging the Bond

Once an eidolon has either submitted to a prospective summoner's power or agreed to assist her, she must succeed at a Summoning test to forge the bond between them.

Binding an eidolon takes 10 minutes per magnitude of eidolon magic the creature grants. This process requires the summoner's total concentration – if she takes any action other than binding the eidolon, the binding fails. In addition, for every hour the summoner spends binding an eidolon, she gains a level of Fatigue and must make a Persistence test (with the Fatigue penalty) to continue. A summoner always gains at least one level of Fatigue from binding an eidolon, even if the process takes less than an hour.

A summoner can attempt to bind a particular eidolon only once in 24 hours. If the process fails, she may wait until the next day to try again, provided the creature does not leave, but the eidolon may set another test or fight her again before it submits.

If a summoner does not have enough POW available to integrate *all* of the eidolon magic spells an eidolon grants, she cannot bind the creature.

Summoners can bind as many eidolons as they have POW available to integrate spells.



### Rushing the Binding Process

A character can rush the binding process as with any other skill, taking a –40% penalty to complete it in half the time or a –80% penalty to instantly bind the eidolon.

### Critical Success

A critical success reduces the time it takes to bind an eidolon by half.

### Fumble

If a character fumbles while attempting to bind an eidolon, she can never bind that eidolon; some imperfection in their souls makes the match impossible.

### Bound Eidolons

A bound eidolon is in most respects identical to a covertly possessing spirit, as described in the *RuneQuest Companion*. It can be detected by characters who can see into the spirit plane and is affected normally by spells like Spirit Screen – which effectively bars a summoner's passage. It can even be exorcised by a divine magic user, provided he can immobilize the summoner long enough to cast the spell and drive the eidolon out.

However, there are a few exceptions to the normal rules for spirits:

- An eidolon cannot apply its POW as a bonus or penalty to any of its summoner's rolls.
- An eidolon spell requires one POW per Magnitude to integrate. However, once integrated, it reduces the summoner's POW by only ½ the spell's Magnitude because the eidolon and summoner share the burden of the magic. Contrary to *RuneQuest* conventions, round this number up.

- An eidolon cannot shift from covert to dominant possession.
- An eidolon cannot unbind itself from a character if the character does not wish it, nor can an eidolon possess an unwilling character.
- An eidolon cannot make spiritual attacks against its summoner or other creatures.

Because a bound eidolon cannot normally interact with the physical world, the only consequences of its spiritual nature involve its interaction with spells or effects that affect the spirit world. Players and Games Masters without the *RuneQuest Companion* need not concern themselves with these rules.

## Eidolon Magic

All bound eidolons grant at least one eidolon magic spell to their summoners; most provide far more.

Eidolon magic functions much the same as rune magic, with the following exceptions:

- An eidolon always teaches a specific selection of eidolon magic spells. A summoner must integrate all of these spells; she cannot pick and choose from among them.
- A summoner does not need to be able to hold runes to use an eidolon magic spell.
- In addition to the penalties listed in the Casting Modifiers Situational Modifiers table in the *RuneQuest* core book, the Eidolon Magic Situational Modifiers apply.

## Eidolon Magic Situational Modifiers

Situation	Skill Modifier
Summoner is holding an item in one hand	-20%
Summoner is holding an item in both hands	-50%

## Summoning An Eidolon

The ultimate technique of a summoner, and one most are loath to use in any but the most dire emergency, summoning involves calling forth the physical body of a bound eidolon, releasing its bonds and loosing it upon the summoner's foes.

Summoning an eidolon takes a number of combat actions equal to the number of hours required to bind it (the sum of the Magnitudes of all the eidolon magic spells it grants divided by six). The summoner may hurry this test normally. At the *end* of this period, the summoner must make a Summoning test.

### Failed Summoning

If the Summoning test fails or the summoner stops summoning to take another action, the eidolon is not summoned. The summoner must make a Persistence test or gain one level of Fatigue.

### Successful Summoning

If the test succeeds, the eidolon's physical form manifests in the nearest open space capable of containing it. Because most eidolons are much larger than most summoners, this may be some distance away.

The summoner immediately gains a number of levels of Fatigue equal to the number she would have gained for binding the eidolon at normal speed (this is the same as the number of actions required to summon the eidolon). She must make a Persistence test to remain conscious.

As long as her eidolon remains manifest, the summoner cannot cast eidolon magic spells granted by it, but her POW does not rise accordingly.

An eidolon remains manifest and under the summoner's control for at least one minute, even if the summoner is unconscious. For every ten points by which the summoner passed her Summoning test, the eidolon remains for another minute.

At the end of this time, the summoner has a choice (if conscious). If she is unconscious, the eidolon automatically slips its bonds as described below.

The summoner can voluntarily allow the eidolon to remain manifest, in which case she loses control of it. She regains any POW allocated to eidolon magic spells granted by the eidolon. If she wants to re-establish her control over it, she must subdue or bargain with it again and succeed at another Summoning test to bind it.

Alternately, she may, if conscious, re-bind the eidolon. This requires a Summoning test, but it is of Simple (+40%) difficulty and does not require an action.

## Unbound Eidolons' Attitudes

An eidolon freed of its service, either by the summoner's choice or because she was unconscious when its manifestation ended, is free to act as it wishes.

Since an eidolon is usually summoned into combat and earns the enmity of the summoner's foes as soon as it appears, it must finish off the creatures attacking it before it makes any further decisions. Eidolons capable of escaping battle may choose to do so, however.

If the eidolon bargained with the summoner or offered its services willingly, it may aid her for the duration of the battle and allow her to re-establish its bonds afterwards. It almost never accompanies her without being re-bound, however.

If the eidolon was subdued by the summoner, it usually resists her attempts to re-establish dominance. Unless it was used for purposes antithetical to it, the eidolon probably won't hold a grudge against its summoner or attack her if she does not seek to regain control. It either flees or remains in its new locale.

If an eidolon was subdued by a summoner it considers its enemy and forced to use its powers against friends or to do harm to its own cause, it always either attacks or flees.

## Eidolon Spells

The spells granted a summoner by bound eidolons are called eidolon magic. Each eidolon spell has its own skill associated with it – these skills are gained when a summoner first binds an eidolon, but remain even if the eidolon is later loosed. Binding another eidolon

that grants the same spells does not affect a summoner's current skill ranking in any way other than giving them a base percentage (POW + CHA) in any spells they do not already have. It costs a number of Magic Points equal to the magnitude of a spell to cast it – other details vary by spell, as described below.

Unless otherwise indicated, assume eidolon spells use the same rules as rune magic.

## Spell List

### Arcblast

Targets 1, Casting Time 2, Instant, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Ranged, Resist (Dodge)

*Lightning, seemingly given shape and life by the caster's will, leaps from her fingertips to rake her foes.*

Although not the most powerful elemental spell in a summoner's arsenal, Arcblast is greatly appreciated for its precision.

Arcblast deals 1d3+1 damage to a random hit location. This damage is magical and electrical. It ignores non-metal armour. If the hit location is protected by metal armour, the spell not only ignores its AP, it deals 1d6+1 damage instead.

Arcblast has a number of Targets equal to its Magnitude. Each successive target must be within 3m of the last. A single creature can be named as the target multiple times, but cannot be targeted by more than half the spell's strikes. The caster must target a creature with all the strikes, even if it means targeting an ally or herself.

*For Example: Aribelle, a summoner who has bound an eidolon of lightning, faces a pair of trollkin bandits. Her*

## Using Other Spells

Virtually any spell, be it the result of Rune Magic, Divine Magic, Sorcery, or some more esoteric type, might be appropriate for a particular eidolon. When the Games Master creates an eidolon, he should choose the most thematically appropriate spells for it, although he should look to the eidolon spells below before selecting from another list.

*eidolon grants Arcblast at Magnitude 1 and Magnitude 5; since the trollkin are wearing patchwork metal armour, she decides to unleash the spell at full power.*

*Aribelle can target each trollkin with up to half of the spell's strikes (rounded down, as usual) – two apiece. Since she must target some creature with all five strikes, she must also target herself with one strike.*



## Aura of Healing

Area 5, Casting Time 5, Duration 1, Instant, Magnitude 5, Self

*The air around the caster glows with warm, welcoming light. Those who stand next to her appear greatly refreshed.*

Aura of Healing is a powerful spell, not because of the strength of its effects, but because it can restore health to many characters at once.

Everyone within the spell's area, including the caster, regains 1 HP per hit location per Combat Round.

Aura of Healing does not restore HP to hit locations that have suffered a Major Wound, but characters within its area are treated as having received First Aid on such wounds and need not make Resilience tests to remain conscious (although they will still die from shock and blood loss after CON + POW Combat Rounds unless otherwise healed).

## Bend Time

Casting Time 0, Instant, Magnitude 5, Self

*The caster's form blurs as she explodes into action, literally faster than the eye can see.*

When a caster employs Bend Time, she completes in a single Combat Action what would normally take her an entire Combat Round (although she can choose to use less).

The caster may immediately take a number of Combat Actions equal to the number she would get in a Combat Round. No other creature can make a Reaction in

response to these actions. If an opposed test is called for because of something the caster does, she gets a +40% bonus on it.

Once she has completed all her actions, the Caster immediately gains a level of Fatigue and loses a number of Combat Actions equal to one plus the number of Combat Actions she took using Bend Time.

This spell stacks with itself up to five times, provided the caster has sufficient MP to cast it.

*For Example: Aribelle is attacked by a dragon. Realizing she is overmatched, she draws on the power of an eidolon of time to cast Bend Time, speeding her escape. Aribelle has a POW of 10 after Integrating with her eidolon, so she can cast Bend Time twice before running out of MP. She has a DEX of 11, giving her two Combat Actions per round. If she uses all her MP, she can take four actions before the dragon can act. Of course, if those four actions don't get her to safety, she will lose her next six actions, as well as becoming Tired – no condition in which to face a dragon!*

## Body Heat

Casting Time 2, Duration 1, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Self

*The caster's body seems to shimmer as though the air around her were superheated.*

By means of this spell, a summoner can channel some of the nature of the fire eidolon bound to her. Anyone touched by or touching the caster suffers 1 point of fire damage to the hit location in contact with her; this damage ignores armour points. The caster requires an Unarmed or Martial Arts roll to touch an unwilling target.

The heat from this spell does not harm the caster, but it may damage her items. It does not harm items whose AP exceed its damage, unless the Games Master deems them exceptionally flammable.

The spell's damage and duration are both equal to its Magnitude.

## Burning Spirit

Casting Time 2, Instant, Magnitude 5, Ranged

*Weird and inconstant shadows flicker across the enchanted creature, hinting at unseen flames. His agonized reaction speaks to the reality of those flames.*

This frightening spell causes spiritual 'fire' to engulf a target. It deals 1d4 damage to each location on the target, or 5d4 points of damage to a creature on the spirit plane.

The damage, which is both magic and fire, ignores armour points.

## Chill Wind

*See Heat Sink on page xx.*

## Cold Wave

*See Heat Sink on page xx.*

## Cold Front

*See Heat Sink on page xx.*

## Earth Storm

*See Rock Storm on page xx.*

## Earthen Grasp

Casting Time 3, Duration 1, Instant, Magnitude 4, Resist (Athletics and Dodge, see below), Ranged

*The caster brings her hands together with a sharp clap; the ground beneath her target erupts in devastating mimicry.*

This spell not only deals ruinous damage to its target, it also holds it fast for future attacks.

The ground rises up to engulf the target of this spell. The target is allowed a Dodge test to avoid the effect entirely; the first time a creature is targeted with this spell, it suffers a -20% penalty to this test. If caught, the target suffers 1d12 damage to all the hit locations on its lower body – Legs and Abdomen for a humanoid. The Games Master should select appropriate equivalents for non-humanoid creatures.

This damage is purely physical; armour applies against it and it does not harm spirits.

Whether the target suffers damage or not, it is held fast by the risen ground; it cannot move, cannot Dodge, and suffers at a -20% penalty to attacks, Parries and physical skill tests. It may use a Combat Action to escape by making an Athletics test.

## Explosive Fire

*See Flash Fire on page xx.*

## Fireblast

*See Flameblast on page xx.*

## Firestorm

*See Flameblast on page xx.*

## Fireflight

Casting Time 2, Instant, Magnitude 4, Resist (Dodge, see below), Self

*A trail of flames erupts behind the caster as she rockets into the air to light upon a distant location.*

This spell allows the caster to take to the air, albeit briefly, and to leave a trail of destructive flames in her wake.

The caster may move up to 20 meters in any direction, including straight up (although she may fall at the end of her combat action if she does not land on solid ground). Any creature between she and her landing spot must make a Dodge test or suffer 1d6 damage. The damage, which is both magic and fire, ignores armour points.

## Flamestorm

*See Flameblast on page xx.*

## Flash Fire

Casting Time 0, Instant, Magnitude 1, Touch, Trigger

*The caster's hand flares brightly for an instant; then the flames leap to her target.*

Flash fire creates a small fire (d6 damage) in the caster's hand. The caster must immediately make an Unarmed (or Martial Arts, if she has it) test to transfer the fire to a target, which can be any creature or object. If the test is successful, the fire deals its damage and may ignite the object.

If the caster misses her target or does not use her Combat Action to attack, the fire fades as at the beginning of the next creature's Combat Action. She may combine one or more uses of this spell with a flurry, but only if she declares the flurry before casting the first spell.

The fire created by this spell is non-magical and does not harm spirits.

More powerful versions of this spell, Explosive Fire (2d6 damage, Magnitude 3) and Flash Inferno (3d6 damage, Magnitude 5), also exist.

## Flash Inferno

*See Flash Fire on page xx.*

## Flameblast

Area 1, Casting Time 2, Instant, Magnitude 3, Ranged, Resist (Dodge)

*The caster's outstretched palms seem to frame a gateway into a world of endless fire; with a sharp gesture, she hurls a fraction of those eternal flames into the mortal world.*

Flameblast is one of the most popular spells with fire-based eidolons. It deals damage as a flame (1 damage) to each hit location of all targets within its area and may ignite objects.

More powerful versions of this spell, Fireblast (Area 3, 1d4 damage, Magnitude 5), Flamestorm (Area 5, 1d6 damage, Magnitude 7), Firestorm (Area 7, 2d6 damage, Magnitude 9) and Inferno Blast (Area 7, 3d6 damage, Magnitude 10), also exist.

## Heat Sink

Area 2, Casting Time 2, Instant, Magnitude 3, Self, Resist (Resilience)

*The blood seems to drain from the caster's flesh, leaving it frozen and blue. In an instant, the chill leaves her body and erupts into the air around her.*

This spell allows the caster to drain the heat from the nearby area, causing damage to nearby living creatures – including, perhaps, herself.

All creatures within the spell's area, including the caster, must make Resilience checks or suffer 1 point of cold damage to each hit location; Armour Points do not apply. This cold is non-magical and does not harm spirits.

More powerful versions of this spell, Chill Wind (Area 4, 1d4 damage, Magnitude 5), Cold Wave (Area 6, 1d6 damage, Magnitude 7), Cold Front (Area 12, 1d6 damage, Magnitude 9) and Ice Age (Area 24, 1d6 damage, Magnitude 10), also exist.

## Ice Age

*See Heat Sink on page xx.*

## Icicle Spear

Casting Time 2, Duration 5, Magnitude 3, Self

*Water condenses into a glittering crystalline spear in the caster's outstretched hand.*

This spell creates a spear of solid ice the caster can wield in melee combat.

The spear deals 1d6 magical cold damage (plus the caster's damage modifier), has an AP of 3 and HP equal to the caster's POW, and is effectively weightless. The caster uses her skill with this spell, plus her All Close Combat skill, for attacks and parries. In addition, the spear does not count as a held object for purposes of casting eidolon magic.

If the caster or the spear suffers even a single point of fire damage, the spear is destroyed.

## Inferno Blast

*See Flameblast on page xx.*

## Recovery

Casting Time 1, Instant, Magnitude 3, Touch

*The caster's hand glows with warm, welcoming light. When she lays it upon the target's wounds, they knit and close.*

The default healing spell of eidolons and summoners, Recovery can knit physical wounds and recover spiritual ones.

When used on the Mortal Plane, Recovery affects a single hit location. It improves that hit location's condition by one step – from a Major Wound to a Serious Wound, a Serious Wound to a Minor Wound, a Minor Wound to 1 HP, and anything between 1 HP and full HP to full HP. Recovery cannot restore a lost limb or bring a character back to life, however.

When used on the Spirit Plane, Recovery heals 2d6 HP.

## Refresh

Casting Time 2, Instant, Magnitude 1, Touch

*The target, heaving shuddering breaths a moment ago, appears much recovered since the caster's hand brushed against him; he throws himself into his work with renewed vigour.*

Refresh removes one level of Fatigue from the target.

## Rock Crush

*See Rock Storm on page xx.*

## Rock Storm

Casting Time 3, Instant, Magnitude 2, Ranged

*The caster pulls her hand back, then thrusts it forward as though throwing a rock. Though she had nothing in her hand, a flurry of stones fill the air.*

This spell bounces harmlessly from armoured knights and scaly monsters, but crushes unarmoured targets with ease.

Rock Storm does 1d4 damage to every hit location on the target.

This damage is purely physical; armour applies against it and it does not harm spirits.

More powerful versions of this spell, Stone Storm (1d8 damage, Magnitude 4), Rock Crush (2d6 damage, Magnitude 6), Stone Crush (2d8 damage, Magnitude 8) and Earth Storm (3d6 damage, Magnitude 10), also exist.

## Slow Decay

Casting Time 2, Duration \*, Magnitude 1, Touch  
*The caster touches her hand to the target's brow; for an instant, the target jerks as though from a frightful cold, but then his laboured breathing calms and he heaves a sigh of relief.*

Slow Decay delays the onset of various maladies by slowing the target's bodily functions.

Whenever a physical malady experienced by the target calls for a test to resist its effects at a specified time, the time increments used are increased in accordance with the following table. This delays the effects of Serious and Major Wounds, poisons and diseases.

Slow Decay lasts for 24 hours.

### Slow Decay

Previous Time	Slow Decay Time
Combat Action	Combat Round
Combat Round	Minute
Minute	Hour
Hour	Day

## Starfall

Casting Time 2, Instant, Magnitude 10, Ranged, Resist (Persistence)

*Somewhere in the sky above the target, a star twinkles. Suddenly, its light flashes to an almost unbearable level as a bolt from the heavens blasts to earth.*

Few spells can match the pure destructive force of a Starfall. The spell calls down heavenly light and force to destroy its target, and few indeed are the creatures capable of surviving it.

A creature struck by Starfall suffers 6d6 damage to a single hit location (determine randomly) and 1d6 damage in all its other hit locations. This damage is magical (allowing it to harm spirit creatures) and ignores armour.

If the target remains conscious, it must make a Resilience test at -20% or be blinded for 1d4 minutes.

## Stone Crush

See *Rock Storm* on page xx.

## Stone Shield

Casting Time 2, Duration 1, Magnitude 2, Self

*Just before a vicious swipe would cleave the caster in two, a pillar of stone rockets from the ground to absorb the striking sword.*

Popular with summoners who prefer to fight in the thick of battle, Stone Shield defends its caster from physical attacks.

When the caster is attacked, she may Parry with Stone Shield (provided she has a Reaction remaining). She uses her skill with this spell for the Parry test. Stone Shield has AP 8 and can block magical attacks that ignore armour (provided they can be parried).

## Stone Storm

See *Rock Storm* on page xx.

## Titansbane

See *Titansfall* on page xx.

## Titansfall

Area 2, Casting Time 2, Magnitude 3, Resist (Dodge), Touch, Trigger

*A giant steps onto the enchanted ground—and suddenly finds itself slipping and falling on a sheet of ice.*

This spell is the bane of large, landbound monsters.

Once cast, it leaves a thin, almost invisible sheet of magical ice on the ground. This ice remains until a creature of at least SIZ 15 steps into the spell's area. The creature must succeed at a Dodge test or fall prone and suffer 1d6 damage for every five points of SIZ. This is an Easy (+50%) test for creatures with four or more legs or that move without legs, but a Normal one for bipeds.

The spell is discharged after a single use.

A more powerful version of this spell, Titansbane (Area 5, Casting Time 2, Duration 7, Magnitude 7, Touch), also exists.

## Walk the Cosmos

Casting Time 5, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Targets 1, Touch

*The caster reaches out to take her companions' hands in hers. Their images waver, flicker – and are gone, vanished into thin air.*

Walk the Cosmos allows the caster to pass between the boundaries of the planes or to travel instantly from one location to the next.



In Gloranthan terms, a character using Walk the Cosmos can travel to any location she has previously visited on the Hero Plane, the Spirit Plane or the Mortal Plane. In other settings, her planar options may be different. The Games Master may restrict travel to or on certain planes; for example, allowing access to Glorantha's Hero Plane only at a gate.

If the caster wants to travel to a location she has never visited before but has seen (via a painting, for example), she suffers a -50% penalty on her Spell test. If she wants to travel to a location she has only heard descriptions of, she suffers a -100% penalty on her Spell test.

For every Magnitude of the spell, the caster can affect one additional target and gains a +5% bonus on her Spell check to visit an unfamiliar location.

## Ward Spell

Casting Time 3, Magnitude 3, Self, Trigger

*Arcane sight reveals a globe of defensive magic surrounding the caster.*

Ward Spell counters the first spell of Magnitude 6 or less cast on its caster. It does not block the caster's own spells, even if they target herself, but stops anyone else – ally or enemy – from casting against her.

As soon as a spell from a source other than herself targets the caster, Ward Spell ends, even if the targeting spell is Magnitude 7 or above and unaffected by it.

Ward Spell does not stop spells with an area from affecting the caster.

## Ward Spirit

Casting Time 3, Magnitude 3, Self, Trigger

*A shell of crackling magic surrounds the caster's soul, warning away hostile spirits.*

The first time a spirit attacks the caster of Ward Spirit, its attack fails and it suffers 1d10 magical damage.

As soon as a spirit attacks the caster, Ward Spirit is discharged and has no further effect.

## Eidolons

The keys to summoning magic, eidolons are beings capable of existing simultaneously on the physical and spiritual planes. This dual nature allows a summoner to tap into their powers – but it also makes an enemy eidolon much more formidable than an ordinary monster.

Each eidolon is a unique creature. No other is exactly like it, although it may share many (or all!) of its game statistics with another eidolon.

## Eidolon Traits

All Eidolons share the following traits.

- Eidolons naturally heal 1 HP per hit location per hour.
- Eidolons whose physical forms are rendered unconscious or 'killed' instead assume their spirit forms. In their spirit forms, they may be bound by a summoner as described in Binding An Eidolon on page xx.
- Eidolons are immune to any energy damage type (other than magic) dealt by an eidolon magic spell they know.

- Eidolons can communicate telepathically with any creature that has a language. This communication requires line of sight, except between a bound eidolon and its summoner, who can communicate at any remove.

## Baygonser

One of the most enigmatic and powerful eidolons, Baygonser is sometimes considered an 'ultimate' or 'ideal' example of its race. Its physical appearance is highly mutable; it can take virtually any body type, although many of its traits remain constant. In its natural form Baygonser is a sphere of darkness about three meters in diameter, with dozens of tiny lights like fireflies floating through it. It can assume the shape of any creature between SIZ 7 and SIZ 27, although neither its strange 'skin' of darkness nor its actual characteristics change to match the assumed form.

Baygonser is a creature of almost pure magic, if not a demi-god in its own right. Its thoughts and motives seem utterly alien to mortals, making it difficult to deal with, and its powers make it just as difficult to overcome by force of arms.

## Hit Locations

Baygonser's consciousness appears to be contained in the myriad 'starflies' floating through its 'body'; these motes serve the same function as the head of an ordinary creature. The vast majority of its form is comprised of invulnerable inky darkness.

## Weapons

Baygonser attacks 'physically' by striking creatures with its starflies. This deals spiritual damage rather than physical, bypassing nonmagical armour and striking spirits as well as physical creatures.

### Characteristics

STR	3D6	(10)
CON	10D6+30	(65)
DEX	6D6	(21)
SIZ	4D6+3	(17)
INT	50	(50)
POW	10D6+15	(50) (30 after spells)
CHA	50	(50)

### Baygonser Hit Locations

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-19	Sphere	invulnerable
20	Starflies	5/30

### Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage
Starfly	200%	2D8

### Special Rules

<i>Combat Actions:</i>	4
<i>Strike Rank:</i>	35
<i>Movement:</i>	fly 30m
<i>Magic Points:</i>	30
<i>Traits:</i>	Darksight, Eidolon
<i>Skills:</i>	Influence 150%, Lore (spirit world) 300%, Lore (world) 200%, Lore (all others) 50%, Persistence 90%, Resilience 80%, Spell (Bend Time) 125%, Spell (Starfall) 125%, Spell (Walk the Cosmos) 125%
<i>Typical Armour:</i>	Starfly shell (AP 5, starflies only, no skill penalty)

### Spirit Form Characteristics

INT	50	(50)
POW	10D6+15	(50) (30 after spells)
CHA	50	(50)

### Spirit Form Special Rules

<i>Combat Actions:</i>	4
<i>Strike Rank:</i>	100
<i>Movement:</i>	fly 30m
<i>Hit Points:</i>	30
<i>Magic Points:</i>	30
<i>Traits:</i>	Darksight, Eidolon, Spirit
<i>Skills:</i>	Influence 150%, Lore (spirit world) 300%, Lore (world) 200%, Lore (all others) 50%, Persistence 100%, Spell (Bend Time) 125%, Spell (Starfall) 125%, Spell (Walk the Cosmos) 125%

### Spirit Form Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage
Starfly	200%	2D8

### Eidolon Spells Known

Spell	Magnitude
Bend Time	5
Starfall	10
Walk the Cosmos	5

### Doldamar

The massive Doldamar is an eidolon of earth. It is ponderously slow and its magic even slower, but only a very foolish summoner would underestimate either. If a mad sorcerer crossed a giant, a lion and a stag, Doldamar might be the result – a maned, feline titan with four great antlers sprouting from its skull. Its flesh is covered with ‘scales,’ actually interlocking chips of rock.

### Characteristics

STR	8D6	(28)
CON	8D6	(28)
DEX	2D6	(7)
SIZ	8D6	(28)
INT	15	(15)
POW	6D6+3	(24) (12 after spells)
CHA	24	(24)



## Doldamar Hit Locations

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-3	Right Leg	6/12
4-6	Left Leg	6/12
7-9	Abdomen	6/13
10-12	Chest	6/14
13-15	Right Arm	6/11
16-18	Left Arm	6/11
19-20	Head	9/12

## Weapons

Type	Skill	Damage
Stone Fist	90%	1D4+1D12 / AP 6
Gore	65%	2D8+1D12 / AP 9

## Special Rules

<i>Combat Actions:</i>	2
<i>Strike Rank:</i>	11
<i>Movement:</i>	5m
<i>Magic Points:</i>	12
<i>Traits:</i>	Eidolon, Formidable Natural Weapons
<i>Skills:</i>	Athletics 110%, Lore (spirit world) 30%, Lore (world) 30%, Persistence 80%, Resilience 110%, Spell (Earthen Grasp) 75%, Spell (Rock Storm) 75%, Spell (Stone Shield) 75%, Spell (Stone Storm) 75%.
<i>Typical Armour:</i>	Horns (AP 3, head only, no skill penalty), stony hide (AP 6, no skill penalty)

## Spirit Form Characteristics

INT	15	(15)
POW	6D6+3	(24) (12 after spells)
CHA	24	(24)

## Spirit Form Special Rules

<i>Combat Actions:</i>	3
<i>Strike Rank:</i>	27
<i>Movement:</i>	fly 12m
<i>Hit Points:</i>	12
<i>Magic Points:</i>	12
<i>Traits:</i>	Eidolon, Spirit
<i>Skills:</i>	Lore (spirit world) 30%, Lore (world) 30%, Persistence 90%, Spell (Earthen Grasp) 75%, Spell (Rock Storm) 75%, Spell (Stone Shield) 75%, Spell (Stone Storm) 75%.

## Spirit Form Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage
Stone Fist	94%	1D6
Gore	69%	1D6

## Eidolon Spells Known

Spell	Magnitude
Earthen Grasp	4
Rock Storm	2
Stone Shield	2
Stone Storm	4

## Glacian

One of the most powerful elemental eidolons, Glacian resembles a living block of ice. Its body is semi-transparent, although it is so large – nearly twenty meters long and almost as many tall and wide – that its innermost depths are black as night. It actually has features – four legs and a head, at least, but these are so broad and blocky they are hardly noticed by most observers. By habit, Glacian plods in both thought and deed, but it can react much faster if the need arises.

## Creating New Eidolons

The eidolons described in this section are but a glimpse of the nigh-infinite variety these magnificent beasts display. The Games Master should feel free to create eidolons unique to his campaign.

Creating an eidolon is much like creating a normal monster, with two exceptions:

First, an eidolon has both a spirit and a physical form; its physical form is a normal monster, while its spirit form is a spirit (see the *RuneQuest Companion* for details on spirits).

Second, an eidolon needs a list of eidolon magic spells associated with it, so that its power may be borrowed by a summoner. In general, each eidolon should have only two to four spells associated with it, and those spells should be of a magnitude appropriate to the creature's power.

## Characteristics

STR	12D6	(42)
CON	8D6	(28)
DEX	3D6+3	(13)
SIZ	10D6+30	(65)
INT	21	(21)
POW	8D6+3	(31) (16 after spells)
CHA	30	(30)

### Glacian Hit Locations

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-3	Right Hind Leg	7/19
4-6	Left Hind Leg	7/19
7-9	Abdomen	7/20
10-12	Chest	7/21
13-15	Right Front Leg	7/19
16-18	Left Front Leg	7/19
19-20	Head	7/19

### Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage
Trample	125%	1D10+2D12

### Special Rules

**Combat Actions:** 3  
**Strike Rank:** 17  
**Movement:** 6m  
**Magic Points:** 16  
**Traits:** Eidolon  
**Skills:** Athletics 160%, Dodge 10%, Knowledge (spirit world) 85%, Knowledge (world) 50%, Persistence 100%, Resilience 160%, Spell (Cold Front) 100%, Spell (Icicle Spear) 100%, Spell (Slow Decay) 100%, Spell (Titansfall) 100%

**Typical Armour:** Icy Hide (AP 7, no Skill Penalty)

### Spirit Form Characteristics

INT	21	(21)
POW	8D6+3	(31) (16 after spells)
CHA	30	(30)

### Spirit Form Special Rules

**Combat Actions:** 4  
**Strike Rank:** 51  
**Movement:** fly 16m  
**Hit Points:** 16  
**Magic Points:** 16  
**Traits:** Eidolon, Spirit  
**Skills:** Dodge 73%, Knowledge (spirit world) 85%, Knowledge (world) 50%, Persistence 110%, Spell (Cold Front) 100%, Spell (Icicle Spear) 100%, Spell (Slow Decay) 100%, Spell (Titansfall) 100%

### Spirit Form Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage
Trample	121%	1D10

### Eidolon Spells Known

Spell	Magnitude
Cold Front	9
Icicle Spear	3
Slow Decay	1
Titansfall	3

### Igiss

A flame eidolon of medium power, Igiss displays the hot rage and fiery passions expected of a being tied to the most inconstant of elements. It is humanoid, about three meters tall at its full height but hunched over like the giant ape it somewhat resembles. Lean muscle ripples beneath its coppery skin. Its 'hair,' which spreads from its head and down its back and limbs, is a sea of leaping flames.

### Characteristics

STR	4D6+9	(23)
CON	4D6	(14)
DEX	4D6+3	(17)
SIZ	4D6+9	(23)
INT	11	(11)
POW	4D6+6	(20) (12 after spells)
CHA	20	(20)

### Igiss Hit Locations

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

### Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage
Claw	75%	1D6+1D10

### Special Rules

**Combat Actions:** 3  
**Strike Rank:** 14  
**Movement:** 6m  
**Magic Points:** 12  
**Traits:** Eidolon  
**Skills:** Athletics 75%, Dodge 40%, Influence 60%, Lore (spirit world) 20%, Persistence 75%, Resilience 70%, Spell (Body Heat) 75%, Spell (Explosive Fire) 75%, Spell (Fireflight) 75%

**Typical Armour:** Tough Hide (AP 5, no Skill Penalty)

### Spirit Form Characteristics

INT 11 (11)  
 POW 4D6+3 (17) (9 after spells)  
 CHA 20 (20)

### Spirit Form Special Rules

*Combat Actions:* 2  
*Strike Rank:* 31  
*Movement:* fly 12m  
*Hit Points:* 12  
*Magic Points:* 12  
*Traits:* Eidolon, Spirit  
*Skills:* Dodge 67%, Influence 60%, Lore (spirit world) 20%, Persistence 85%, Spell (Body Heat) 75%, Spell (Explosive Fire) 75%, Spell (Fireflight) 75%

### Spirit Form Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage
Claw	66%	1D4

### Eidolon Spells Known

Spell	Magnitude
Body Heat	1
Explosive Fire	3
Fireflight	4

### Meriael

Sometimes called the 'silver angel' and the 'silver guardian' Meriael is a beneficent healer and defender eidolon. Its form explains its first nickname – it is a tall, winged humanoid formed from smooth, gleaming metal. It has no head, but the hints of a human-like face emerge from its chest. Meriael's instinct is to protect those weaker than itself and it may strike bargains related to this task. However, it is not a true angel or

agent of good, always siding with those who appear weak – even if their own wickedness made them so. Despite its reputation as a defensive eidolon, Meriael puts up a formidable fight against a summoner who tries to subdue it.

### Characteristics

STR 3D6+6 (16)  
 CON 3D6 (10)  
 DEX 5D6 (17)  
 SIZ 3D6+3 (13)  
 INT 20 (20)  
 POW 8D6 (28) (18 after spells)  
 CHA 25 (25)

### Meriael Hit Locations

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-3	Right Leg	8/5
4-6	Left Leg	8/5
7-9	Abdomen	8/6
10-12	Chest	8/7
13-14	Right Wing	8/5
15-16	Left Wing	8/5
17-18	Right Arm	8/4
19-20	Left Arm	8/4

### Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage
Sword Arm	70%	1D8+1+1D2

### Special Rules

*Combat Actions:* 3  
*Strike Rank:* 18  
*Movement:* 4m, fly 8m  
*Magic Points:* 18  
*Traits:* Eidolon, Formidable Natural Weapons

### Skills:

Athletics 50%, Dodge 65%, First Aid 100%, Influence 100%, Lore (spirit world) 60%, Lore (theology) 60%, Perception 60%, Persistence 150%, Resilience 75%, Spell (Recovery) 75%, Spell (Refresh) 75%, Spell (Spell Ward) 75%, Spell (Spirit Ward) 75%

*Typical Armour:* Silver Body (AP 8, no skill penalty)

### Spirit Form Characteristics

INT 20 (20)  
 POW 8D6 (28) (18 after spells)  
 CHA 25 (25)

### Spirit Form Special Rules

*Combat Actions:* 4  
*Strike Rank:* 45  
*Movement:* fly 18m  
*Hit Points:* 18  
*Magic Points:* 18



**Traits:** Eidolon, Spirit  
**Skills:** Dodge 91%, Influence 100%, Lore (spirit world) 60%, Lore (theology) 60%, Perception 60%, Persistence 160%, Spell (Recovery) 75%, Spell (Refresh) 75%, Spell (Spell Ward) 75%, Spell (Spirit Ward) 75%

### Spirit Form Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage
Sword Arm	82%	1D8

### Eidolon Spells Known

Spell	Magnitude
Recovery	3
Refresh	1
Spell Ward	3
Spirit Ward	3

## Naeli

One of the smallest and weakest eidolons, Naeli's powers govern healing and protection. It resembles a crude, oversized stone idol of a rodent, though it does not match any particular species. Its rocky body glows faintly. Like most eidolons, Naeli can communicate with humans, but its wants and thoughts are only a small step from animalistic. Summoners seeking to add its power to theirs usually have more trouble *finding* the little creature than subduing it.

### Characteristics

STR	2D6	(7)
CON	3D6+3	(13)
DEX	5D6+9	(26)
SIZ	2D6	(7)
INT	7	(7)
POW	4D6+6	(20) (15 after spells)
CHA	15	(15)

### Naeli Hit Locations

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

### Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage
Bite	60%	1D6-1D4

### Special Rules

**Combat Actions:** 4  
**Strike Rank:** 18  
**Movement:** 4m  
**Magic Points:** 15  
**Traits:** Eidolon  
**Skills:** Acrobatics 80%, Athletics 55%, Dodge 90%, Lore (animal) 25%, Lore (spirit world) 25%, Persistence 40%, Resilience 20%, Spell (Recovery) 50%, Spell (Stone Shield) 50%, Stealth 80%.

**Typical Armour:** Stony hide (AP 5, no skill penalty)

### Spirit Form Characteristics

INT	6	(6)
POW	4D6+6	(20) (15 after spells)
CHA	15	(15)

### Spirit Form Special Rules

**Combat Actions:** 2  
**Strike Rank:** 21  
**Movement:** 15m

**Hit Points:** 15  
**Magic Points:** 15  
**Traits:** Eidolon, Spirit  
**Skills:** Dodge 81%, Lore (animal) 25%, Lore (spirit world) 25%, Persistence 50%, Spell (Recovery) 50%, Spell (Stone Shield) 50%, Stealth 71%.

### Spirit Form Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage
Bite	48%	1D2

### Eidolon Spells Known

Spell	Magnitude
Recovery	3
Stone Shield	2

## Voald

A small but surprisingly powerful eidolon, Voald is a capricious sprite of lightning and storms. Voald bears more than a passing resemblance to St. Elmo's Fire, although close inspection reveals a 'face' crackling within its bright, glowing, spherical body. Nearly impossible to bargain with as its simple whims change in a moment's time, it can prove just as tricky to subdue.

### Hit Locations

Voald lacks an ordinary physical body. Its four quadrants can each be treated as a 'chest' for the effects they have on its combat performance.

### Weapons

Voald attacks by touching its opponents and sending an electric shock through them. This deals electrical damage rather than physical, bypassing nonmagical armour. The jolts also strike spirits as well as physical creatures.

### Characteristics

STR 1D6+3 (6)  
CON 3D6 (10)  
DEX 5D6+3 (20)  
SIZ 1D6+3 (6)  
INT 7 (7)  
POW 7D6+3 (28) (24 after spells)  
CHA 12 (12)

### Voald Hit Locations

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-5	Lower Left	-/6
6-10	Lower Right	-/6
11-15	Upper Left	-/6
16-20	Upper Right	-/6

### Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage
Shock	60%	1D6

### Special Rules

*Combat Actions:* 4  
*Strike Rank:* 13  
*Movement:* fly 6m  
*Magic Points:* 24  
*Traits:* Eidolon  
*Skills:* Dodge 120%, Lore (spirit world) 25%, Spell (Arcblast) 60%, Stealth 50%

### Spirit Form Characteristics

INT 7 (7)  
POW 8D6+6 (34) (30 after spells)  
CHA 12 (12)

### Spirit Form Special Rules

*Combat Actions:* 2  
*Strike Rank:* 19  
*Movement:* fly 24m  
*Hit Points:* 24  
*Magic Points:* 24  
*Traits:* Eidolon, Spirit  
*Skills:* Dodge 117%, Lore (spirit world) 25%, Spell (Arcblast) 60%, Stealth 47%

### Spirit Form Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage
Shock	60%	1D6

### Eidolon Spells Known

Spell	Magnitude
Arcblast	1
Arcblast	3

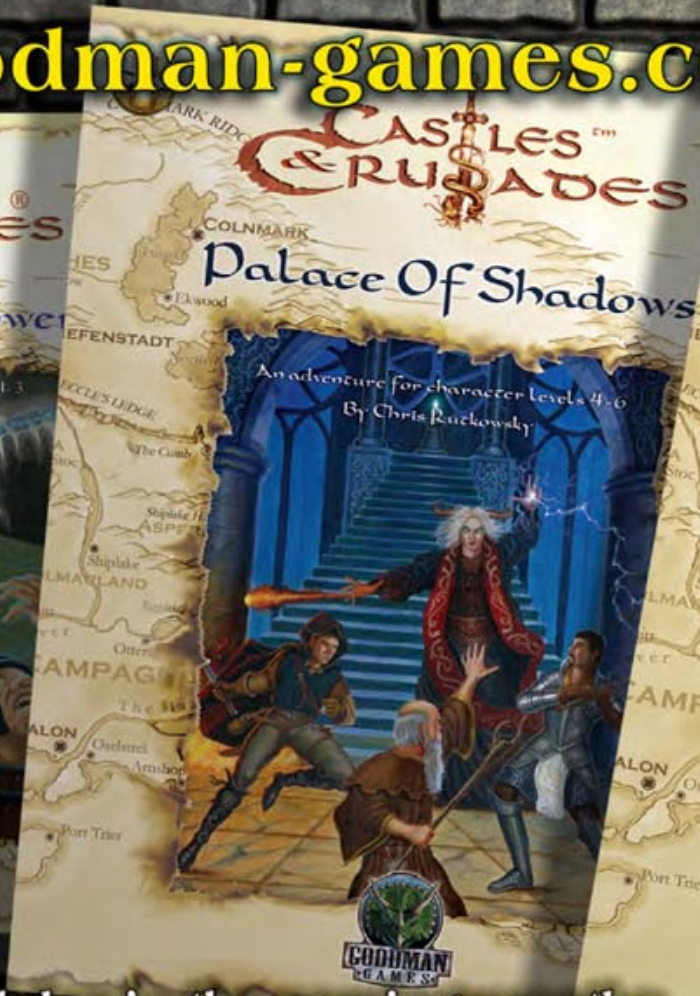


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# THE ARK OF DELIGHT

AN ADVENTURE SETTING FOR CONAN, BY CHARLES GREEN

## OMU'S DILEMMA



Omu is a Stygian merchant with a taste for the exotic. However, he is also inherently lazy, preferring others to do the work while he reaps the benefits. While technically a member of Stygia's ruling class, his family is not one of wealth or influence. He is more interested in pursuing his own base desires.

Some years ago, Omu was fortunate enough to inherit a Stygian galley from an uncle. Rather than take up a dangerous career as a legitimate merchant or corsair, Omu decided to put his new ship to use as a pleasure-boat. He began accumulating a stock of whores, which he keeps drugged and compliant. He has spent years traveling up and down Stygia's coasts, stopping for a few days time in port towns, catering to all who had the money to purchase a night of pleasure in the converted hold of the ship. After several name changes, Omu settled on calling the ship The Ark of Delight.

He found prostitution to be an ideal trade, as it allowed him to make a great deal of money without doing any actual work himself. His initial investment in the whores had long since payed off and more sex slaves were always available at decent prices.

As with all men who love power, Omu wanted more. He began selling a variety of drugs to his clients, supposedly to 'enhance' the carnal experience. His profits increased, as a captive market on his ship would buy his drugs at whatever prices he requested. His situation began to change when, by mistake, Omu took a shipment of black lotus blossoms by mistake. Rather than turn the illegal plants over, he instead began to sell them, quietly, to select clients. Initially, this was simply to be rid of the plants, but Omu soon noticed the demand for them grew. More and more of his clients were coming to him, seeking the plant. Omu did what any self-respecting businessman would: he found a supplier and began selling it in large quantities.

Now, in addition to spirits and whores, Omu reaps great profit by selling all manner of lotus-derived drugs to any who ask for it. He still maintains his legitimate whores as a front, but his real money is made in the drug trade.


However, Omu knows his trade is not without risks. Other Stygians would covet his prize if they knew about it, so he keeps his drug trade a secret if at all possible. The last thing he needs is an jealous noble to take Omu's work for his own. To this end, Omu has hired a gang of enforces. These cruel men do the whoremaster's dirty work for him.

Omu knows his time on earth is limited, and has begun using his wealth and free time to practice demonic sorcery in an attempt to learn some secret that might save his life when the time comes for his reckoning.

## FACES OF THE ARK

While the Ark does belong to Omu, he cannot operate it himself. Indeed, it is his desire to have as little to do as possible, leaving the day to day operations of his vessel to other, more qualified people.

## SAILORS



The Ark has a full complement of 32 sailors to keep it in good working order. These sailors are a motley mix of nationalities. However, none are there by choice, having been purchased by Omu or traded to him by former compatriots or those holding gambling debt. At the first opportunity, these sailors will jump ship. While not very talented warriors, it may be possible to turn them against their master.

If stats are needed, assume each sailor is a 1<sup>st</sup> level commoner.

## WHORES

In some ways, Omu is a traditionalist. His whores are expected to go nude at all times, and to wear the elaborate headdresses associated with their caste. Omu prides himself on having a variety of whores to appease every desire his clients may have. As such, his collection covers nearly every conceivable fetish, being of all ages, sizes and genders. The lot of a whore is rough one, and many do not survive in the business for very long. It is not uncommon for whores to be found dead or missing, presumed to have leapt overboard to escape their fate. More than once, a whore managed to carry a baby to term, only to have the infant discovered by Omu and used as a sacrifice to his demonic patron, Serapis

However, not all whores on the ship are what they appear to be. Omu does not trust to have so many people in one place without supervision. A few months ago, he hired a Zingaran temptress named Sancha to keep an eye open and to report anything suspicious. To the rest of the Ark, Sancha is simply Omu's favorite whore, one that enjoys the favors his attention brings. None so far suspect that she is his eyes and ears. So far, Sancha has proven a loyal servant, although if she is truthful with herself, she will realize that, no matter how favored she is, she still profits from human misery.

## THE PATH OF THE ARK

While Omu is a pragmatic man, he is also lazy. He has allowed himself to fall into a pattern. He kids himself into thinking that this trek up and down the coast affords him maximum profits, but in truth he is simply not willing to alter his course.

The Ark of Delight begins its circuit beyond the most southern end of Stygia's coast.

## STYGIAN NAMES

Even though the vast bulk of the sailors and whores aboard the Ark are from other parts of Hyboria, Omu has given them all Stygian names, and insists that they refer to each other in this way. Below is a list of names that can be applied to any person on board who needs one. They are not divided by gender, as Omu will often give males female names and vice versa.

Aqik, Ikeyowa, Uyohip, Amsi, Akila, Bahiti, Bes, Chisisi, Donkor, Femi, Habibah, Kafele, Lateef, Walidah, Usi, Tabia.

While near Kush, Omu instructs his helmsman to keep the vessel out of sight of the shore. When the ship reaches a stone marker poking up above the surface of the sea, the ship turns inland and makes for a narrow inlet, secure and secret. This is a trading point, used by a cartel of Black Kingdom mercenaries who fund their operations with the proceeds from the sale of the lotus. Here, Omu purchases a large quantity of the terrible black lotus plant, as well as black lotus powder and wine. On rare occasions, he also purchases the poisonous lotus juice, but such instances are always upon commission from a secretive assassin working within Stygia. The price Omu pays for the drugs always includes an evening of sport with his whores.

Afterwards, Omu takes his wares and sails out to sea, and then north back the shores of Stygia. Under normal circumstances, the Ark can complete the journey to Khemi in northern Stygia in four days, but Omu tries to take his time. A journey north typically lasts two weeks, during which time the Ark spends days at a time anchored offshore at certain points to entertain clients, some of whom travel for miles to meet the ship. Special care is taken when

passing between the Stygian coastline and the Isle of Siptah, as more than once Omu has lost sailors and whores to mysterious circumstances while sailing past the isle.

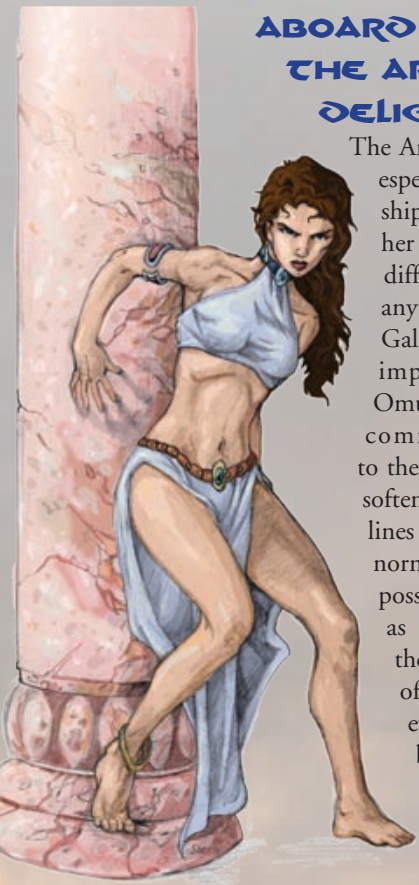
Once the Ark has reached the estuary for the River Styx, the ship sails to Khemi, where Omu makes the bulk of his fortune. He typically spends another two weeks anchored in the city harbour, sheltered from bandits by Khemi's black stone walls. Thutothmes has recently been made aware of Omu's thriving legitimate business, and exacts a tariff on Omu's profits to allow the whoremaster to make anchor in the city. Omu is less than pleased with this extortion, but willingly pays, as his black lotus trade is still a secret from the temple of Set, and he wants to keep it that way.

While in Khemi, Omu refreshes his supply of whores, forcing those who do not produce enough profit to live by their wits in Khemi. He considers this being especially lenient with them, as he would much rather simply slit their throats and throw them overboard. If he is feeling magnanimous, he may give a well-favored whore a supply of money and contact within the city to set them on a decent foot after they leave his service.

After the two weeks, he repeats the journey south to replenish his black lotus supply. The whole cycle then repeats itself, and has done so for years. The Ark of Delight may make 10 such cycles in a year, and each year Omu stores away his earnings in secret caches scattered up and down Stygia's coast. He has actually lost count of the money he has hidden away, and has forgotten where some of it is.




## ABOARD THE ARK OF DELIGHT



The Ark is not an especially fancy ship. She is, at her core, no different than any Stygian Galley. The improvements Omu has commissioned to the vessel have softened the hard lines the ship normally would possess, as well as increasing the amount of privacy for everyone on board, from whores and sailors to clientele.

### THE EXTERIOR



Like all Stygian galleys, the Ark of Delight is a black vessel covered in snake imagery. However, on the Ark, these images are not as curved, suggesting phallic shapes, crawling in and out of tiny decorative holes carved into the wood. The result is so suggestive that many become aroused simply by looking at the vessel, although most will not know why.

### ON DECK

Normally, galleys have silken screens in place to shield those on deck from the elements. The Ark takes this tradition one step farther. The deck is covered in a dark silk tent, inside which are other screens mounted on frames. This results in a labyrinthine interior that affords privacy for those seeking illicit trysts who cannot wait until they get below decks. In several places throughout this maze, there are coal-heated braziers, and thick, cloying incense is burned to ease the transition from the upper, public world to the world of the flesh that lies beneath the doors at the end of the maze. Whores without scheduled clients often wander through the maze, attracting potential clients through their arts.

Moving through the maze is difficult for those who have not done so already. Without a guide, characters must make a Will save (DC 15) to get from one end of the maze to the other. Failure means the character has run into a dead end and must make the test again. The layout of the screens is changed several times a night, and the pattern used is known to each of the whores.

Of course, silk and wood are not very sturdy, so cutting through to the other end can be accomplished in three rounds, but doing so attracts a lot of attention: 1d6 sailors and 1d3 security men (use the bodyguard stats below).

### THE CREW DECK

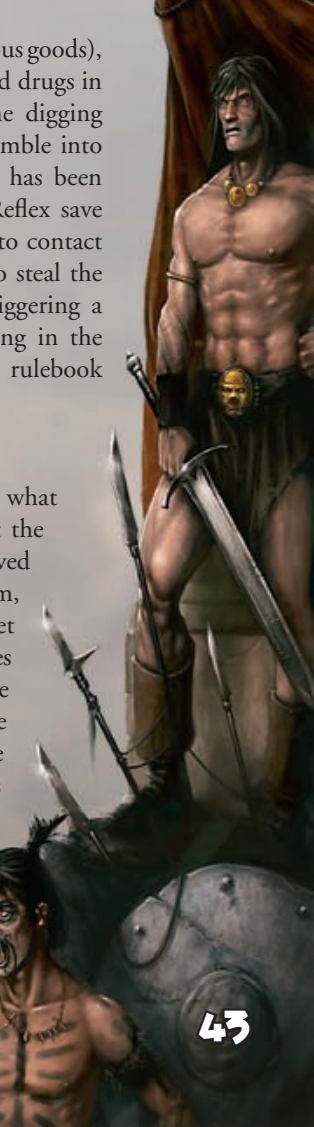
Passing through the oval, serpent-carved doors at the end of the silk maze leads to a short stairwell. The first landing is the crew quarters and rowing benches, and is off-limits to clients. The rowing benches are first, and a short flight of stairs leads up to the crew quarters. Omu's private office is at the far end of this deck. He keeps it locked at all times, and carries the only key around his waist. The lock can

be picked (DC 17). The room is filled with cushions and couches, as well as a locked strongbox (DC 20). Inside is Omu's personal treasure, the choicest picks of the items exchanged for a night with his whores. Unless he is attending to special guests, or selling black lotus, he can be found here at almost any time.

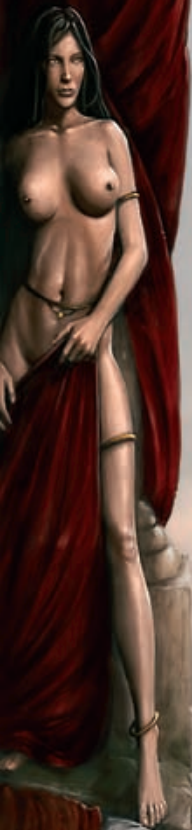
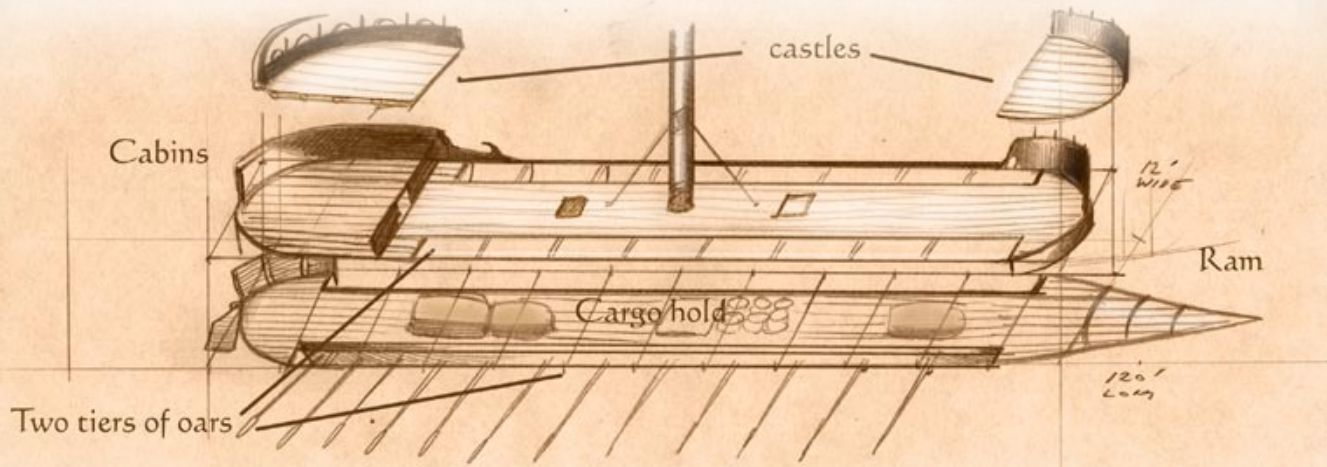
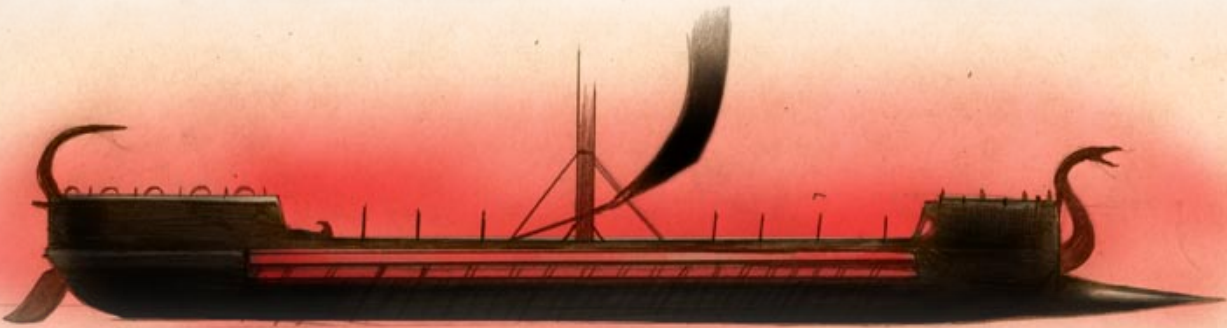
The ship's small kitchen is located here as well, as is the meager room in which the crew eat, in shifts.

In addition to the wealth (500 silver in various goods), Omu keeps his stock of black lotus-derived drugs in this room. Characters spending any time digging through Omu's possessions will likely stumble into a container of the drug. Once the drug has been uncovered, the character must make a Reflex save (DC 15) to avoid accidentally coming into contact with it. Unfortunate characters seeking to steal the potent blossoms may find themselves triggering a release of perfume in their haste, resulting in the usual effects on page 276 of the *Conan* rulebook unless great care is taken to avoid this.

### THE BORDELLO



This section of the Ark of Delight is what most of those who come to ship see. At the bottom of the stairs is a sumptuously carved door that opens into a large sitting room, which is covered in thick carpets, red velvet pillows and large cushions. Here, whores lay about, seeking to entice clients. Some take their charges then and there, and the atmosphere of the room is one of immense sensual promise. Beverages and legal drugs are available from a naked bartender, who has been known to take clients herself, if the money is sufficient.



Those wishing for more discreet pleasures may choose a whore and be taken to one of the many rooms located along a hallway running behind the sitting room. These rooms are also where the whores sleep and keep their own belongings, such as they are, as well as where the fees collected for their services are kept until the morning. The décor is similar to the sitting room, although each whore adds personal touches that make the room unique.

At the end of the hallway is another door, which opens into the private area. This large room is nearly the size of the sitting room, and is much more conservatively decorated. This is the place Omu sets aside for important guests, or those seeking to purchase and indulge in the black lotus. A small supply of the black lotus powder is kept behind the bar, and more can be obtained from Omu's office if needed. There are couches and pillows strewn about and at any given time there are 1d6 patrons here, lying about in a drug-induced stupor or engaging in the carnal activities for which the ship earns its name.

### USING THE ARK

❖ The characters are hired to discover the source of a vial of Black Lotus juice poison used to kill a Stygian noble. After discovering the identity of the assassin, it is determined that the poison was purchased from Omu. The dead noble's son agrees to double his fee if the players will bring him Omu's head.

❖ Characters may themselves be in need of one of the Black Lotus derived drugs, and are told that the only source for it that anyone knows of is through Omu, who is scheduled to weigh anchor off the nearby coast any day now.

❖ Someone with power secretly hates Omu, and has placed a spy within the whoremaster's court. The characters are hired to infiltrate the Ark, disguised as patrons, and to locate the spy. Once found, they are to tell her that it is time for 'the last dance' a code phrase which means Omu's execution for past misdeeds. Once inside, they discover Sacha is the spy, and she is willing to perform the last dance, but needs the characters' help in order to do so.

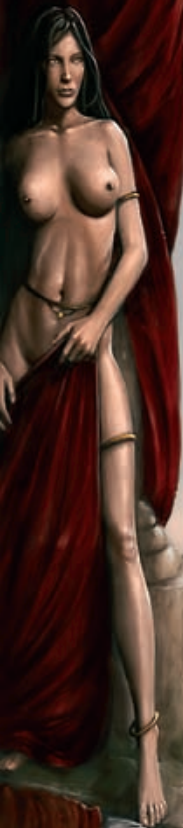
❖ The characters wake up on the Ark with splitting headaches. They have little memory of the night before, but it seems as though someone had drugged their wine and sold them to Omu. The whoremaster intends to put them to work as sailors, soldiers, or (if someone amongst the players has a Cha of 13 or greater) in the Bordello itself. Characters will have their weapons stripped from them, and must plan an escape, unless they wish to serve under the odious Stygian's leadership. After they escape, how will they discover the identity of the ones responsible for their torment? Also, if they have taken anything Omu considers valuable, how long before his retribution catches up to them?

❖ The characters are hired by a merchant family to rescue their daughter, who was kidnapped by slavers days before. Gather Information checks indicate that the slavers who took her are well known to sell pretty young captives to Omu for use on his ship. Unfortunately, the Ark has already sailed from this town. Once the characters manage to discover the Ark's next port, and travel there in time to board it, they must locate the kidnapped girl and set her free.

❖ Assuming the characters have managed to get into and out of the Ark, there is a good chance they will have taken something from the ship. As it happens, the thing they took was also a map to one of Omu's treasure caches. Can they find the treasure



Stoen



before pursuit from the Ark (either Omu himself, or his bodyguards if the whoremaster is dead) catches up with them, all the while braving the dangers of the terrible Stygian deserts?

## OMU, DEGENERATE WHOREMASTER AND DRUG DEALER

Medium Humanoid (3<sup>rd</sup> Level Stygian commoner /  
1<sup>st</sup> Level scholar)

**Initiative:** +1

**Senses:** Listen +1, Spot +1

**Languages:** Stygian, Demonic

---

**Dodge Defense:** 11

**Parry Defense:** 11

**Hit Points:** 10 (4 HD); **DR:** -

**Saves:** Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +4

---

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**Melee:** Dagger +1 (1d4, 19-20/x2 critical, AP -)

**Ranged:** Stygian Bow +1 (1d12, 19-20/x2 critical,  
AP 2)

**Base Attack:** +1; **Grp** +1

**Power Points:** 3

**Sorcery:**

Summoning – *demonic pact, channel demon,  
master, aid me!*

**Abilities:** Str 11, Dex 10, Con 11,  
Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 14

**Special Qualities:** Stygian Qualities, knowledge is  
power, background (Pact)

**Feats:** Dabblers (Divination), Knowledgeable,  
Diligent, Persuasive

**Skills:** Appraise +10, Bluff +9, Decipher Script +3,  
Diplomacy +9, Gather information +7, Intimidate  
+4, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (local)  
+8 Sense Motive +10

**Possessions:** Dagger, Stygian Bow, Fine Clothing,  
The Ark of Delight and its contents.

**Corruption:** 3

## BODYGUARDS

Omu is never outside the company of his three  
bodyguards, Ikemut, Mefef, and Wadisdi. These  
men are paid well for their loyalty.

Omu has 6 more such men at his command,  
although they remain in other parts of the Ark of  
Delight when not in use.

Medium Humanoid (2<sup>nd</sup> level Stygian soldiers)

**Initiative:** +0

**Senses:** Listen +0, Spot +0

**Languages:** Stygian

---

**Dodge Defense:** 11; 14 vs. Ranged

**Parry Defense:** 16

**Hit Points:** 13 (2 HD); **DR:** 3

**Saves:** Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +0

---

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**Melee:** Heavy Mace +4 (1d10, x2 critical, AP 4) or  
Dagger +3 (1d4, 19-20/x2 critical)

**Ranged:** Stygian Bow +2 (1d12, 19-20/x2 critical,  
AP 2)

**Base Attack:** +2; **Grp** +3

**Abilities:** Str 13, Dex 10, Con 12,  
Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 10

**Special Qualities:** Stygian Qualities

**Feats:** Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Heavy Mace),  
Parry

**Skills:** Gather Information +6, Intimidate +2,  
Knowledge (local) +4, Knowledge (warfare) +2,  
Search +6, Sense Motive +4

**Possessions:** Simple Clothing, quilted Jerkin, heavy  
mace, cosh, targe, dagger

## OMU'S DEMON

The demon with which Omu maintains a *pact* is  
a black fiend that allows Omu to call him Serapis.  
He is a normal demon of his type, as found on page  
378 of the *Conan* rulebook. He does not currently  
possess any levels in the Scholar Class, but still  
knows two sorcery styles (Curses and Hypnotism)  
as well as the usual Summoning spells. As Omu has  
only recently entered into the pact with Serapis, the  
whoremaster has yet to learn many of the secrets the  
demon possesses.

For a sacrifice, Serapis enjoys virgins, although he  
is particularly fond of babies, the sooner after  
birth the better. The whores have noticed that  
children born on the Ark vanish as soon as  
Omu discovers them. Many of the whores  
have taken to giving their babies to the sea,  
allowing them a clean death by drowning  
rather than to be eaten by whatever foul  
thing Omu calls at night.

**SANCHA,**  
**DANCING-GIRL AND SPY**

Medium Humanoid  
(2<sup>nd</sup> Level Zingaran Temptress.)

**Initiative:** +4

**Senses:** Listen +5, Spot +5

**Languages:** Zingaran, Stygian

---

**Dodge Defense:** 15

**Parry Defense:** 10

**Hit Points:** 7 (2 HD); **DR:** –

**Saves:** Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +3

---

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**Melee:** Stiletto +2 finesse (1d4, x4 critical)

**Base Attack:** +1; **Grp** +1

---

**Abilities:** Str 10, Dex 13, Con 10,

Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 16

**Special Qualities:** Zingaran qualities, comeliness, savoir-faire, seductive art

**Feats:** Light-Footed, Dodge

**Skills:** Bluff +9, Balance +6, Diplomacy +9, Disguise +9, Gather Information +9, Heal +4, Hide +5, Listen +5, Knowledge (local) +2, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +4, Move Silently +5, Perform (dance)+9, Sense Motive +4, Sleight of Hand +3, Spot +5, Use Rope +3

**Possessions:** Wisps of silk, bodice, stiletto



# Write For The Mongoose

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# THE ICHTHUS OF LIFE

Part one of a scenario for *Hawkmoon the Roleplaying Game*, by Richard Ford.

*The blood red sun was slowly setting beyond the Persian horizon as Bull wrenched his scarlet-stained axe from the assassin's head. Jean hissed at him to follow and turned, dragging Stephane's bloodstained figure with him. As they fled further into the hills Hargett surveyed the road behind them, his eyes straining in the waning light. It would soon be dark and their pursuers would have a deadly advantage if they didn't put some distance between them.*

*They ran for what seemed like hours, taking it in turns to pull Stephane along. The young man's face grew more ashen with every mile and they knew it was folly to hope he would make it. Despite their certainty Jean would not leave him behind. He had travelled for weeks with the young mercenary and he was not about to leave him to the mercy of foreign killers.*

*When the Frenchmen felt they were at a safe distance they stopped to rest. Stephane lay silent in the darkness, he had long since passed out from blood loss. Bull and Hargett took watch as Jean tended to his dying friend. He had tried his best to bind the deep lacerations in Stephane's body but there was nothing he could do to stem the flow of blood. As he looked at the pale youth before him he absent-mindedly fingered the fish-shaped pendant around his neck. To his amazement it suddenly felt warm to the touch. He remembered the old nomad's story. At the time he had thought it the fantastical tale old men often told, now he was not so sure. Knowing he had nothing to lose, yet still feeling a little foolish, he took the pendant from around his neck and pressed it to a blood drenched wound on Stephane's leg. At first nothing happened and Jean chided himself for his naivety. Then, as if stirring from a peaceful sleep, Stephane gave a low moan and his eyelids fluttered open. Without thinking Jean pulled the soaking bandages from his companion's leg and saw, to his amazement and confusion, bare skin. There was not even a scar where the wound had been. Without hesitation he pressed the pendant to Stephane's remaining wounds and tore the bindings away. Each of the lacerations had closed and the Frenchman's breathing, once shallow and fading, became strong.*

*Jean sat back, staring first at his miraculously cured friend, then at the fish-shaped pendant in his hand. It seemed that the old man had not been a teller of tall tales at all. He indeed held in his shaking hand, the Ichthus of Life...*

*The Ichthus of Life* is for 3-5 players of between Seasoned and Veteran ability. The story centres around the discovery of a sorcerous object that has the ability to heal, and sometimes restore the dead to life. The players will find themselves in

possession of this item, and they are soon the target of those who desire it for their own dire ends. The scenario should be set around the time Granbretan has first invaded Europe and begun its suppression of France. The Dark Empire has encroached on

French soil but has not yet invaded the Kamarg. This way the players have a ready-made enemy, just waiting to scupper their every plan. However, the scenario can easily be adjusted to fit into any time period with a minimum of fuss.

## CHAPTER I

### Friendly Faces

Use this section to introduce the party to the Ichthus. From early on they should be made to appreciate the artefact's importance but they will not yet know quite how well coveted it is.

#### Background and NPC Motives

A group of four French mercenaries are back from an expedition to Persia. They were originally sent on a simple courier mission for a minor noble (the details of this aren't important but you might wish to create a further background in case the party bring it up) but were soon caught up in a situation which has now grown way out of hand. Whilst there, they were introduced to the Ichthus and immediately spellbound by the legend surrounding it. A wandering hermit who possessed the Ichthus befriended the group (who originally numbered thirty) and told them that the Ichthus, a small fish shaped pendant, was originally crafted by an ancient and powerful sorcerer. Apparently it held miraculous healing properties and was rumoured to be able to return a corpse from the dead. Although they doubted his tale, the mercenaries travelled with the old man for some time, until one night disaster struck. Whilst encamped on the outskirts of a small town the Frenchmen were attacked by a group of black-clad assassins. At first their motive was obscure as they flitted in and out of the darkness, killing indiscriminately. Suddenly the old man grabbed one of the mercenaries, a man named Jean Verre, and thrust the Ichthus into his hand. He implored him to ensure that this seemingly insignificant object was taken to safety.

Before the mercenary could question him further the old man collapsed, a dagger protruding from his back. The remaining mercenaries fled into the night.

When they had reached a safe enough distance they stopped to gather their thoughts and tend to the wounded. One of their number, Stephane Serrure, was fatally injured and it was obvious he would soon die of blood loss. With nothing to lose Jean took out the Ichthus and pressed it to Stephane's wounds. Before their eyes the gaping lacerations healed up and colour rushed back into the injured man's face. Realising the old man had spoken the truth and they now held an artefact of fantastic power, the mercenaries began to make the long journey home. As they trod the road to France they were perpetually hampered by their black clad assailants, until their number dwindled to the four who now remain. They had quickly realised that the Ichthus was what the assassins were after but Jean refused to relinquish the item, even if it meant facing death. He believed that men who would kill for such a thing must only have evil in mind and he saw his journey as a crusade to keep the artefact from their grasping hands.

When they finally reached France the small band was unsure of what to do next. They knew that if they kept the Ichthus they would soon be killed and it would fall into the hands of the enemy. Together they decided it would be best to let Count Brass, Lord Guardian of the Kamarg, decide the item's fate since he would have the requisite knowledge and the military strength to protect it. Since the mercenaries hold a deep-seated mistrust of Granbretan and its denizens they decided it would be best if they were kept well out of it.

Stephane made the long hard journey to see the Count's underlings and arrange a meeting with him at Castle Brass. He was told that Count Brass would welcome an audience, and Stephane was told to return in a week's time.

Once he had arranged the meet he travelled back to meet his remaining comrades and they hid out in the wilds of Provence, counting down the days to when they could relieve themselves of their sorcerous burden.

#### What Happens

Jean, Hargett, Stephane and Bull are now travelling the road south, towards Aigues-Mortes. On the road they will meet up with the Player Characters who will also be travelling, possibly on the way to the village of Petit Greche (see *Stop Over*). The mercenaries will be reluctant to reveal much about themselves at first but days in the wilderness with only each other to talk to will begin to take their toll and soon they will become comfortable with the party and let them in on their little secret. At this stage do not reveal everything. Let the Player Characters know that the Frenchmen are holding a seemingly mystical item and that they are meeting up with Count Brass to decide its fate but that is all. If the Player Characters try to delve any further the mercenaries will clam up immediately.

Eventually Jean will suggest that the group travel together (he believes the more of them there are the less susceptible to attack they will be, but he will not tell that to the Player Characters) and the Party should have little reason to refuse.

With their newfound friends the Player Characters will proceed to the village of Petit Greche.

## Alternatives

If the party are reluctant to befriend the Frenchmen then have Jean make the first move. He will introduce himself in a friendly manner although his three companions will remain suspiciously insular.

Should the party seem disinterested in hearing the Frenchmen's tales you will have to force it upon them. The Frenchmen will be only too forthcoming with information. If they are only interested in playing mercenary-type characters then explain the value of the Ichthus to them, this should at least spark an initial interest.

Have the Frenchmen persuade the party to travel with them, Jean will be most persuasive as he is almost at his wits end after sleeping rough for months. If the Player Characters remain reticent, throw in an easy encounter that they and the Frenchmen can overcome together. This will build up some camaraderie and trust between the groups.

NB: at this stage do not introduce an encounter with the Guardians of the Black Light (see section *A Stab in the Dark*); they should remain secret for now.

## NPCs

### Jean Verre

Jean is the current bearer of the Ichthus and takes his role very seriously. He sees himself as a crusader on a mission to keep the Ichthus out of evil hands and deliver it to safety. Although he does feed off the power the Ichthus grants, he realises eventually

he will have to give it up, albeit reluctantly.

For Jean's statistics use the Brigand, on page 137 of *Hawkmoon the Roleplaying Game*.

### Stephane Serrure

After Stephane's healing by the Ichthus and (indirectly) Jean, he has become devoted to both his friend and finding a rightful home for the powerful artefact (which mainly involves keeping it away from Granbretan). He would now follow Jean into the darkest pits of Hades if he so desired and would also lay down his life to preserve the safety of the Ichthus.

For Stephane's statistics use the Peasant, on page 139 of *Hawkmoon the Roleplaying Game*.

### Hargett

Hargett will always be in the background keeping himself to himself. You should use his silent demeanour and the way he perpetually keeps his hood over his eyes to unnerve the party. In reality there is nothing sinister about Hargett, he is simply a serious, reflective individual. He is as loyal to Jean and the Ichthus as the rest of the Frenchmen and will defend it with his life.

For Hargett's statistics use the Brigand, on page 137 of *Hawkmoon the Roleplaying Game*.

### Bull

Bull will initially appear wary and aggressive towards the party. His huge stature and grizzled appearance should be enough to put the party on their guard. However, once the party have earned his trust they will find him the most approachable

and jovial of the Frenchmen. He has a limited intelligence and does not really appreciate the importance of the Ichthus. However, he is loyal to his companions and will follow their lead in any situation.

For Bull's statistics use the Mercenary, on page 139 of *Hawkmoon the Roleplaying Game*.

## The Ichthus of Life

This ancient artefact of unknowable origin contains fantastical healing properties. When worn about the neck it restores 1 hit point to a randomly generated location per Combat Round. It will also restore 1D10 hit points per Combat Round to any wound it physically touches.

## STOP OVER

This section will hopefully build up a little trust between the Players and the Non-Player Characters and also build up a little more mystery about the origins and power of the Ichthus.

## Background and NPC Motives

Unbeknownst to the party, a Granbretanian patrol is scouring the area in search of the Ichthus. They are under the command of Lord Alcardy, a nobleman and prominent member of the Order of the Fox, who wants the Ichthus for his own dire ends (see Chapter II). Hopefully the party will want to avoid any unwanted Granbretanian attention anyway, particularly if they have had a run in with the Dark Empire before. However, even if the party and the Ichthus are discovered the

Order of the Fox will not attempt to apprehend them. The soldiers are under orders to report any sightings of the Ichthus or any clues to its whereabouts but under no circumstances should they try to apprehend whoever carries it.

If the Granbretanians do gain sight of the Ichthus (and live to report it) Lord Alcardy will send forth Nezzether's Guardians of the Black Light (see *A Stab in the Dark*).

### What Happens

The party should arrive in Petit Greche around midday. This will give them time to look around the village before they have to find lodgings. There is an inn, which is the focal point for the settlement, an apothecary containing various bits and bobs, and a blacksmith where the party can purchase or repair weapons and arrows (the blacksmith is also a dab hand at fletching). At the edge of the settlement is the small shack where Mad Meg lives. The villagers tolerate her as a harmless old eccentric but if the players disturb her they will receive quite a frightening welcome.

As the party are exploring Petit Greche the Order of the Fox will enter the settlement. They will be looking for four men matching the Frenchmen's description and will question the entire village. Overall the villagers are fairly hostile towards their Granbretanian oppressors. Therefore, if the party and the Frenchmen manage to stay out of sight, the villagers will not give them away. However, even if they are spotted, the Granbretanians will simply ride away towards their master to deliver the news.

The village of Petit Greche is a standard, rural affair with people going about their day-to-day business as usual. Places of interest are as follows:

#### 1. Blacksmith's

The blacksmith's is a standard affair offering the usual gear and repairs but Jaque (the smithy) is also a very accomplished fletcher. He has a couple of finely crafted longbows (+5% Skill, 250 SP) and a single flame-lance.

Jaque himself is a jolly, good-natured man, who will conceal the party and the Frenchmen from their Granbretanian pursuers if they request his help.

#### 2. Hogwash Inn

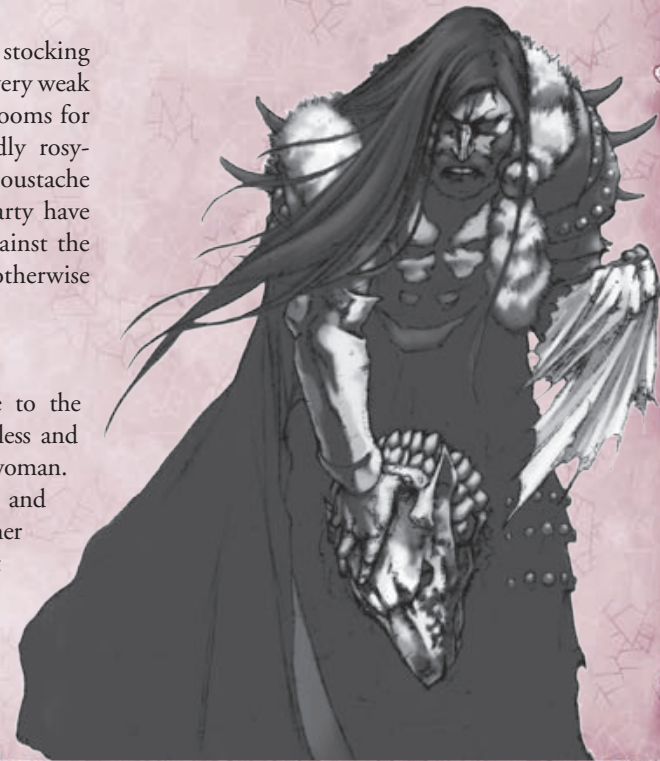
This spacious and homely inn has a bar stocking various ales and wines (ranging from the very weak to the devastatingly strong) and several rooms for rent. Oswald the Innkeeper is a friendly rosy-cheeked man with a large handlebar moustache and the biggest beer belly any of the party have ever seen. He will also aid the group against the Order of the Fox if they ask him but will otherwise do his best to avoid any trouble.

#### 3. Meg's Shack

This stinky one roomed hovel is home to the village eccentric, Meg. She is quite harmless and is tolerated by the villagers as a sad old woman. They occasionally give her scraps of food and old rags to wear but otherwise stay out of her way. If the party encounter her she will rant and rave about nothing in particular, until she spots the Ichthus. Upon discovering that the party or the Frenchmen hold this powerful item her ravings will become much more coherent:

*The mark of Septimus! You bear his pendant! It must be kept safe, you know it must. There are fell beings abroad that would use it to raise the Corruptor once more. You must all beware, beware and make a solemn oath. You must all swear to protect it with your lives lest the Keeper of the Dark Faith rises once more to take up his demon sword and slay the world! Swear it, swear the oath now!!*

At this point you may wish to nominate one of the party to be the 'Chosen One' (choose any character). This player will be significant in the plot of the adventure but all they need to know at this point is that Meg is overjoyed to see them:



*You!! You have returned young Master. Only you can defend us from the Lord of the Black Light. Oh joy! Oh rapture!*

Meg will carry on her rant, kissing the feet of the 'Chosen One' and appears quite mad. The old woman is in fact a sorceress originally from Granbretan who long ago adopted the 'mad old woman' façade to avoid persecution at the hands of the Dark Empire. She recognises the Ichthus as a powerful item and will implore the party to see it reaches safety. Meg will not leave them alone until they have solemnly promised to defend the item with their lives. (This might be a good point to introduce the Order of the Fox that will be drawn to Meg's raised voice and word of the Ichthus).

#### 4. Apothecary

The Apothecary is run by a thin, mysterious looking figure by the name of Ronan. His accent is of the Isle of Eire, although his skin is swarthy and tanned like someone from Espanya. His shop is full of bric-a-brac: tinctures, spell ingredients, herbal remedies etc, that are all pretty much worthless. If the party reveal they have the Ichthus thinking that Ronan might have some sage advice, they will be sorely disappointed. He is not however, a total quack. If the party do engage him in friendly conversation he will offer them some of his 'under the counter' offers. These are one *healing salve* (instantly heals 1D3 hit points if applied to a wounded area, with enough for 5 doses, 600 SP), an 'Amulet of Divine Redemption' (which may will come in handy later when facing undead, 850 SP) and a small shrunken-head broach (which looks quite hideous but will come in handy when facing the Guardians of the Black Light, 950 SP). All of these items are grossly overpriced and Ronan will

not be that keen a salesman, but the party would do well to purchase as many of these items as they can afford.

#### Alternatives

If the party do not encounter the Order of the Fox then the next section (*A Stab in the Dark*) will not occur. It is important therefore that the party are made to work hard to avoid being spotted. The Frenchmen (particularly the clumsy Bull) will do their best to blunder into the Granbretanian's path so the party will have to look after them as well as keeping themselves hidden.

The party may not want to avoid the Order of the Fox anyway and might launch an attack themselves. If this is the case then try and allow one of the Granbretanians to escape so he can deliver his message. However, if the party are intelligent enough to allow no survivors they can avoid the encounter with the Guardians of the Black Light.

## NPCs

### The Order of the Fox

A Granbretanian soldier named Oliver leads Lord Alcardy's search party, consisting of four members of the Order of the Fox. He has a little more experience than his men, although not much, and if they encounter any significant danger he will fight to the end to give his men a chance to flee. They all have the same statistics:

**Characteristics:** STR 15, CON 15, DEX 11, SIZ 12, INT 8, POW 8, CHA 7

**Skills:** Artillery 40%, Athletics 40%, First Aid 40%, Language (Fox) 80%, Lore (Military Tactics) 35%, Perception 45%, Riding 40%, Survival 35%, Tracking 65%

### Armour & Hit Points

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

#### Light Granbretanian Armour:

-8% Skill Penalty

#### Weapons

Type	Skill	Damage / AP
Shortsword	50%	1D6+1D2 / 3

#### Special Rules

Combat Actions: 2

Strike Rank: +10

Damage Modifier: +1D2

Movement: 4m

## A STAB IN THE DARK

This section will most likely see the party take possession of the Ichthus and introduce them to their assassin pursuers.

### Background and NPC Motives

If the Granbretanian patrol discovers the Ichthus they will return to Lord Alcardy with the news. He will then have Nezzether (see next month)

despatch his assassins to retrieve it. The Guardians of the Black Light will be ordered to bring back the Ichthus at all costs but if they are confronted with any opposition they are to capture rather than kill the enemy, if at all possible. Nezzether requires discretion to carry out his diabolical plans and wishes to question the current holders of the Ichthus and discover how much they have told other people of its powers.

### What Happens

As the party are bedding down for the night, most likely in the Hogwash Inn, the Frenchmen will be attacked. If the party have stayed up drinking with the Frenchmen (who despite their important mission still enjoy a few ales) adjust their skills accordingly to account for the thick heads they will have. After the party have fallen asleep the following will awake them:

*Your sound sleep is broken in the dead of night. As your eyes slowly open you are sure you were disturbed by a shuffling noise although you can no longer hear it. All that remains is the faint swaying of trees in the midnight wind. As your ears strain through the pitch-blackness, the air is suddenly pierced by a scream. This is followed by harsh cries and the unmistakable sound of battle.*

As the party run to help they will find one or more of the Frenchmen already slain and the others desperately fighting for their lives. Jean will hand over the Ichthus and order the party to flee with it. At this point the overwhelming numbers of the enemy should be enough persuasion for the party to run like the wind, the Frenchmen will also implore the party to escape and deliver the Ichthus to safety.

### Alternatives

If the party managed to avoid the Granbretanian patrol then Lord Alcardy will have no clues as to the Ichthus' whereabouts and will be unable to despatch his assassin allies. The party will consequently sleep well and set off refreshed with the Frenchmen.

It may well be that your party do not race to aid the Frenchmen but may prefer to save their own skins. If this is the case Jean will find one of the party before they flee and thrust the Ichthus into his hand, demanding they protect it. He will then dive into a vicious melee with the Guardians of the Black Light, giving the party time to make their escape.

Rather than flee into the night, the party may take the suicidal option and stand to fight the swell of assassins. If all of the party are overcome (the assassins have orders to subdue rather than kill their enemies) the survivors will be transported, along with the Ichthus, towards Alcardy's castle. On the way they will be intercepted by Count Brass (see *Run Away!!*). If the party are split up and some flee as others are captured then there will be a chance for the escapees to track and free their allies.

## NPCs

### Guardians of the Black Light

This ruthless band of assassins was recruited and trained by Nezzether. They are the warrior branch of a forgotten religion devoted to their deity Abbassyn and are willing to do anything to see him rise once more from the infernal pits of Hell. Nezzether is their leader and mentor and they remain fanatically loyal to him having been

educated from an early age in the gruelling ways of the warrior-assassin. There are a total of ten of these warriors currently pursuing the Ichthus, with the following statistics:

**Characteristics:** STR 10, CON 11, DEX 16, SIZ 10, INT 12, POW 10, CHA 6

**Skills:** Acrobatics 50%, Athletics 40%, Dodge 40%, Evaluate 40%, Sleight 50%, Stealth 75%

### Armour & Hit Points

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-3	Right Leg	0/5
4-6	Left Leg	0/5
7-9	Abdomen	1/6
10-12	Chest	1/7
13-15	Right Arm	1/4
16-18	Left Arm	1/4
19-20	Head	0/5

**Leather Shirt:** -4% Skill Penalty

### Weapons

Type	Skill	Damage / AP
Scimitar	75%	1D6-1D2+1 / 4
Throwing Dagger	75%	1D6-1D2 / 4

### Special Rules

<b>Combat Actions:</b>	3
<b>Strike Rank:</b>	+14
<b>Damage Modifier:</b>	-1D2
<b>Movement:</b>	4m

## RUN AWAY!!

Here the party will (hopefully) be fleeing for their lives through the thick woodland surrounding Petit Greche, rather than facing the insurmountable power of the Guardians of the Black Light.

### Background and NPC Motives

The Guardians of the Black Light will pursue the party relentlessly through the dense terrain. If they capture and overcome any of the party they will try to return them to Nezzether for questioning. Their main priority however is the Ichthus, if they manage to retrieve this they will retreat rather than risk losses.

Unbeknownst to the party, Count Brass and some of his warriors were on their way to intercept the Frenchmen and transport them safely to Castle Brass in time for the meeting. As the party flees into the night Count Brass (who will be closing in on Petit Greche) will overhear the commotion and move to investigate. Count Brass and the Guardians of the Black Light are on a collision course.

### What Happens

As the party flee through the woods they will come upon a clearing. Describe as follows:

Through the dawn haze you can see a clearing up ahead. As you approach you notice it is an old graveyard, long since forgotten and shrouded in dead leaves and vines. As you quickly pass through the burial ground you notice that some of the crude stones bear carvings and inscriptions whilst

others are left blank, leaving no clue as to whom they stand for. Here and there are dotted pillars and statues that look to be of ancient origin but they are so eroded it is impossible to tell for sure.

*Suddenly you hear a noise from up ahead, then in quick succession, one to the left and then the right. A throwing knife cuts the air without warning and ricochets harmlessly off a pillar in front of you. This is closely followed by two more but like the first, these also miss. Before you can move any further you see two black shapes emerge from the dense wood up ahead. These are followed by more figures on both your flanks. Spinning round you see yet more of your pursuers, all advancing like hungry wolves bent on rending your flesh to the bone.*

The party will be surrounded and have to fight for their lives. If one of the party members purchased the shrunken-head broach from Ronan the Apothecary and has it on display, they will find their black clad attackers strangely fearful and unwilling to engage them in combat. The broach hails from Nezzether and the Guardian's homeland and is regarded as a talisman of imminent doom. If the bearer gets close to one of the Guardians they will scream in terror and try to get as far away as possible without actually fleeing the scene.

Nezzether's assassins will outnumber and outclass the party, and the combat will last up until one of the party is close to obtaining a Serious Wound or the Ichthus is taken. Just when all looks lost the following will occur:

*A bellowing cry pierces the air making your black clad assailants falter for an instant. Horned horses suddenly burst from the surrounding woodland*



*their hooves cracking some of the graveyards ancient flagstones. The horses carry heavily armoured knights all bearing shields and keen broadswords. Their livery is white, bearing the clenched fist of Count Brass. With grunts of fury and the dawn light glinting from their blades, they smash into the assassins.*

The strength of the warriors' attack should be enough to rout the Guardians of the Black Light. Once the battle is over Count Brass will dismount and introduce himself, apologising for his tardiness. He explains that he was on his way to intercept the Frenchmen and bear them to safety and apologises for his late arrival. If all of the Frenchmen have been killed he will show deep sorrow and regret.

Count Brass will offer to accompany the party to the Castle Brass where the meeting to decide the Ichthus' fate will soon take place. If the party refuse he will insist that it is for their own safety, persistent refusal will see him lose patience. Count Brass will not try to take ownership of the ancient artefact and allow the party to continue to bear it.

When all this is done Count Brass will allow the party to climb onto the back of his warriors' steeds and proceed on to The Gathering...

### Alternatives

If your players have Veteran characters you may wish for them to fight the Guardians of the Black Light alone. Count Brass can then appear when the fight is over to guide the party back to his castle

If the party is nimble enough and one or more of them knows enough about forest lore, they may be able to escape from the Guardians altogether

without having to fight for their lives. In these circumstances, have them bump into Count Brass when they think they are safe (this is a good opportunity to build up the tension).

## NPCs

### Count Brass

For a complete description of Count Brass, see page 127 of *Hawkmoon the Roleplaying Game*.

### Guardian of the Kamarg

For a complete description of the Guardians of the Kamarg, see page 138 of *Hawkmoon the Roleplaying Game*.

## THE GATHERING

This will introduce the party to an array of European nobles and allow them to rest a little before the real fun begins.

### Background and NPC Motives

Nobles and scholars from across Europe have congregated at Castle Brass to discuss the fate of the Ichthus of Life. They are to decide whether it would be better to destroy the artefact, use it for good or hide it away in case it is one day retrieved by the evil that once held it and used it for foul deeds. Little do they know that one of the nobles is a spy who even as they speak, plots to return the Ichthus to an evil order of knights, older than any of the nations of the Tragic Millennium.

### What Happens

The party will be transported to Castle Brass, a large foreboding construction, and allowed to rest and heal awhile. Count Brass will introduce them to Bowgentle (see *Hawkmoon the Roleplaying Game*, page 129), and he will show the party around and answer any questions they may have about the arriving delegates.

As they sample the meagre pleasures of Count Brass they will notice the delegates begin to arrive (see Non-Player Characters below).

When all the nobles are assembled the meeting will be held; there is no time for niceties as the problem of the Ichthus must be resolved as soon as possible. Bowgentle will approach the party at some stage and inform them that the Seneschal has demanded their participation in the meeting. He will then lead them to the monastery's meeting hall.

*As you walk through the dark brick tunnel which leads towards the main hall you can hear harsh, raised voices echoing from up ahead. Bowgentle seems suddenly concerned and beckons you to follow him whilst raising a finger to his lips. The voices grow louder and you realise that the meeting has already begun. It appears that the nobles are far from an agreement on how to deal with the Ichthus.*

As the party enter the meeting hall Count Brass will raise a hand to calm the bickering nobles. He will introduce the party as the bearers of the Ichthus, suddenly piquing the assembled noble's interest. For the benefit of the party he will explain the legend of the Ichthus and reveal why so many are willing to fight and die to possess it.



*As you all know this seemingly insignificant trinket is fabled to restore life itself. Over the years its reputation has grown and the healing powers it possesses made legendary. Rather than take Jean Verre's word for its healing properties we have taken the time to test it and I can assure everyone here that it is quite genuine.*

*The story behind the Ichthus however, is not one of purity and good deeds. As with all things pure there are those who would attempt to warp and pervert the Ichthus and it was Abbassyn the Corruptor, who first attempted this. Before the Tragic Millennium, Abbassyn discovered the Ichthus' existence and began to formulate his plans. He realised that by tainting the Ichthus with his own infernal lifeblood he could corrupt the holy artefact and make it a force for evil. With it he would be able to spread disease and pestilence across the land, simply by the force of his will. Before he could complete his dire plans he was confronted and slain by a brave warrior named Septimus. Abbassyn and the warrior fought for three days until Septimus finally slew the Demon with its own sword, the only thing that could defeat it. The warrior later died of his wounds but his remains were encased in a solid lead cross in honour of his services to the goodly powers. Abbassyn meanwhile was banished to another plane to contemplate his next move. Over the centuries his hatred and yearning for revenge festered.*

*Years passed and the Ichthus was protected until the events of the Tragic Millennium. After that the Ichthus was never heard of again until it was recently discovered by a group of French mercenaries. Through them and the men you see here before you, we have found the Ichthus in our care. At the moment it is safe but we do not know for how long.*

If the party was rescued from the Guardians of the Black Light, Count Brass will continue:

*Only yesterday we encountered a group of assassins intent on recovering the Ichthus. These warriors were obviously bent on using it for evil, they were prepared to employ any means to recover the item and fought fanatically to retrieve it. It appears that Abbassyn's envoys are abroad once more and we have little time to make our decision.*

Once Count Brass has finished his telling of the Ichthus' legend the debate will resume. Count Brass, although trying to remain as a neutral mediator, wishes to hide the Ichthus away, considering it an artefact too important to destroy but too dangerous to use openly for good.

Manuel of Catalonia will advocate the Ichthus' healing properties and argue for its open use. He believes that it could easily be protected by the united might of the nobles, along with the Red Church, and argues that its uses for good far outweigh its potential for evil.

Dieter of Sahbruck will demand that the Ichthus is destroyed immediately. He will loudly protest at what he sees as needless debate and argue that the Ichthus is not a holy relic but an infernal tool for the summoning of demons.

Outwardly the Mermian League will side with Count Brass and ask that the Ichthus be protected. Their leader, Stelios, will request that the Ichthus is put in their care and would be best protected by the Mermian Unity. Secretly he wishes to take the ancient artefact and study its powers. Blind ambition and the potential to gain more power are

the only reasons the Mermians are here.

Hoping to gain a quick resolution to the meeting, the Knights of Aragon will side with Count Brass (who they see as the next most powerful, after themselves) and call for the Ichthus' to be hidden.

Once demand for the secretion of the Ichthus has been made Count Guntha will step forward and implore the assembled nobles not to simply throw away such a valuable item. He (for reasons revealed below) wishes the Ichthus to remain intact, at least for the time being.

The debate carries on for some time with all the nobles split and no resolution in sight. Eventually Count Brass will call for an adjournment of the meeting and suggest the nobles relax and continue their debate the next day.

### Alternatives

The party can join in or sit back as much as they please as the proceedings unfold.

### NPCs

Count Brass hosts the meeting and watches the proceedings in silence, ever watchful and suspicious of his noble counterparts from other countries.

### Duke Manuel of Catalonia

Probably the most humble and altruistic of all the nobles, Manuel is an ageing, austere duke with a weathered yet kindly face, but who is still powerfully built despite his years. He is a devout of the Red Church of the Redeemer, and truly believes it is a force for good. However, Manuel

has no appreciation of how little power the Church truly holds, and his opinions are generally ignored by his fellow nobles.

For Duke Manuel's statistics use the Noble, on page 139 of *Hawkmoon the Roleplaying Game*.

## Dieter Von Rechtsburg of Sahbruck

This well disciplined and militaristic noble is a powerful Germanian duke. He is a rival of Count Vincent, the ruler of Sahbruck and a man who would gladly see the Ichthus in the hands of his allies in Granbretan. Dieter is an arrogant noble, despite his resentment of the Dark Empire, and he treats everyone with an air of contempt. His strong, square jaw and severe haircut echo the stern disciplined attitude of the Teutonic Knights, of which he is one, and he wanders everywhere in full armour, constantly vigilante and ready for anything. He is accompanied by a contingent of five knights. They will only talk amongst themselves and never interact with any of the other orders or the party.

For Dieter's statistics use the Soldier, on page 140 of *Hawkmoon the Roleplaying Game*.

## Mermian League

The Mermian contingent appears all smiles as they arrive at Castle Brass. They appear peaceful and serene but beneath this façade they are devious and merciless. Their leader is Stelios Kastapolis, a jolly bearded man whose mouth is a perpetual grin, but whose unsmiling eyes survey everything.

He will gladly mix with the party and answer any questions they may put to him but after being enchanted by his silver tongue the party will find they have gleaned little, if no information of any true worth.

For Mermian statistics use the Soldier, on page 140 of *Hawkmoon the Roleplaying Game*.

## Knights of Aragon

Hailing from Espanya, the Knights of Aragon are led by a bullish, broken nosed man named Benito Calzhage. He and his contingent are a serious weather-beaten crew, fresh from their battles with raiders from Afric. Benito considers the Ichthus an inconvenient distraction from his country's conflicts and will want the proceedings to end as quickly as possible. He has little time for what he considers a triviality.

The Knights of Aragon are a stern and serious bunch, quick to anger and loyal to none but the Count of Aragon and one another.

For Knight statistics use the Mercenary, on page 138 of *Hawkmoon the Roleplaying Game*.

## Count Guntha of Vien

Count Guntha leads the delegation from Osterland. He is swathed in bandages, which hang limply from beneath his antiquated armour. His face is mostly concealed to hide the disfigurement brought on by the advanced stages of leprosy. Despite his obvious illness he remains a noble figure and handles himself with all the lordly pride of a true count.

For Guntha's statistics use the Noble, on page 139 of *Hawkmoon the Roleplaying Game*.

## A Traitor in their Midst

Guntha is a secret agent for the Black Knights. They have promised him a cure for his potentially fatal disease in return for his services as a spy (of course there is no chance that they will fulfil their side of the bargain).

The Black Knights are a secretive mystical order whose roots lie in the worship and conjuration of evil spirits and demons from other planes. They require the Ichthus for their own ends and have sent Count Guntha to try and retrieve it. If the diseased Count fails in his mission they still have Lord Alcardy in their control as a contingency.

And so ends part one of

THE ICHTHUS OF LIFE

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REINVENTING THE RPG THRU BARE KNUCKLES ROLE PLAYING



# New Initiatives

Attention citizens! As we enter Year 214 of the brave new era of Alpha Complex, Your Friend and Mine, Friend Computer, and his bestest buds in the Service Groups have launched a series of exciting new initiatives to make procedures even more funefficient! Words like funefficient (fun+efficient) are just one of these wonderful new initiatives that might be making your life interesting tomorrow!

## ■ CPU

Those fun-loving bureaucrats at CPU are the wackiest (for values of wacky that are within 0.2 standard deviations of a behavioural baseline determined by psychological profiling of citizens) clones in Alpha Complex, and their new management projects will make running missions smoother and easier than ever!

## ■ *Troubleshooter Ad-Hoc Operations Management*

Every Troubleshooter is extensively cross-trained in several disciplines, from Team Leadership and Equipment Maintenance to Hygiene Security and Happiness Management. Under current guidelines, these exciting Mandatory Bonus Duties are assigned at the start of a mission, which can lead to a grievous lack of coverage of a key field if a Troubleshooter is incapacitated by Commie Mutant Traitors! Just thinking of the possibility that a Troubleshooter team under fire might be denied regular hygiene checks boggles the mind! The TroubleShooter Ad-Hoc Operations Management Initiative allows Mandatory Bonus Duties to be reassigned as needed.

Under this system, MBD badges are tied to a computer, and are reconfigured as needed. To

## By Gareth Hanrahan

see his current job, a Troubleshooter just needs to look down at his chest! Duties are allocated by CPU operations management who are observing the Troubleshooter mission through the Recording Officer's data stream. Failure to complete one's assigned duties, whatever those duties currently are, is treason! For added security, Ad-Hoc Operations Management Badges are equipped with radio-controlled termination charges in case Commie infiltrators attempt to sabotage Troubleshooter missions!

## ■ *Audio Form Filling*

Have you ever been trapped under fire from Commie Mutant Traitors, but you can't find a pen to fill in that pesky AF/5322/43-A2 form, *Request for Corridor-Scale Airstrike*? Well, those daycycles are behind you now! Under the new Audio Form Filling & Voice Recognition Initiative, electronic versions of all forms will now be available online! Just call the AFF&VRI on your handy PDC, select the form from the list, then speak at the tone. The Voice Recognition Software will automatically filter out background noise and other voices, leaving only the words of your Team Leader.

(Errata: Noise Filtering not implemented due to cutbacks. Voice Recognition works but only if you speak in a silly accent. Your first answer is final and all forms are automatically submitted upon completion.)

## ■ IntSec

The friends you didn't know you have at Internal Security are looking forward to another productive year 214, keeping our beloved Alpha Complex free from Commie subversion and terrorism! Help them help you with these bright new projects!

## ■ *Thermosetting ME Cards*

Sometimes, an IntSec agent has to go undercover, adopting a false identity to blend in

with the common clone. When the agent casts off his disguise and stands proudly forth as a heroic Hero of the Complex, he needs to be able to prove his identity immediately. Thermosetting ME cards will make this possible in situations where Friend Computer is not available to verify identities. Our undercover IntSec agent need only pop his ME card into a bucket of warm water, and the card will magically change from its undercover state to an official IntSec ID! No undercover agent need ever fear being caught without authorisation again!

## ■ *Rumour Control*

Loose lips sink warbots! Rumours are a pernicious and vile scourge upon our fair Alpha Complex, and have been found to be a leading cause of dissent, confusion and tooth decay. However, IntSec acknowledges that on rare occasions, an ad hoc unofficial method of information dispersal has advantages over HPD&MC broadcasts and Information Alerts. Therefore, under the new initiative, the spreading of Ad Hoc Informal Information Updates (previously termed 'harmless rumours') will be permitted, while spreading of Unfounded Erroneous and Dissent-Inducing Deceits (previously 'bad rumours') will remain treasonous.

To ensure that Ad Hoc Informal Information Updates aren't being used for Unfounded Erroneous and Dissent-Inducing Deceits, all Ad Hoc Informal Information Updates must be accompanied with a full listing of those who passed on the Ad Hoc Informal Information Update in question. So, if you heard from Bob-R that there's a leak in the reactor, and Bob-R heard it from Cyril-Y, and Cyril-Y got it from Agnes-B, then if the nice IntSec agent asks you,

then you must say 'Bob-R told me that Cyril-Y told me that Agnes-B told me that there's a leak in the reactor.' Simple.

(Failing to fully tag Ad Hoc Informal Information Updates is treason. Discrepancies in Ad Hoc Informal Information Updates will be noticed. At least that's what Phil-G told me, and he heard it from Abe-Y and she got it from Alice-G and Alice-G heard it from some clone down the cafeteria...uh-oh...)

### ■ HPD&MC

Housing Preservation Development & Mind Control can always be counted on for a few good ideas!

### ■ Mission Commentary Track & Extras

The Recording Officer is, of course, responsible for recording Troubleshooter missions for future reference, so that every Commie Termination can be rewatched again and again in glorious Executivision! Recorded missions are also used as training videos for new Troubleshooters, and the new Mission Commentary Track & Extras Initiative will enhance the value of these training documentaries. Every Troubleshooter will be fitted with a microphone, and encouraged to comment on each other's activities! When Bob-R's disarming that WMD, Phil-R is right there, letting the audience know what Bob-R is doing and how well he's doing it! Troubleshooters will be encouraged to make private video entries describing their feelings on the mission so far, and to record optional extras like equipment guides and blooper reels! Why, the Mission Commentary Track & Extras Initiative won't just help train future Troubleshooters, they'll also form a wonderful memento of those successful missions!

### ■ Troubleshooter Team Dorms

Most citizens rarely need to take advantage of Alpha Complex's wonderful transport system – their quarters are conveniently near their work assignments! Troubleshooters, though,

often find themselves zipping from one sector to another on their missions. At the end of a hard day spent zapping Commie Mutant Traitors, the last thing you want to do is have to trek back to your quarters across six sectors. That's why your friends at HPD&MC are installing Troubleshooter Team Dorms across Alpha Complex. These quarters away from quarters will be your temporary home during long missions. You'll share these dorms with other eager and highly-trained Troubleshooter teams, so you can share information and skills even when resting up for your next exciting mission! How efficient! Team Dorms – the fun place to recover from being shot!

### ■ R&D

They research! They develop! They research some more! Things develop! And with these new initiatives, you'll get to help!

### ■ Colour Zappers

Commie Mutant Traitors can be anywhere, so stay vigilant! But the place they're most likely to be in among the INFRARED proles ('cos there are lots of them!). Now, say the Commies have kidnapped Teela-O-MLY and you need to rescue her from those INFRA-Traitors! You could do in lasers blazing, but what if poor Teela-O gets shot? The poor girl can't afford to lose another clone.

Or, you could use a Colour Zapper, the dialable bomb! Using advanced and friendly technology, the killer beams from a Colour Zapper only disintegrate things that are a particular colour! Tune the Colour Zapper to BLACK, and all those Infrareads are fried, but Teela's Orange-jumpsuited-body and pink face are unharmed! Wonderful!

Colour-Zappers come in hand-fitting grenade format, and deal W4V damage to anything coloured the target colour!

### ■ MemoMax Transfer Beam

Every citizen is equipped with a MemoMax recorder, to copy their memories into their new clone should the unthinkable occur. In a situation where a new clone cannot be delivered promptly (like a mission to the Outdoors, or during the usual 1500 hours Clone Jam), the MemoMax Transfer Beam can step up to the challenge! This handy gadget overlays the memories of a dead clone onto a teammate, allowing the memories and skills of the late Troubleshooter to be accessed temporarily!

(MemoMax Transfer Beam may result in neurological damage and hallucinations, not to mention the late Troubleshooter's mind trying to seize control of the new body - each round, both players roll 1d20, highest gets the body this round. Transfer lasts until the new clone arrives, at which point the Beam must be used to transfer the dead Troubleshooter's memories into the new body. Or brains start exploding. Do not operate the MemoMax Transfer Beam when under the influence of drugs, alcohol or propaganda.)

### ■ Armed Forces

*Glory Glory Hail Computer! Glory Glory Hail Computer!* And with these new initiatives, the clones will, indeed, go marching on!

### ■ Tactical Warbot Fun Initiative

The Army's increased investment in Warbots such as the Shadow Mark IV has run into a few problems, which will be solved by this new initiative! The problem: Warbots are programmed to cope with situations like direct nuclear attack or engaging a whole regiment of Commies, but aren't great at interpersonal relations or, well, not crushing people. The Tactical Warbot Fun Initiative will teach Warbots to think like Friend Computer's most trusted friends – Troubleshooters!

Each team lucky enough to be selected to participate in this initiative will be issued with

a Warbuddy – that’s a Warbot brain inside a standard Jackobot body. The Warbuddy will accompany the team on their exciting mission, learning how to handle things with the subtlety and skill Troubleshooters are famous for!

(Warbot brains are expensive. Do not let the Warbuddy sustain damage. Do not inform the Warbuddy it’s not in a Warbot body, as this can cause damage.)

### ■ PLC

Production, Logistics and Commissary are your bestest friends when on missions – and with these new initiatives, you’ll love them even more!

### ■ C-Bay Missions

Competition is the most efficient way to do anything! That’s why, in the year 214, the new C-Bay mission scheme will swing into operation! Mission alerts! Equipment! Information! Team-Mates! Travel Passes! Ammunition! Widgets! Everything you need will be available on C-Bay. Bid credits for that juicy mission alert, and for the equipment you’ll need and only that equipment! After all, when it’s your credits that you’re spending, you’ll have an incentive to be efficient! Buy buy buy and save save save – save Alpha Complex from Commies, that is!

### ■ Troubleshooter Happy Meals

Studies have shown that low blood sugar leads to a 16% decrease in laser accuracy and a 25% rise in dissent and disobedience, leading to a 45% rise in mission errors. Troubleshooter Happy Meals will solve this problem! During the mission briefing, every team member will have their blood and digestive system sampled and the data is fed to their personalised lunchbox. The lunchbox then calculates the optimum time for each Troubleshooter to eat. Yum!

(Lunchboxes are equipped with sirens to ensure Troubleshooters do not miss their meals. Not eating at the calculated optimum time is obviously a sign of treasonous tendencies and a subconscious desire to sabotage the team’s chances of success.)

### ■ Tech Services

Tech Services doesn’t have to be the boring Service Group. With these new Initiatives, basic infrastructure will be as fun as [INSERT SIMILE HERE.]

### ■ Collateral Damage Allowances

Studies have shown that 132% of Troubleshooter missions result in collateral damage to sections of Alpha Complex. (This study may not be accurate, as the study team was blown up by a misplaced grenade during a mission.) To speed processing of repair, the Collateral Damage Allowance Initiative will allocate a repair budget to each mission based on likely explosions/reactor leaks/crashes/sector-wide catastrophes. With the damage from every mission *pre-calculated*, repairs to Alpha Complex will be completed 13% faster! Excelsior!

(Failing to meet damage quotas is treason. Wilfully damaging Alpha Complex property is treason.)

### ■ Power Services

Power Services doesn’t have to be the boring Service Group. With these new Initiatives, basic infrastructure will be as fun as [INSERT SIMILE HERE.]

### ■ Rolling Mandatory Bonus Sleep-Time

Your pals at Power Services will be instituting the Rolling Mandatory Bonus Sleep-Time Initiative across Alpha Complex. Under this wonderful scheme, you’ll be given extra sleep-time at intervals throughout the week-cycle! What fun, to have all those extra hours in bed! Wow, I know I can’t wait!

Note that because you’ll be asleep, all power in sectors undergoing Rolling Mandatory Bonus Sleep-Time will be cut off and redirected to higher-clearance sectors. If you have trouble breathing during a Rolling Mandatory Bonus Sleep-Time because the air recycling system has shut down, please remember that the foam in your SlumberPal Pillow can hold several cubic centimetres of oxygen, which should be plenty to keep you going!



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