

# Signs & Portents

Shamanism in RuneQuest • Money matters in Traveller • Deus Vult Scenario and much more



It's Time to Crack Some Heads!  
The Judge Dredd Miniatures Game is Out



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# Editorial



The work of an megalomaniac is never done, and this month has been no different. As head of SPECTRE I have to occasionally make examples and I hope the successors to Mr Mubarak and Mr Ben Ali will know not to short-change me in the future...

So what is in this month's Signs and Portents, I hear you ask (in a pleading, please don't hurt me kind of way)?

The second part to the excellent article on Shamanism in RuneQuest kicks off this issue, with more spirits that you can shake a British secret agent at. An interesting little piece on making money (one of my favourite pastimes) for Traveller is also featured with a nice little adventure attached.

A second scenario, this time for the superb Deus Vult, is our third major feature this month, with funny goings-on in Normandy (aren't there always?).

With the usual mix of additional articles and news I certainly hope you find this magazine useful.

You'll have to excuse me now. A Mr Gaddafi is on my special hotline and I think he is crying...

Nick

# Credits

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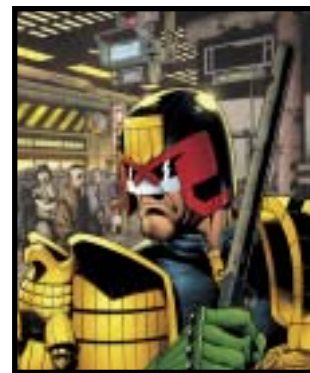
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# Mongoose News

By Nick Robinson

## CTA: Noble Armada Open Day

On March 19th, Mongoose Publishing is throwing open the doors to its UK HQ, for the official A Call to Arms: Noble Armada Open Day!

Its doesn't matter whether you are a CTA veteran or not, as we will have events running for you, whatever your skill level.

If you are a novice to A Call to Arms, then we will have a range of special frigate-duel games that will teach you all the core rules from the ground up. Fight your way through perilous space lanes, and there will be a special prize for you!

If, on the other hand, you are a long-term veteran of A Call to Arms, then we will have some more heavyweight games ready for you. We'll go through the changes that have been made to this edition of the rules, and then let you loose with an entire fleet to create carnage and havoc in the galaxy.

All miniatures will be supplied, so just bring yourself and enjoy a fun-filled day of gaming..

We will also be providing tables for those of you who have been quick off the mark and have already painted fleets and digested the rules. In the afternoon, we will combine you with the CTA veteran squad and run a mini-tournament to find out who the best admiral is..

As usual, Mongoose's shop will be open for you to pick up lots of goodies, including a few bits and pieces that won't be on general release for a while.

Doors open at 9am, and games will start just as soon as we can start pairing opponents together. The events will run until around 6pm.

## Facebook

We now have our own Facebook page where you can get the latest news and discuss the magazine. The group name is 'Signs and Portents Magazine' and we hope to see you there.

## Spug The Law!

The Judge Dredd miniatures game has now been released. It is available for free download at [http://www.wargamevault.com/product\\_info.php?products\\_id=88841](http://www.wargamevault.com/product_info.php?products_id=88841)

Now grab your gun and strap on your kneepads, it is time to take the streets!

## Next Issue

The final part of Lof Uncovered will describe the remaining areas of interest and have a map of the city.

There will be a new adventure for both Traveller and RuneQuest plus news of May's special issue, which marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Mongoose Publishing.

Additional material for RuneQuest, Dredd and Traveller will all be included for yet another bumper issue!



# Convention Diary

## RolePlaying Conventions 2011

### Concrete Cow

19<sup>th</sup> March

The Old Bath House, Milton Keynes

[www.mk-rpg.org.uk/Concrete\\_Cow\\_games](http://www.mk-rpg.org.uk/Concrete_Cow_games)

### Compulsion

25<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> March

Teviot Row Student Union, Edinburgh

<http://www.geas.org.uk/compulsion>

### Con-Quest

30<sup>th</sup> April

Derby Assembly Rooms, Derby

<http://www.con-quest.co.uk>

### UK Games Expo \*

3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> June

Clarendon Suites, Edgbaston, Birmingham

[www.ukgamesexpo.co.uk](http://www.ukgamesexpo.co.uk)

## Other Conventions 2011

### Claudia Con \*

13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> March

Renaissance London Heathrow Hotel, Hounslow

<http://www.claudiaconuk.com>

## Wargaming Conventions 2011

### Noble Armada Open Day \*

19<sup>th</sup> March

52-54 Cricklade Road, Swindon

[http://www.mongoosepublishing.com/news/news\\_item.php?pkid\\_news=471](http://www.mongoosepublishing.com/news/news_item.php?pkid_news=471)

### Salute \*

16<sup>th</sup> April

Excel Exhibition Centre, London

[www.salute.co.uk](http://www.salute.co.uk)

### Triples

21<sup>st</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> May

English Institute of Sport, Sheffield

<http://www.sheffieldwargames.co.uk/site/node/1>

### Campaign

4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> June

Thecentre:mk, Milton Keynes

<http://www.mkws.org.uk/index.php?s=campaign>

Mongoose Publishing will be attending events marked with an asterisk.  
More events will be added to this list on a monthly basis as they are confirmed.

# The Awesometer

Gaming items that get our hearts racing (or sometimes not) each and every month!

# AWESOME

## Nick Robinson's TOP 5

Heroes of Sci Fi

- Han Solo. Smuggler. Liar. Con-Artist. Shoots First. My Kind of hero.
- Flash Gordon. GORDON'S ALIVE!
- Wulf Sturnhammer wit der Happy Stick und der Wulf Silencer.
- Judge Dredd. Killed billions in the name of the law. If he took bribes he'd be further up the list.
- Kirk. No green-skinned alien woman is safe.



You find a dragon's unguarded treasure hoard.



You discover it was not unguarded...

# GRUESOME

## The Timeline

A guide to get your tails wagging for future Mongoose releases

April: Animals and Starports for Traveller

May: Monster Island. With extra Monsters!

June: The Sword

**TRAVELLER**

**RuneQuest**

**TRA**

# Quote of the Month

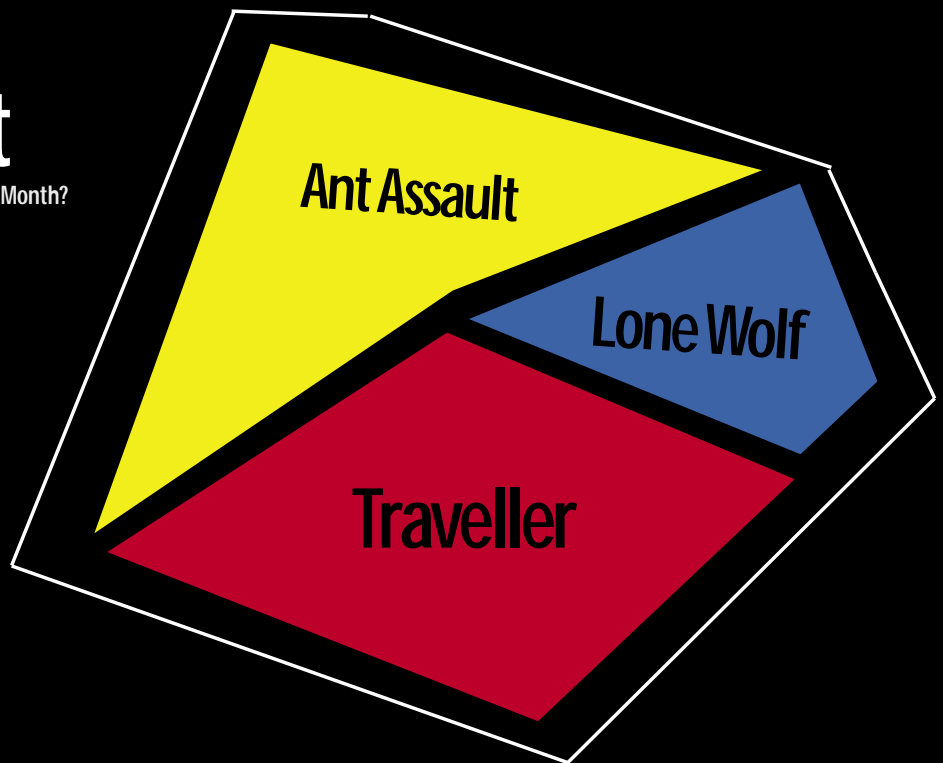
Which phrases have been flying around the office more than the dog's ball?

'Yeah, of course I did it!  
...Zap! Zap! Zap! Zap!

**A** player new to Paranoia discovers to his clone's cost that there is no such thing as sarcasm in the world of Alpha complex.

## The Time Chart

What have we been spending our time on at Mongoose this Month?



Worlders come calling

July: Paranoia - Fun and games... OUTSIDE!

August: Van Graaf's Journal of Adventuring

VELLER

PARANOIA  
PARANOIA

BATHFINDER  
ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE

# Feedback and Letters

One thing I am anxious to know is what readers of Signs and Portents think of our issues and to hear their thoughts and comments. So please, if you have anything you want to share please visit our forums, or the Signs and Portents Facebook group, and make your thoughts known. They are looked at and we try to respond to people's concerns and attempt to bring you articles you want to read.

Now onto your recent comments for the last issue.

## Shamanism for Fun and Prophets

We have had lots of feedback regarding this article.

For one of our readers: 'We've got two new spirit magicians starting next week, so such an article could not have come at a better time!' - languagegeek

and another reader said: 'Really great article... after so many years, shamanism is understandable and playable... felicitations!' - Loran

with gran\_orco adding: 'Nice job! I have understand all, finally!! Very Happy I want the second part! Awesome!'

The article has been very well received, although Phil Hibbs noted: 'I can still see that shamanism can be seen as substantially more dangerous to use than other magic systems...'

However the very active thread on our forums did try and reply thoroughly to the questions Phil raised.

I certainly hope you all enjoy the second part of the article just as much!



## On Quatermass

J Ross noted on 'The Thing in the Pit': 'The new scenario makes this American wish that he had access to Quatermass. Nice TARDIS shout-out.'

Despite being British I also have never seen the particular show, but am well aware of it (and even as I write this it is winging its way towards me, thanks to Amazon). It is always mentioned as a British Sci-Fi classic, although the last time it was shown was probably before I was born (a long, long time ago!) and the original broadcast was live (so if the actors had screwed up it would have been remembered for very different reasons). A couple of Doctor Who episodes did later draw upon Quatermass quite heavily...

## On Dredd

One of our readers, Shokker, was very pleased to see more Dredd in issue 89: 'The Clock's Ticking ... What can I say? BRILLIANT!!!!!!!'

Well done Nick and team for delivering more Judge Dredd material, it's great to know your following of Dredd fans haven't been sidelined. More of the same please (especially adventures – these really do help keep the game alive).'

Glad you liked it. There will be more material for the Dredd game to come in future issues...

## On Paranoia

Danforth pointed out the R&D article referenced an earlier edition of the game, not that it stopped him from enjoying it. Apologies for any inconvenience and I now hand you over to the clone responsible for this error, S.Cape-G-OAT-1.

"Huh? I had nothing to do with..."

ZAP! ZAP! ZAP!

"Aaaargh!"

There, that's the way to deal with traitors! And rest assured any future treasonous behaviour will be similarly punished.

## Feedback for this Issue

We are always eager to hear from our readers and if you have anything, (good, bad or humorous) you wish to share with us please visit our forums or Facebook page.

Visit us at <http://www.mongoosepublishing.com/forum.php> and join in the Signs and Portents discussion.

# March 11 Releases



*Bedecked with weapons, the Anikrunta-class Dreadnought of the Decados is a mighty vessel, protected by marauders and gatling lasers while its heavy meson weaponry pounds the enemy to dust.*

*The time-honoured tradition of taking larger enemy vessels with a co-ordinated boarding action is often countered by the Anikrunta's compliment of Marauders, a detachment of which are kept on board as standard, though their numbers can be increased.*

*House Decados Anikrunta Dreadnought*  
Price: \$24.99

*This pack contains one Anikrunta Dreadnought Everything you need to bring real firepower to your fantasy campaign!*

**Pre Order Now**

*Also used by the forces of the Empire itself, the Maestekulos Dreadnought has a fierce arrangement of weaponry, including the short-ranged but utterly devastating meson spinal mount.*

*Its close link to the Empire has served House Hawkwood well, as the presence of this mighty dreadnought in their fleets demonstrates.*

*This pack contains one Maestekulos Dreadnought.*

*House Hawkwood Maestekulos Dreadnought*  
Price: \$29.99



**Pre Order Now**



True to the Hazat philosophy of war, the Adonais is packed full of troops, ready to be launched in the greatest boarding actions the galaxy has seen. Even if the enemy refuses to close range, rank upon rank of heavy and medium blasters will ensure every opponent is quickly stripped of its shields and mauled before they can escape.

Dreadnoughts are among the most powerful ships in *A Call to Arms: Noble Armada*, and every admiral desires a squadron or two on his side!

This pack contains one Adonais dreadnought.

House Hazat Adonais Dreadnought  
Price: \$24.99

Pre Order Now

Premier supplément de la dernière édition du jeu de rôle Traveller, ce livre est conçu pour venir compléter les règles existantes sans déséquilibrer le jeu. C'est un livre incontournable pour ceux qui cherchent à s'aventurer dans le monde de la sécurité privée.

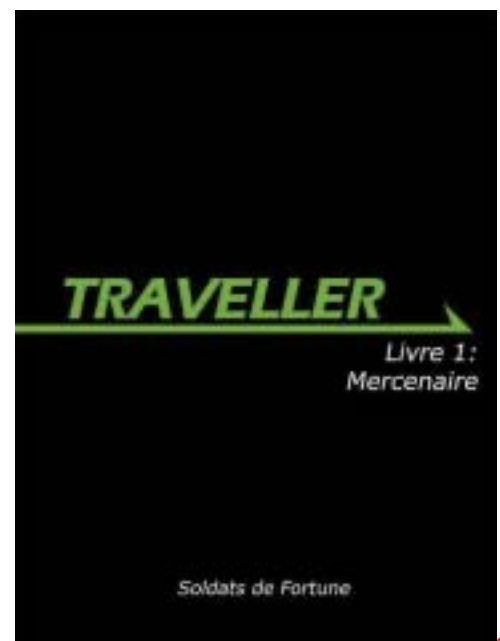
Il contient de nouvelles carrières spécifiques comme celles des mercenaires sous contrat et des professionnels de la sécurité. Du hors-la-loi au commando d'élite en passant par tous les militaires indépendants, ces carrières proposent de nouvelles options et des possibilités variées.

Vous y trouverez aussi des règles sur la façon de gérer une unité combattante, y compris un système complet pour créer des contrats destinés à vos joueurs, ainsi que des règles abstraites pour le combat de masse. Les personnages auront donc l'opportunité de poursuivre leur carrière de mercenaire au sein de leur propre unité.

Avec un nouvel arsenal et de nouveaux équipements à la portée de ces hommes déterminés, il n'y a aucun doute que l'univers n'en est que plus dangereux !"

Pre Order Now

Traveller Livre 1: Mercenaire  
Price: \$34.99  
Format: Softback (108 pages)



# March 11 Releases



*al Malik Asim Light Carrier Squadron*  
Price: \$14.99

Pre Order Now



*al Malik Efreet Destroyer Squadron*  
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*al Malik Rahimat Galliot Squadron*  
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*al Malik Spider Frigate Squadron*  
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*Decados Lucretzia Galliot Squadron*  
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Pre Order Now

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# March 11 Releases



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# March 11 Releases



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*Li Halan Slayer Raider Squadron*  
Price: \$14.99

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# RUNE QUEST II

● 天 地 人 文 ● 神 魔

MONGOOSE PUBLISHING

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

# The World of Spirits

By Gary Goldman, Bruce Mason and Pete Nash

*Redspear watched in wide-eyed silence as the high shaman ended his long chant and the last beat of the drum was sounded. He waited with his heart in his mouth; never before had he crossed the borders of life. Slowly he became aware of the changing colours around him, everything became sharper and more detailed. The flames from the fire grew higher and brighter and seemed to dance together like children, the trees around them were taller and full of vibrant greens and whispered in half heard voices, the very air seemed alive somehow. He looked about in wonder at the colours and textures all around him as though he had never opened his eyes before.*

*"Welcome to the spirit world, Redspear" smiled the old shaman as he took his hand and gently pulled him from his body like a leaf from water.*

The spirit world is a complex and often confusing realm that is both separate from the mundane world and yet intimately linked to it as well. There is constant interaction with the mundane world from the spirit plane in the form of shamans journeying there on spirit quests, haunts

crossing the borders between the worlds to terrify the living and ancestor spirits being venerated by their descendants.

The spirit plane is both an impossible distance and leap of imagination to reach for the layman and an oddly familiar environment accessed by ritual for those with Spirit Walking abilities. There are also places and times when the spirit world can overlap into the mundane world and create gateways or portals where the borders of both realms are weaker and easier to cross.

The first article on shamanism in *Signs & Portents* gave background detail on shamanism and expanded upon some of *RuneQuest II's* game mechanics. With this second article we shall examine some of the inhabitants of this strange and otherworldly realm; provide some mechanics for journeying there; example spirit cults; new heroic abilities and, finally, provide a couple of non player characters who long-time *RuneQuest* players might well recognise. But first some brief comments about getting the most out of bound spirits.

A bound spirit is trapped in the mortal world and unable to regenerate Magic Points. Yet to bind a spirit the Shaman needs to defeat it in spirit combat by reducing it to zero Magic Points. This makes the *straightforward* binding of an aggressive attack spirit such as a *bane* rather pointless. For this reason, any spirit magician wishing to bind such a spirit for later use needs to find a way to allow the spirit to regenerate some or all of its Magic Points. Of course, as stated last time, a Shaman does not have to bind spirits to a fetish. It is possible to defeat a spirit in combat and then bind it to a single, future service to be agreed later. The spirit remains on the spirit plane where it can recover its Magic Points. One time in the future, the magician can summon the spirit as if it were a spirit ally and the spirit will, if possible, attend and undertake the service. Whether or not spirits *bound to future service* count against the magician's maximum number of bound spirits (*RuneQuest II* page 140) depends on the campaign setting.

That said one generic option is to allow a spirit magic to transfer his own Magic Points to a bound spirit he controls with a suitable ritual and a Spirit Binding skill roll. The Magic Points are transferred at a rate of one per hour. This means the spirit magician can 'recharge' his bound spirit's Magic Points as part of a long and involved ritual. Games Masters may also require other sacrifices to be made at the same time depending on the campaign setting. A fumbled roll will likely release the spirit by accident.

There are also various other ways to replenish a spirit's Magic Points while it is bound. The forthcoming supplement *Blood Magic* explores methods such as *Avulsion* (the killing and reaping of a creature's life force) in depth. Games Masters should explore the creative options and implications of different methods. Consider what it must be like for a Shaman who lets a disease spirit suckle his Magic Points to feed itself.





## Spirit Bestiary

The following spirits represent just small fraction of the complex and interesting denizens of the spirit world. Some of these descriptions are merely expansions or additional information on the basic spirits from the Core Rulebook, others are new and more unusual spirits that may prove of interest or provide inspiration for Games Masters to invent their own spirits. They are presented in alphabetical order for ease of reference.

As per *RuneQuest II*, all spirits know the skills of Spectral Combat at POWx5% and Persistence at POWx4% while some may also possess Discorporation at POWx5% and Stealth at POWx4%. Some spirits may have much higher values for these skills. Other additional skills may be thought appropriate by Games Masters for stronger spirits such as Common Magic, Influence and Insight. Any skill with INT, POW or CHA as a base are often most appropriate. A handy rule of thumb is to say that such skills are likely to be rated at a percentage equal to around their POWx3% to POWx5%.

### Ancestor Spirits

Ancestor spirits are the souls of dead family members who reside on the Spirit Plane after death, rather than joining a deity in their halls on the God Plane. They remain on the spirit plane, close to their tribal lands in the mundane world, to help their former clan and family members. Ancestors are often the first port of call for a clan chief or family head looking for assistance, typically through the intermediary of his local spirit magician.

Whilst the gods can be fickle and often cruel, ancestors are often far more approachable if they are suitably venerated and respected by their descendants. Through veneration an ancestor worshipper hopes to emulate their greatness and deeds, and become an ancestor himself so he may one day watch over his clan to protect and teach them, reminding them of the traditions and rituals that have made the clan strong for hundreds of years.

Ancestor spirits are just as complex and variable as any human. They will have their own well defined personalities complete with dislikes and opinions. Often their personalities are more rigid and inflexible due to the hundreds of years of existing on the spirit plane. They may be wise and knowledgeable about clan affairs but may also be old fashioned and harbour ancient grudges of little relevance to the modern world.

This makes ancestor worship something to be defined through play and used as a backdrop that helps define the spirit magician's approach to the rest of the spirit world rather than just a specific magical source.

The powers and abilities of ancestor spirits are detailed fully in the *RuneQuest II* and expanded upon in the shamanism article in the previous article (Signs & Portents 89) and so are not repeated here. Some examples of ancestor spirits follow and are ready for use in play or to provide inspiration.

#### WARRIOR BROTHER

Warrior Brother was renowned as a master of weapons and military tactics. He was as strong as two men and wore his armour when he slept. We remember how he single-handedly slew three of the enemy clan's thanes when they dared to cross the Black Brook into our lands.

Intensity 2 ancestor spirit, INT 12, POW 14, CHA 14

Skills: Lore (Regional) 104%, Culture (own) 104%, Persistence 56%, Spectral Combat (Spectral Sword) 70%, Sword and Shield 104%, Lore (Tactics) 104%

Common Magic: Bladesharp 4, Demoralise, Parry 4

Heroic Ability: Duellist

#### CHIEF ALL-FATHER

Chief All-father was the wisest and most beloved clan chief since the Raven banner was found in Badgers Wood. He made peace with the unfriendly tribes and he led the warriors to victory over the dark raiders. We remember how the herds grew tenfold under his watchful eye.

Intensity 3 ancestor spirit, INT 16, POW 21, CHA 18

Skills: Lore (Regional) 111%, Culture (own) 111%, Persistence 84%, Spectral Combat (Sword and Shield) 105%, Oratory 111%, Influence 111%, Insight 111%

Common Magic: Glamour 6, Fate 6, Bearing Witness 6, Second Sight, Thunder's Voice 6  
Heroic Ability: Heroic Aura

#### OLD MA

Old Ma was a wise woman who lived near the village when the blood plague came. She healed the villagers and drove away the sickness spirits, then taught us all how to use herbs and friendly spirits to keep our children safe.

Intensity 3 ancestor spirit, INT 18, POW 21, CHA 6

Skills: Lore (Regional) 111%, Culture (own) 111%, Persistence 84%, Spectral Combat (Spectral staff) 105%, Lore (Herbs) 111%, Healing 111%, First Aid 111%, Insight 111%

Common Magic: Heal 6, Spirit Bane 6

Spirit Allies: Old Ma may also call on an Intensity 2 healing spirit ally that acts as a Cure Disease spell and a guardian spirit of Intensity 2, with a POW of 16

Heroic Ability: Disease Immunity

#### OLD GRANDPA

Old Grandpa was a master boatman and knew all the currents and best fishing spots in the rivers and streams. He could talk to the water spirits and often brought fine catches to the high table. We remember how he hid the villagers in the marshes when the foul raiders slipped past the guards.

Intensity 4 ancestor spirit, INT 12, POW 25, CHA 8

Skills: Lore (Regional) 115%, Culture (own) 115%, Persistence 100%, Spectral Combat (Spectral net) 125%, Boating 115%, Lore (River) 115%, Swim 115%, Survival 115%, Craft (Net making) 115%

Spells: Endurance 4, Beast Call, Lucky, Repair 4, Light

Spirit Allies: Old Grandpa may also call his old spirit ally, *Keelfriend*, who is an Intensity 3 water elemental STR 21, SIZ 3, INT 3, POW 20, DEX 8

Heroic Ability: Born in a Boat (as per the *Born to the Saddle* ability but applies to all Boating skill rolls instead)

# The World of Spirits

## Bane Spirits

Bane spirits are entropic spirits derived from the Chaos Rune, they exist only to cause dissolution and deterioration to the very spirits and souls of their victims. Bane spirits have the ability to absorb and destroy the spiritual essence of their targets, their entropic touch permanently destroying any magic points they drain in spirit combat and they are capable of utterly destroying any spirits they reduce to zero magic points, their victims literally ceasing to exist, their spirit is simply rent apart and dissipated.

As Bane spirits are both hostile and dangerous they are rightly avoided by most sensible spiritual traditions. A few malign and chaotic spiritual cults may seek out and use these twisted spirits, but most shamans try and either avoid them or try their best to destroy or trap them to prevent them causing further damage in the spirit world. When vengeful or malicious spirit magicians do use Bane spirits they are most commonly bound into a fetish, released and commanded to attack other spirits or bound into an easily broken fetish and set as a trap for an unsuspecting foe to unleash.

### SLIME

This spirit attempts to dissolve its target into a puddle of mucus.

Intensity 1 bane spirit, INT 4, POW 9, CHA 9, CA 2, SR +7, Spirit Damage 1D6

Disincorporate 45%, Spectral Combat 45%, Persistence 36%

### MAW

This spirit appears to consume its victim.

Intensity 2 bane spirit, INT 5, POW 15, CHA 12, CA 2, SR +9, Spirit Damage 1D8

Disincorporate 75%, Spectral Combat 75%, Persistence 60%

### SCREAM

Surrounded by some sort of psychic scream this spirit seems to shatter its victim into pieces.

Intensity 3 bane spirit, INT 6, POW 20, CHA 14, CA 3, SR +10, spirit Damage 1D10

Disincorporate 100%, Spectral Combat 100%, Persistence 80%



## Birthing Spirits

Birthing spirits are a very specific type of spirit creature linked to the Fertility and Harmony runes. They provide a great advantage to the sometimes risky business of childbirth by helping to ease the mothers pain and induce a feeling of calm and peace to both mother and baby.

Birthing spirits also grant a gift to the new-born child in the form of a boost to one of the child's characteristics, this takes the form of a fixed bonus equal to the spirit's intensity, to one of the child's characteristics. This gift often has some physical manifestation such as a specific birthmark, unusual eye colour or something similar.

Birthing spirits must be persuaded to assist the spirit magician and they may well ask for a boon on the mundane plane in reward for their services. This can be abstracted as an opposed test of the spirit magician's Influence skill against the spirit's Persistence if preferred.

Game Masters may wish to introduce other types of Birthing spirits which grant unusual abilities to the new-born child such as second sight, the ability to communicate with a certain animal, being born Rune Touched and so on as they feel appropriate to their campaign. Such special birthing spirits should be at least Intensity 3.

An example of a birthing spirit is found under the cult of Pamalt in Cults of Glorantha. A further example is provided here.

#### MIDWIFE'S FRIEND

Manifests as a smiling, portly old lady with sparkling violet eyes.

Intensity 3 birthing spirit, INT 6, POW 20, CHA 14

Spirit Combat (Spectral slap, 1D10) 100%, Persistence 80%

If convinced to help deliver a baby within the clans home territory, Midwife's Friend will grant a gift of +3 to any one of the baby's physical characteristics. She requests the boon of three days' service from the magician for this gift.

### Chonchon

Chonchons are magical denizens of the spirit world that can break through into the mortal plane and take physical form to terrify its inhabitants. They appear as large grotesque human heads with huge ears that they flap to move around. They can pass into the mortal plane at will but must hide in a dark place during the day as they are instantly dismissed back to the spirit world by direct sunlight. Chonchons are described more fully in *Monster Coliseum* (page 117).

Spirit magicians who defeat chonchon spirits in spirit combat on the spirit plane may bind them in to a fetish so they can release them at night for their own purposes. Breaking the fetish releases the Chonchon which can then act of its own accord. Chonchons are always hostile to mortals so usually it will attack the nearest flesh and blood mortal. If the breaker of the fetish looks weak enough it will attack him. Remember that unless the magician undertook a specific ritual, the bound Chonchon may have zero Magic Points and will be for all intents and purposes useless. Two example chonchon spirits follow.

#### CHON-CHAW

Intensity 2 conchon spirit, INT 14, POW 17, CHA 1, SR +8, CA 3, Spirit Damage 1D10 Spectral Combat 85%, Persistence 68%

#### CHON-CHOM

Intensity 3 conchon spirit, INT 16, POW 20, CHA 1, SR +9, CA 3, Spirit Damage 2D6 Spectral Combat 100%, Persistence 80%

### Curse and Sickness spirits

Curse spirits are malevolent beings who seek to attack and covertly posses mortals. They are linked to the Disorder Rune and are often found lingering close to areas of great disaster or misfortune. Curse spirits

will have a number of poison effects equal to their Intensity and once they are in possession of a victim they emulate these effects (as in the Disease and Poison section on page 55 of the *Core Rulebook*). The previous article provided mechanical suggestions for how to construct such spirits and a few examples are presented here. The mechanics, however, are simply a starting point. To produce new and exciting curses simply assess the likely intensity needed and create a spirit to match. Most spirits covertly possess the victim.

#### VOMITER

Intensity 1 curse spirit, INT 8, POW 10, CHA 9, CA 2, SR +9, Spirit Damage 1D6

Discorporate 50%, Spectral Combat 50%, Persistence 40%, Stealth 40%

Vomiter manifests as a shadowy blur with a strong smell of vomit. Victims who make any sudden activity must make a Resilience test or be incapacitated for 1D3 CA's with uncontrollable vomiting and retching.

*"I am a sexy, shoeless god of ... barf."*

#### SQUINT

Intensity 2 curse spirit, INT 10, POW 15, CHA 12, CA 3, SR +11, Spirit Damage 1D8

Discorporate 75%, Spectral Combat 75%, Persistence 60%, Stealth 60%

Squint manifests as an indistinct and blurred movement in the air. Possessed victims find their vision dims and blurs, this results in a halving their Perception skill tests for spotting things and any other sight related skills, such as missile weapons, suffer a -20% penalty.

#### DIRE

Intensity 3 curse spirit, INT 12, POW 20, CHA 12, CA 3, SR +12, Spirit Damage 1D10

Discorporate 100%, Spectral Combat 100%, Persistence 80%, Stealth 80%

Dire manifests as an unpleasant grinning old man. Whenever the possessed victim makes a skill roll, he must roll twice and use the worst dice roll. If he fumbles in combat then he must also roll twice on the fumble table.

Sickness spirits are malevolent beings who attack and covertly posses mortals. They are linked to the Death Rune and are often



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found lingering near the bodies of the recently dead or in foul and foetid marshes, where they await passing mortals to attack and posses. Sickness spirits may have a number of disease effects equal to their Intensity and once they are in possession of a victim they emulate these effects (as in the Disease and Poison section on page 55 of the *Core Rulebook*). As with curse spirits, new and exotic diseases can be created by comparing their severity with pre-existing conditions and setting the spirit's intensity accordingly.

## SOUL WEEPER

Intensity 1 sickness spirit, INT 8, POW 10, CHA 9, CA 2, SR +9, Spirit Damage 1D6  
Discorporate 50%, Spectral Combat 50%, Persistence 40%, Stealth 40%

Soul Weeper manifests as a slowly dissolving shadowy spirit. The spirit carries the disease of Soul Blight at an Intensity of 65.

## MAD-DOG

Intensity 2 sickness spirit, INT 10, POW 15, CHA 12, CA 3, SR +11, Spirit Damage 1D8  
Discorporate 75%, Spectral Combat 75%, Persistence 60%, Stealth 60%

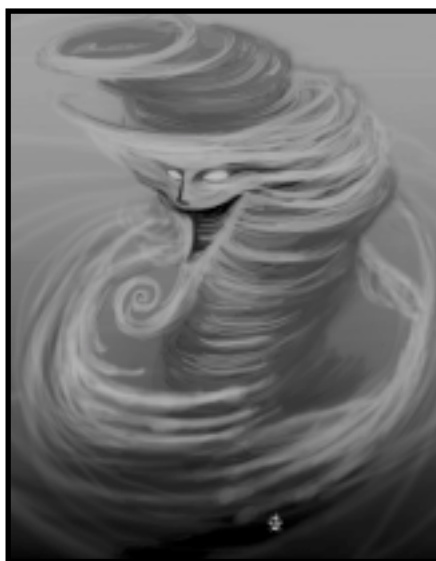
Mad-dog manifests as an insanely rabid dog and carries the disease of Rabies at a potency of 80.

## FEVERFILTH

Intensity 3 sickness spirit, INT 12, POW 20, CHA 12, CA 3, SR +12, Spirit Damage 1D10  
Discorporate 100%, Spectral Combat 100%, Persistence 80%, Stealth 80%

Feverfilth manifests as a hideous rotting goat, the spirit carries Creeping Chills at a potency of 90.

A good rule of thumb to employ with sickness and curse spirits and the potency of their effects is to assume a potency of around four or five times their POW as a base level. This can then be modified depending upon the severity of their effect.



## Elemental Spirits

Elemental spirits originate from the Elemental Runes; *Air, Darkness, Earth, Fire and Water*. They are the *spiritual* form of such beings as are summoned by such spells as Elemental Summoning but a spirit magician can invest their powers within his *own* body.

The shamanism article in Signs & Portents 89 discussed elemental spirits and their abilities in some depth, and they are also detailed more fully on page 144 of the *Core Rulebook*. Other types of elemental spirits can be derived from the elementals presented in RuneQuest II supplements. For example a Shade (darkness elemental) spirit's powers can be derived from the rules for Shades given in Races of Glorantha Volume I page 270. An elemental spirit with an Intensity of 3 will be within 4–6 cubic metres in volume normally and when embodied the spirit magician acts as an elemental of that size.

It is possible for spirit magicians to gain elemental spirits as allies in which case the magician cannot embody the spirit but can summon it to the mortal world through Spirit Walking and have the spirit manifest within the appropriate volume of material.

As stated in the previous article, elementals and elemental spirits have different relationships of POW to volume. In some settings this may be undesirable and can be modified by the Games Master if it suits his world better.

## Fear spirits

Fear spirits are linked to the Disorder Rune and cause feelings of unease, panic or outright terror in those they effect. When a fear spirit successfully overcomes a target in spirit combat it covertly possesses him and remains hidden until the possessed victim is put under stress or faces something which may cause anxiety, then the spirit takes hold again, forcing an opposed test of the victims Persistence versus the Fear spirits Spectral Attack skill. If the spirit wins then it affects the possessed victim, its effects varying with the spirits Intensity as shown on the table at the bottom of this page.:

Fear spirits may be temporarily overcome with appropriate magic such as Fanaticism, but the spell's magnitude must be equal to or greater than the spirits intensity to work. Once the spell expires or is cancelled then the fear spirit instantly returns and may exert its influence on its victim again.

Intensity 1	Mild anxiety and unease	Victim suffers –10% to all skill rolls
Intensity 2	Demoralisation	As above plus effects as per the common magic spell Demoralise
Intensity 3	Fear	As per the divine spell, Fear
Intensity 4+	Terror	Collapses in terror a number of minutes equal to the spirit's Intensity

As an alternative system to the above Games Masters may prefer to use the 'Fear and Madness' rules from *Necromantic Arts*. If this is the case then calculate the Fear spirits 'Fear Rating' as its Intensity x10 instead and add this to the Fear Rating of any creature faced by the possessed victim or add it to the attack roll of magic users if they are using fear or demoralisation spells against the victim. Thus a possessed victim is far more likely to break under the horrors he witnesses or suffer more readily from fear-inducing magic.

## Guardian spirits

These useful spirits originate from the Magic Rune and act as a ward from hostile magic as well as being the natural enemies of Bane spirits. They are often found in places where vast magics have been cast, or holy sites where a god or great hero invoked the power of a Rune. They can also be drawn to intense concentrations of magic such as ceremonial gatherings, ley lines and magical nodes for example.

The usefulness of guardian spirits should not be underestimated by spirit magicians as they can help them counter incoming magical attacks from divine and sorcery magic users as well as other hostile spirits by interposing themselves between the threat and the magician. They can provide a valuable first line of defence for the magician allowing him to unleash more powerful and damaging spirits upon his foes as their offensive spells are simply stopped dead by his guardian spirit. A guardian spirit tends to look like the spirit tradition's totem animal. A badger Hsunchen from Glorantha would have a guardian spirit looking like a badger, a Saami nomad spirit would be a Reindeer.

The spirit can attempt to block any spell with a Magnitude less than a third of its POW (rounded up), spells beyond this level are too powerful for the spirit to block and they can effect the spirit magician as normal, although he may still attempt to resist them himself if possible.

If the Guardian spirit is strong enough to resist the spell then it does so with its Persistence skill, which has a base level of the spirits POW x4%. Should a bane spirit be present then the magician may release the guardian spirit and it will immediately engage the bane spirit in spirit combat, battling to the death. Other guardian spirits which will attack hostile spirits such as disease spirits, chonchons and so on exist but are much rarer.

### LITTLE WARDEN

Intensity 1 guardian spirit, INT 8, POW 10, CHA 9, CA 2, SR +9, Spirit Damage 1D6  
Spectral Combat 45%, Persistence 36%  
May attempt to block spells up to a Magnitude of 4

### BRIGHTSHIELD

Intensity 2 guardian spirit, INT 10, POW 15, CHA 12, CA 3, SR +11, Spirit Damage 1D8  
Spectral Combat 75%, Persistence 60%  
May attempt to block spells up to a Magnitude of 5

### WATCHWORD

Intensity 3 guardian spirit, INT 12, POW 20, CHA 14, CA 3, SR +13, Spirit Damage 1D10  
Spectral Combat 100%, Persistence 80%  
May attempt to block spells up to a Magnitude of 7

## Ghoul spirits

Ghoul spirits are the hungry demonic entities responsible for possessing and animating fresh corpses into the physical undead horrors known as ghouls so they can sustain their parody of life by devouring other corpses. They are typically found lurking in areas where fresh corpses are found, such as burial grounds, sepulchres and battlefields, where they attempt to break through into the mundane world and animate a corpse to feed.

Malign and desperate spirit magicians will sometimes try to bind these spirits for their own twisted reasons. They can be used for many dark purposes such as possessing fresh corpses or being bound to a fetish as a trap to threaten the living. Some spirit magicians may even be insane enough to internalise a ghoulish spirit to gain one of their



special abilities, they can choose either to gain the ghoul's horrific demoralising howl or to gain their venomous bite attack.

Ghouls spirits typically have a POW of 3D6, with an average of 11, making them Intensity 1 spirits. Those ghoulish spirits with a POW of 13 or more are classed as Intensity 2 spirits. They rarely attack still-living souls, preferring to animate fresh corpses instead, but will fight with spectral claws in spirit combat if they are provoked and will not hesitate to destroy a victim's soul and possess the freshly dead body.

## Healing spirits

Healing spirits are linked to the Fertility Rune and are gentle and peaceful by nature. Unsurprisingly, they are the natural enemies of sickness spirits and are highly unlikely to assist those who use or control such spirits.

Should a spirit magician require the assistance of a healing spirit he must first convince it to help, this can be done with either an opposed test of Influence versus the spirits Persistence or by making some form of bargain with the spirit. Such bargains invariably involve the magician in some minor quest to rid an area of a sickness spirit or similar tasks. Lucky magicians may even gain a healing spirit

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as an ally and be able to request its aid by calling it forth with its true name.

The most useful healing spirits are of higher Intensities and provide the healing equivalent to a Heal Body divine spell equal in Magnitude to their Intensity and costing them an equal amount of magic points to use. This is a natural ability for the spirit and no skill roll is required, only enough magic points to fuel it. Lower Intensity spirits may possess an ability equivalent to a Heal Wound spell instead.

Other, rarer variants of healing spirits exist that possess different powers. These powers are equivalent to one of the following divine spells: Cure Disease, Cure Poison and Heal (Mind).

Remember that a bound spirit cannot regenerate its Magic Points therefore healing spirits are rarely bound; for obvious reasons using a blood sacrifice to replenish their Magic Points does not work. They are usually contacted through Spirit Walking and then *asked* to provide healing or binding for a single future service. On the other hand disease masters will often journey to spots frequented by healing spirits and imprison them in bindings so that they can no longer be called upon.

## Haunts

Wraiths and ghosts are both possible types of haunts which may be encountered by a shaman, either as possible allies to dark shamanic traditions or as hostile spirits to be confronted to save mortals from their horrors.

They have been covered in some detail in the previous article and the *RuneQuest II* supplement *Necromantic Arts* also presents some possible interpretation of such haunts. A couple of examples are provided below and may be used by Games Masters as they stand or as an inspiration for their own haunts. Although a haunt cannot disincorporate mortals because it is bound to the material plane, a value for spirit combat is given in case a shaman attempts to disincorporate the haunt.

### WOSIL DARC

Wosil Darc was once a mighty sage who wandered the world seeking knowledge of ancient civilisations. His last expedition ended in disaster when he was slain in some ancient ruins by bandits and buried in a shallow grave. He is now bound to the ruins for eternity. He is not inherently evil but he does desperately try to plead with mortals for their help, causing damage with his cold spectral touch as he does so. *Intensity 1 ghost*

**Characteristics:** INT 10, POW 12, CHA 9,

**Attributes:** CA 2, SR +10, Move 20m flying, Spectral Damage 1D6

**Traits:** Wraith Form; *Necromantic Arts* (Ghostly Weapon, Possess Lesser creature).

**Skills:** Evade 36%, Insight 27%, Influence 36%, Persistence 48%, Stealth 48%,

**Spirit Combat:** Ghostly Touch 60%,

**Physical Combat:** Wraith Claws 36% (S/T, 1D6)

**Notes:** He possesses the traits of Wraith form (Signs & Portents 89), Ghostly Weapon and Possess Lesser creature – these allow him to attack mortals with his touch and control small animals such as rats and bats in his immediate environment. He is bound to the ruins by his still hidden body and can only be truly removed by a proper burial rite. The *Necromantic Arts* trait "Possess Lesser Creature" should be interpreted as a form of domination, not actual possession. His wraith form/ghostly weapon attack ignores all non-magical armour.

### RAGE

Rage is the insane spiritual remains of a warrior who was flayed alive by his foes many centuries ago. He is utterly insane and full of hateful vengeance and will attack any mortal who is unfortunate enough to come close to him. He manifests as a hideous screaming parody of human form with his skin hanging in threads about his body.

*Intensity 3 wraith*

**Characteristics:** INT 16, POW 20, CHA 14,

**Attributes:** CA 3, SR +15, Move 20m flying, Spectral Damage 1D8

**Traits:** Wraith Form; *Necromantic Arts* (Ghostly Weapon, Telekinesis)

**Skills:** Evade 50%, Insight 60%, Influence 42%, Persistence 80%, Stealth 60%,

**Spirit Combat:** Strangling with ropes of skin 75%

**Physical Combat:** Skin strangling 80% (L/M 1D8), Thrown Rock 100% (M— 1D4, 20m)

**Notes:** His telekinesis trait allows him to move objects up to his POW in metres with a STR equal to his INT, he often uses this ability to throw objects at mortals as he attacks them. Rage could potentially be freed in two ways. One is to discover his name and tell him. The second would be to find his flayed skin. It is likely that this has been put to nefarious uses by some necromancer.

## Hellion

Hellions are manifestations of pure energy sometimes encountered on the spirit plane. They manifest as translucent silvery bubbles and fill the air with a smell of ozone. Hellions have not, as yet, been defined in *RuneQuest II* but their statistics can easily be adapted from previous editions of *RuneQuest* or from the free *RuneQuest* creatures download found on the Mongoose website. Hellions are certainly not a good spirit for a shaman to use as they are more closely linked to more alien magic such as sorcery and so they are best avoided by spirit magicians. Games Masters are most likely to use Hellions as enemies or troublesome encounters for questing shamans.

## Knowledge spirit

Knowledge spirits are linked to the Truth Rune and are actually partly encyclopaedic in nature and partly prescient. If the owner of a knowledge spirit can beat it in an opposed test of Spirit Binding versus its Spectral Questioning skill, then the spirit will reveal hidden knowledge by answering, correctly and accurately, a number of questions up to its Intensity. It can see no more than its Intensity in days into the future but up to its Intensity x100 years into the past.

The Games Master must carefully consider the information he provides to his players through a knowledge spirit, questions should be answered with infuriating



literalness or bizarrely phrased prophecy, although they will always be accurate and correct.

Examples of knowledge spirits are found under the cult of Pamalt in Cults of Glorantha.

## Nature spirits

Nature spirits are discussed fully in *RuneQuest II* and additional examples are provided here. Nature spirits embodying Combat Manoeuvres have a minimum POW of 19–24 (25–30 for critical only manoeuvres); those embodying Traits have a minimum POW of 13–18 and sometimes more if the particular effect warrants it.

The abilities provided by nature spirits are only accessible if the spirit is internalised as detailed in *RuneQuest II*. Other abilities are possible for such spirits such as the terrible defensive odour of a skunk, the colour changing ability of the chameleon or the poisonous properties of a plant. Any ability, skill or unique behaviour of an animal or plant is a possible source of an ability a spirit magician can use.

Some examples of nature spirits follow. Remember these are individual spirits and others of their kind may be more or less powerful.

*Power Root* (Intensity 3 boost MP, plant spirit) INT 1, POW 20, CHA 1, CA 2, SR +1, HP 20 Spirit Damage +1D10. Persistence 60%, Spectral Hallucinogenic 100%. Increases the MP of the magician by 3.

*Thorny Might* (Intensity 2 boost Damage Modifier, plant spirit) INT 1, POW 18, CHA 1, CA 2, SR +1, HP 18 Spirit Damage +1D10. Persistence 72%, Spectral Thorns 90%. Increases the Damage Modifier of the magician by two steps.

*Steadfast Root* (Intensity 2 grants Combat Manoeuvre, plant spirit) INT 1, POW 21, CHA 1, CA 2, SR +1, HP 21 Spirit Damage +2D6. Persistence 84%, Spectral Roots 105%. Grants the magician the use of the Stand Fast combat manoeuvre.

*Touch Vine* (Intensity 4 grants Combat Manoeuvre, plant spirit) INT 1, POW 27, CHA 1, CA 3, SR +1, HP 27 Spirit Damage +2D8. Persistence 108%, Spectral Vines 135%. Grants the magician use of the Pin Weapon critical combat manoeuvre.

*Shadows Leaper* (Intensity 2 grants ability, Lynx spirit) INT 5, POW 16, CHA 5, CA 2, SR +5, HP 16 Spirit Damage +1D8. Persistence 64%, Spectral Bite 80%. Allows the magician to use Leap attacks as detailed in the combat chapter of the Core Rulebook.

*Bushy Tail* (Intensity 3 increase skill, Squirrel spirit) INT 5, POW 17, CHA 4, CA 2, SR +5, HP 17 Spirit Damage +1D10. Persistence 68%, Spectral Bite 85%. Increases the magician's Athletics skill by +30%.

*Nevermore* (Intensity 3 increase skill, Raven spirit) INT 6, POW 24, CHA 6, CA 3, SR +6, HP 24 Spirit Damage +2D6. Persistence 96%, Spectral Peck 120%. Increases the magician's Perception skill by +30%.

*Swift Tail* (Intensity 2 boosts MP, Mouse spirit) INT 5, POW 14, CHA 3, CA 2, SR +4, HP 14 Spirit Damage +1D8. Persistence 56%, Spectral Bite 70%. Increases the magician's MP by +2.

*Swift Hoof* (Intensity 3 increase skill, Zebra spirit) INT 4, POW 23, CHA 4, CA 3, SR +4, HP 23 Spirit Damage +2D6. Persistence 92%, Spectral Hoof 115%. Increases the magician's Ride skill by +30%.

*Scaled Walker* (Intensity 3 boost AP, Armadillo spirit) INT 4, POW 21, CHA 4, CA 3, SR +4, HP 21 Spirit Damage +2D6. Persistence 84%, Spectral Claw 105%. Boosts the magician's AP by +3.

## Nymphs

Nymphs are a form of special nature spirit inhabiting a specific natural environment or geographical feature. They are subdivided in to several types according to their habitat; dryads are sylvan spirits tied to a grove of trees, hags are dark and malign spirits of caves and ruins, naiads are fickle water spirits and oreads are spirits of mountains or valleys.



Nymphs can either be encountered in a physical form on the mortal plane or in their spirit form on the spirit plane. It is the spiritual form that is of most interest to spirit magicians as they can be bargained with for assistance or bound to serve a shaman. Nymphs will never agree to be bound as they hate being removed from their home and so must be defeated in spirit combat to be used in this manner.

The basic statistics for each type of nymph are shown below along with some possible powers that they may possess, encounters with nymph spirits are best rolled up beforehand by Games Masters due to their unique powers. Many nymphs will also know common magic or possibly a few divine spells as well, hags may have learnt several sorcery spells instead of common magic, but remember that spirits cannot regenerate Magic Points on the mortal plane. Most nymphs are classed as spirits of Intensity 2 to 5 dependant upon their POW.

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## DRYAD

INT 3D6+6, POW 2D6+15, CHA 2D6+12  
Dryads may control all the plant life within POW x2 metres, she can cause plants to bloom, roots to grapple foes and branches to sway and move. Dryads are often very friendly to elves.

## HAG

INT 2D6+12, POW 2D6+21, CHA 1D6  
Hags may summon a darkness elemental with a size equal to one square metre per magic point expended, there must be some suitable dark shadows for the elemental to form. Shamans who use Hag spirits must be aware they are dismissed instantly by direct sunlight and forced to return to the spirit world. They are also invariably hostile to most mortals and may know sorcery spells as well.

## NAIAD

INT 3D6+6, POW 2D6+18, CHA 2D6+12  
Naiads may transform themselves into a water elemental with a size equal to one square metre per magic point expended, there must be enough water nearby for the naiad to transform in this manner. If they are destroyed in their elemental form then they simply return to the spirit world.

## OREAD

INT 3D6+3, POW 2D6+15, CHA 2D6+9  
Oreads may transform themselves into an earth elemental with a size equal to one square metre per magic point expended, there must be enough earth nearby for the oread to transform in this manner. If they are destroyed in their elemental form then they simply return to the spirit world.

## Pain spirits

Pain spirits are an unpleasant and dangerous spirit used by some dark and malign spiritual traditions to cripple and torture their foes. They are also known as

fatigue spirits in some spiritual traditions. Pain spirits are most commonly associated with the Gorgorma cult in Glorantha but may also have a place in other world settings.

Pain spirits inflict terrible pain on those they possess until they are somehow exorcised, this varies with the Intensity of the spirit as per the table at the bottom of this page.

Further information on pain spirits are found under the cult of Gorgorma in *Cults of Glorantha*.

## Rune spirits

Shamans can forge runic relationships with the Spirit World on ritual Dream Hunts and become Rune Touched just as other magical traditions offer their paths to harnessing the Runic powers.

As a more temporary alternative to this, Rune spirits, which are spiritual manifestations of the Runes on the spirit plane, may be sought out and internalised to provide Runic powers to the spirit magician. This allows a temporary use of the spirits Rune Touched ability whilst internalised as detailed on page 104 of the *Core Rulebook*. More than one rune spirit may be internalised at once, but all the spirits must be compatible. For example mixing Fire with Ice inside your body at the same time is *really* not a good idea!

Rune spirits will normally have an Intensity of 1 or 2 although more powerful examples do exist and will have a proportionately greater effect.

Most shamanistic traditions have two or three runic associations and so will find the appropriate runic spirits as friendly, although their direct opposites will most

likely be hostile. Other runic spirits are likely to be neutral.

## Tribal spirits

Tribal spirits are closely related to nature spirits but they are linked to the Man Rune instead of the Plant or Beast Runes. They are not to be confused with Ancestor spirits, as these venerable forebears are very different, but are instead more like concepts or ideals specific to a clan or tribe made manifest. They are a kind of tribal memory in spiritual form which can be tapped and used by members of the appropriate culture.

Tribal spirits will always possess a skill appropriate to the clan or tribe they represent. This could be the Ride skill for a nomadic clan or the Survival skill for an Arctic tribe, for example. When internalised the spirit will provide a bonus equal to its Intensity x10% to the appropriate skill.

A couple of easily adaptable examples are given below:

### WISE-CHIEF

Intensity 2 tribal spirit, INT 5, POW 13, CHA 5, CA 2, SR +5, HP 13, Spirit Damage 1D8, Persistence 52%, Spectral Spear 65%  
Wise-chief grants an increase to the magician's Influence skill of +20%.

### HORSE-WHISPERER

Intensity 3 tribal spirit, INT 6, POW 20, CHA 6, CA 3, SR +6, HP 10, Spirit Damage 1D10, Persistence 80%, Spectral Spear 100%  
Horse-whisperer grants an increase to the magician's Ride skill of +30%.

## Spirit Lords

Spirit lords are extremely powerful spirits who's abilities transcend the normal classifications, they may be linked to several runic powers and even possess unique abilities. They may be from almost any basic spirit type, be it a terrible dripping manifestation of venom and poison derived from a curse spirit or a wise and intelligent knowledge spirit.

Intensity 1	Aching, cramps	Inflicts one level of Fatigue
Intensity 2	Crippling pain	Inflicts two levels of Fatigue
Intensity 3	Debilitating pain	Inflicts four levels of Fatigue



Such spirits will always have access to unique powers, common magic and other abilities well beyond their basic spirit type. They will also have highly developed personalities along with their own agenda to follow and do not take kindly to troublesome mortals interfering in their affairs.

Spirit lords may not be bound into a fetish but, if defeated in spirit combat or if they choose to assist a spirit magician temporarily, then the spirit lord can work their magic or manifest certain traits through that person. This ability is usually restricted to a certain geographical location the spirit lord calls home.

Such spirits have Intensities of at least 10 or more and are well beyond the scope of a typical shaman to control or bind. They are a mechanic for Games Masters to use as important non-player characters on the spirit plane who can act as reoccurring contacts, allies or foes to make life interesting for their players. Games Masters must be careful to avoid direct confrontations with these spirits and his players as they are capable of doing serious damage to even an experienced party.

In settings where the Concert skill is used, such as *Wraith Recon*, it is possible that some groups of magicians may try to cooperate in order to bind a spirit lord. Such an attempt, or the results of the attempt, provide many possible plot hooks to build adventures upon.

#### SHAYLE

Intensity 10 disease spirit lord  
INT 20, POW 50, CHA 20, CA 5, SR +20, Spirit Damage 2D8  
Skills: Common Magic 120%, Discorporate 120%, Insight 120%, Perception 100%, Stealth 100%, Persistence 120%, Spectral Combat (Spectral Whip) 140%, Disguise 100% (reduce Shayle's Disguise skill by 1D10% per hour as he slowly reverts to his true form)  
Common Magic: Befuddle 2, Babel 2, Countermagic 10, Glamour 10, Mindspeech 10, Repair 10, Slow 10

Shayle is a twisted and malevolent sickness spirit lord who's primary goal is to spread disease across the spirit plane and to infect as many as possible. He is highly intelligent, scheming and calculating and infinitely patient, he delights in nothing more than seeing long term plans come to fruition and in duping unsuspecting mortals into helping advance his foul agenda. He can manifest up to eight different diseases at once.

Shayle manifests as a hugely bloated and rotting corpse, alive with maggots and covered in open sores and pulsating blisters. He is able to mask his true form temporarily by taking on the form of a tall, thin white haired youth with sparkling violet eyes, but this illusion tends to slip with time as he slowly reverts to his true form over the course of several hours.

#### LEILANI

Intensity 10 guardian spirit lord  
INT 18, POW 50, CHA 25, CA 5, SR +22, Spirit Damage 2D8  
Skills: Common Magic 120%, Discorporate 100%, Insight 100%, Perception 120%, Seduction 120%, Persistence 140%, Spectral Combat (Spectral light) 120%  
Common Magic: Bearing Witness 10, Befuddle 2, Countermagic 10, Mindspeech 10, Repair 10, Push/Pull 10

Leilani is a bright and helpful guardian spirit lord who, rather grandly seeks to rid the spirit plane of evil and malevolent influences. She is enthusiastic and confident, but often a little naive and quick to accept things at face value. She occasionally seeks the help of mortal heroes to assist her in her grand plans to fight her foes on the Spirit Plane and beyond, but she often forgets just how frail mortal souls are for such battles.

Leilani manifests as a tall, beautiful woman with flowing silken hair that shimmers from blond to red. Her facial features are sharp and elfin with the palest blue eyes that flash with a silvery light. She often floats just above the ground with her diaphanous silvery robes billowing behind her in some impossibly slow spirit wind.

## Spirit Traditions

In every world setting there will be many different approaches to spirits and the spirit world and each one will be influenced by the culture and environment they are found in. These are referred to as spirit traditions and can be thought of in simple terms as a kind of cult. In *RuneQuest II* these spirit traditions are treated as spirit cults and the rules in the *Core Rulebook* give some ideas on how to create your own cults and outline the spirits, runes, myths and magic available to them.

To give some idea of how Game Master's can easily create their own spirit cults a couple of simple examples are provided. These can be used as they are or modified as required. Many other examples of spirit cults can be found in *Cults of Glorantha*.

### Brother Hunter

#### RUNES

Death and beast

#### MYTHOS AND HISTORY

**Hunter Kills the First Beast (Resonance 65%)** Brother Hunter knew his people were starving in the Great Winter, the food stores were low and the snow and ice had not melted for months. Then he had a dream, a great wolf came to him and showed him how to hunt the beasts of the forest and mountains, to kill them swiftly and take their meat. He taught him how to send their spirits back to the spirit world to be reborn.

#### NATURE

Although the cult is small and is restricted to the clan's territory it is very influential with the clan chieftains. Other hunter cults from nearby tribes are also known and respected as well.

#### ORGANISATION

The cult has very little in the way of organisation, the clan shamans pick those they wish to join their ranks in vision quests and train them in their ways. Any clan member in good standing may learn Spirit Binding from the shamans and may request help in creating fetishes for a

# The World of Spirits

suitable gift. There may only be one High Shaman in the cult at a time.

## COMMON MAGIC

None, but the shamans have no objection to using such magic. Bandits Cloak, Speedart and Warmth are available from many clan members.

## HIGHER MAGIC

Brother Hunter provides the help of many spirits to the clan and its shamans. Friendly and hostile spirits can be summarised as below, all other spirits are considered neutral.

*Friendly spirits:* Nature spirits in the form of wolves, ravens and lynxes. Fire elemental spirits and appropriate Tribal spirits. Ancestors are also venerated as friendly spirits.

*Hostile spirits:* Nature spirits in the form of elk, rabbit, deer and grouse. Ice spirits are also considered hostile. Bane and sickness spirits are shunned as well.

## SPIRIT ALLIES

The cult has two allied spirits which may be called upon.

### Wolf Brother

Intensity 2 nature spirit, boost movement, INT 5, POW 14, CHA 3, CA 2, SR +4, HP 14. Spirit Damage +1D8. Persistence 56%, Spectral Bite 70%. Boosts the magician's movement by +3.

### Hunt Friend

Intensity 3 tribal spirit, INT 6, POW 20, CHA 6, CA 3, SR +6, HP 10, Spirit Damage 1D10, Persistence 80%, Spectral Spear 100% Hunt Friend grants an increase to the magician's Track skill of +30%.

## CULT SKILLS

Perception, Stealth, Track, Survival, Spirit Binding, Spirit walking, Lore (Brother Wolf Tradition).

## ALLIED CULTS

Most hunter cults are friendly to the Brother Wolf tradition.

## The Cursed One

RUNES  
Disorder and spirit

## MYTHOS AND HISTORY

**The Cursed One Finds Strength (Resonance 65%)** the Cursed One was once a mortal who was shunned by his own clans for a thing He Did Not Do. As he hid in a dark cave one day a spirit whispered the secrets of the power he could gain from following its dark path. After many years he returned to his people and they fled in terror at the powers he showed them. He cursed their lands and left to form his own band of followers.

## NATURE

Although the cult is small it tends to attract many evil and power hungry people who care little for their own traditions and seek revenge in some form.

## ORGANISATION

The cult has very little in the way of organisation, the strongest member present leads rituals and squabbles and fights between members are commonplace. Despite this there is typically a semi-stable pecking order and cult members who prove themselves in some way may learn Spirit Binding from the shamans and may request help in creating fetishes for a suitable gift.

## COMMON MAGIC

None, but the shamans have no objection to using such magic. Spells such as Disruption, Befuddle and Hand of Death are commonly available - for a price.

## HIGHER MAGIC

The Cursed One provides the help of many spirits to its cultists and its shamans. Friendly and hostile spirits can be summarised as below, all other spirits are considered neutral:

*Friendly spirits:* Nature spirits in the form of jackals and vultures. Sickness and curse spirits. Fear and ghoulish spirits. Some pain spirits.

*Hostile spirits:* Nature spirits of any prey animal are all hostile. Healing and birth spirits are hostile. Bane spirits are often used but are rarely better than neutral in attitude even to cultists.

## SPIRIT ALLIES

The cult has two allied spirits which may be called upon.

### Jackal's Laugh

Intensity 2 grants special trait, nature spirit, INT 1, POW 21, CHA 1, CA 2, SR +1, HP 21 Spirit Damage +2D6. Persistence 84%, Spectral Bite 105%. Grants the magician the ability to demoralise foes with his hideous insane laugh. Anyone within the magician's POW in metres must resist with their Resilience against the magician's Persistence or be demoralised (as per the common magic spell) while the laugh continues. Anyone who resists is immune to the fear attack for the rest of the day. Remember that spirit abilities cannot be "turned off" so this laugh is permanently in effect while the spirit is internalised.

### Darkword

Intensity 2 curse spirit, INT 10, POW 15, CHA 12, CA 3, SR +11, Spirit Damage 1D8 Spectral Combat 75%, Persistence 60% Darkword manifests as a horrible pulsing movement in the air. Possessed victims find their memory and mind effected by a dull throbbing pain and whispered threats only they can hear. This has the effect of reducing all the victim's INT based skills by 20%.

## CULT SKILLS

Stealth, Craft (Poison), Spirit Binding, Spirit walking, Lore (The Cursed One).

## ALLIED CULTS

A few chaotic and evil cults sometimes form temporary alliances with the cult but these invariably fall apart with infighting and jealousy until a new common foe arises.



## Spirit Quests

Spirit Quests are the spirit magician's way of seeking out suitable spirits to aid him or become allies. They are the spiritual equivalent to a divine cultist learning new myths and spells, or the sorcerer researching a new grimoire to gain arcane knowledge. Yet they are also very different; unlike his priestly or sorcerer equivalents the spirit magician must leave his physical body and quest upon the spirit plane to seek out useful spirits and either persuade them to help him or bind them against their will.

There really is no better way to run locating and dealing with spirits within a game than through role-playing the encounters. However, this is not always practical, particularly with larger groups where the other players have no real dealings with the spirit world. The following rules are presented here to provide an alternative that can be used during downtime for a spirit magic user to locate, negotiate with and bind spirits. They are meant as a guide only and Games Masters are positively encouraged to amend and modify them to fit with their campaign and world.

The first step in seeking a spirit is for the shaman to decide on what type of spirit he seeks. This could be as simple as looking for a guardian spirit to help protect the shaman or as complex as seeking an

allied magic spirit with a set of fire related spells to help defeat a local troll tribe. The possibilities are as vast as the spirit world itself and so the player must clearly state to the Games Master just what type of spirit his character is seeking and an ideal Intensity level for that spirit.

Once the type of spirit has been determined then the shaman needs to make an appropriate Lore roll to find a suitable location to begin his spirit quest. If the shaman is seeking a type of spirit regularly associated with his own spirit tradition and is in his home terrain then a Lore (Regional) roll augmented with Lore (Shamanic Tradition) would be sufficient (see the *RuneQuest II Core Rulebook* page 33 for augmenting skill rolls).

If, however, he is in another location or is seeking a more unusual spirit for his spirit tradition then the Games Master may well feel other skills, such as Lore (Animal) or Lore (Spirit World), may be more appropriate based upon the type of spirit he seeks.

The Games Master may apply modifiers to these skill rolls based upon various advantages or disadvantages. A few possibilities are listed on the table at the bottom of this page. These modifiers may well be cumulative.

Once a suitable location has been determined then the shaman needs to

travel there and enter the spirit world as described in the rules for spirit magic (*RuneQuest II Core Rulebook* pages 138–142). Such journeys are typically only a day or two in duration and should be easily slotted into players' 'down time' between adventures.

If the shaman fails his Lore roll then he is unable to even find an appropriate location in time or his other duties interfere. Perhaps he needs to do further research or the site was temporarily out of use for some reason. The Games Master may allow him to make another roll at a later date with a bonus (say +20%) to reflect the current level of research already completed. If he fumbles the roll then he may well find himself in a hostile situation or completely waste his time looking for a suitable spot. If, however, he succeeds then he may then prepare to enter the spirit world on his spirit quest.

### The Spirit Quest

Once the appropriate Lore roll has been made and the location found, then the shaman may enter the spirit world and make a Spirit Walking skill to try to find the type of spirit he requires. The shaman may make one such skill roll for every 1D4 hours he remains on the spirit world. This is handled as an opposed test against half the appropriate spirit's Persistence skill, as most spirits are not actively hiding.

Reason for skill modifier	Modifier Applied	Examples
Appropriate location	+5% to +20%	Site of a week old wildfire may grant +5% to find a fire spirit but the edge of a lava pit would give +20%.
Inappropriate location	-5% to -20%	A long-empty sepulchre for seeking a ghoulish spirit would be -5% but seeking a ghoulish spirit at a well renowned for its healing waters would give a -20% penalty.
Appropriate time	+5 to +10%	An ancestor's birthday +5%, midnight for a darkness spirit +10%.
Holy Time	+20%	Walpurgis Night, All Hallow's Eve, Sacred Time (Glorantha).
Shared runic affiliation	+5%	+5% per rune the spirit and shamanic tradition share, even if considered a hostile or enemy spirit.
Runic opposition	-5%	-5% per rune opposite the spirit has to the shamans tradition, such as darkness being opposed by fire or light.
Allied spirit.	+20%	The spirit type sought is considered an ally to the spirit cult or is a tribal ancestor such as a horse spirit to a nomad or bloodline ancestor.
Enemy spirit	-20%	The spirit type sought is considered hostile to the spirit cult such as a sickness spirit to a healing cult.

# The World of Spirits

During this time the Games Master may require the player to roll for random encounters on the spirit plane which may well disturb or change his spirit quest. A spirit world encounter table is provided at the end of this article.

If he succeeds in locating a suitable spirit then the shaman needs to roll and determine the spirit's initial attitude toward him. The spirit will have a general attitude to the spirit magician based upon his particular spirit tradition. A bane spirit is likely to be hostile to most sane spirit traditions, healing spirits are often neutral and guardian spirits are typically friendly. The Games Master should rule which column to use. The table also provides a modifier to his Influence skill or other skills used to gain the spirits assistance.

The Spirit Attitude Table should only be taken as a guide and it must be remembered that a hostile healing spirit is far less of a concern than a hostile bane spirit. Even a spirit who may be interesting in becoming an ally could well change its attitude if an Influence skill roll is fumbled.

## NEGOTIATING WITH THE SPIRIT

Once the spirit's initial attitude has been determined then the shaman must either defeat it in spirit combat (sometimes mock spirit combat) and bind it to his service or, more commonly, convince it to assist him with a roll of his Influence skill opposed by the spirit's Persistence. The spirit magician's actions will often be determined by the type of spirit he is seeking, the descriptions of each spirit type should be consulted at this point for clues to the best action. The

modifier from the Spirit Attitude table above should also be applied to this skill check.

The games master may also allow the shaman to augment his Influence skill with his Lore (Shamanic Tradition) or Lore (Spirit World) should he feel this is appropriate. A critical success could well result in the spirit offering to become an allied spirit, this means the shaman may call upon it any time in the future for its assistance. A fumbled roll would result in a hostile and possibly dangerous response from the spirit.

The games master should now work out some form of agreement between the shaman and the spirit. This is best role-played, if possible, but the following tables are provided with some suggestions, or for when inspiration fails.

**Spirit Attitude Table**

Hostile	Neutral	Friendly	Attitude to shaman
01-05	01-10	01-15	Friendly and co-operative, +20% to Influence
06-15	11-30	16-75	Open and helpful, +10% to Influence
16-25	31-70	76-85	Neutral, +0% Influence
26-85	71-90	86-95	Open dislike, -10% to Influence
86-00	91-00	96-00	Aggressive, -20% to Influence

**Spirit Request Table**

	Spirit's Request	Examples	Difficulty of task
1	Physical Task	Deliver a message, climb a hill, move an item	Routine
2	Physical Sacrifice	A sacrifice of alcohol, money, blood, a possession	Simple
3	Physical Compulsion	Eat no meat, remain silent, sleep outside	Very easy
4	Mental Task	A riddle or puzzle, answer a question, learn a chant	Easy
5	Mental Sacrifice	Don't use a Lore or INT based skill for a time	Medium
6	Mental Compulsion	Be friendlier, hate darkness, develop a phobia	Medium
7	Magical Task	Cast a spell, seek a spirit, increase a magical skill	Tough
8	Magical Sacrifice	Sacrifice Magic Points, forget a spell, release a spirit	Hard
9	Magical Compulsion	Cast no fire magic, learn a particular spell	Very hard
0	Roll twice	Roll twice and apply the results	Extremely hard

Next the Games Master needs to determine the difficulty of the request, this can be simply abstracted with the roll of a D10 on the difficulty column above, but it is important to remember that the difficulty of the request should be in proportion to the power of the spirit. The Intensity of the spirit could be applied as a modifier to the D10 roll if felt appropriate by the Games Master.

Remember an agreement is only made when both parties have finally agreed on the result. The Games Master may even allow the shaman and spirit to continue to barter using appropriate skills such as Influence, Insight and Evaluate or even role-play the encounter with the player.

Once an agreement has been reached then it becomes binding on both parties, although in reality such agreements are as easily broken on the spirit plane as they are on the mundane plane. However a shaman who gains a reputation for continually breaking agreements will find fewer spirits are willing to assist him as time goes on.

It is also possible for a shaman to enter the spirit plane and simply search for a

interesting spirits at random. Although this is can be a risky business the rewards can also often be much higher than the safer Spirit Quest.

The following encounter tables are provided to give Games Masters a random encounter chart to use for shamans who wish to explore the spirit world or who may have become lost on a Spirit Quest. As a guide, a roll should be made on the table for every four hours spent on the spirit plane, those spirits encountered deeper within the spirit world will tend to be of much greater power than those found on the borders.

Ancestors are not shown on the random encounter chart as they are usually only available to blood relatives and are not likely to be found wandering the spirit plane.

The attitude of the spirit to the spirit magician can be determined randomly using the Spirit Attitude Table. An Aggressive spirit will attack if it feels the shaman is weak while a Friendly spirit may be interested in an exchange of some sort. Spirits with other attitudes will react based on how the magician responds. The spirit's Intensity will depend on the region. Spirits in the border region usually have an intensity of 1D3, spirits in the outer region have an intensity 1D3+1 and spirits in the Inner Region have an Intensity of 1D4+1 at least.

#### Border Regions of the Spirit Plane

1D100 roll	Encounter
01-02	Chonchon
03-05	Sickness spirit
06-08	Curse spirit
09-10	Ghoul spirit
11-25	Ghost or Wraith
26-27	Bane spirit
28-30	Nymph
31-60	Magic spirit
61-70	Knowledge spirit
71-80	Guardian spirit
81-85	Discorporate shaman
86-00	To outer region

#### Outer Region of the Spirit Plane

1D100 roll	Encounter
01-03	Chonchon
04-06	Sickness spirit
07-09	Curse spirit
10-12	Elemental spirit
13-15	Hellion
16-25	Ghost or Wraith
26-28	Birthing spirit
29-35	Healing spirit
36-45	Knowledge spirit
46-55	Magic spirit
56-60	Guardian spirit
61-70	Tribal spirit
71-80	Fear spirit
81-85	Other spirit or demon
86-90	Discorporate shaman
91-00	To inner region

#### Inner Region of the Spirit Plane

1D100 roll	Encounter
01	Spirit Lord
02-10	Cult allied spirit
11-25	Elemental
26-35	Ghost
36-40	Hellion
41-45	Healing spirit
46-50	Knowledge spirit
51-60	Magic spirit
61-65	Guardian spirit
66-70	Rune spirit
71-80	Pain spirit
81-85	Discorporate shaman
86-00	Games Master's choice or use a questing ancestor spirit

## Heroic Abilities

Two new heroic abilities are presented here to round out spirit magicians.

### Animal Companion

**Requirements:** POW 15 or higher, Spirit Binding at 90% or higher

**Hero Points:** 8

**Duration:** permanent

After a suitable quest the Adventurer gains an animal companion of a type appropriate to their cult or culture. The animal is a superior example of its type and has 1 point of more of Fixed INT than normal. The ability does not allow either to speak the other's language nor does it provide telepathy. The Adventurer can summon their companion by spending 1 Magic Point, in which case the companion arrives within 1D10 Combat Rounds. The strength of the bond is such that the companion knows in advance when it will be wanted.

Should the companion die, the Adventurer loses the ability and must reacquire it if they wish to gain a new companion.

### Self-Resurrection

**Requirements:** POW 18 or higher, Spirit Walking at 90% or higher, High Shaman status

**Hero Points:** 12

**Duration:** special

The Adventurer can, literally, bring themselves back from the dead. Once the body dies, the Shaman is able to act normally on the spirit plane so none of the spirit allies or fetishes are immediately released. The Shaman can then use spirits



# The World of Spirits

or spells to heal the body. Providing the body is healed so no locations are suffering anything worse than a minor wound and providing the body is capable of holding life (for example, it is not decapitated), the Shaman can then make a Spirit Binding test to reanimate himself by, literally, binding his soul back into his body. Each time this ability is used it is lost and must be regained.

## Sample Non Player Characters

Finally, two shaman non player characters are presented here. Blueface is an example of a spirit magician who has progressed even beyond High Shaman status. He no longer regards himself as a member of any one clan or hearth. Instead he roams the plains bringing succour to those who need it and terror to those who deserve

it. His name is given for the ghostly blue tattoos covering his body. If watched for long enough those tattoos seem to move, as if alive.

Muriah is an example of a new shaman who is beginning to come into her power. She is fundamental amoral, seeking only the power to wreak revenge on those who wronged her and willing to kill, maim or torture anyone who stands in her way.

### Blueface the Shaman

As old and as ageless as the plains on which he roams, Blueface follows his own agenda. All who live on the plains know of him.

STR	14	1-3	Right Leg	0/6
CON	15	4-6	Left Leg	0/6
SIZ	14	7-9	Abdomen	0/7
INT	18	10-12	Chest	0/8
POW	21	13-15	Right Arm	0/5
DEX	17	16-18	Left Arm	0/5
CHA	20	19-20	Head	0/6

**Attributes:** SR 18, CA 3, Damage -1D2, Move 8m, Magic Points 21

**Armour** (Penalty 0): None.

**Skills:** Athletics 91%, Brawn 28%, Culture (Own) 102%, Dance 87%, Evade 34%, Evaluate 91%, First Aid 88%, Influence 100%, Insight 82%, Lore (Regional) 122%, Perception 92%, Persistence 102%, Resilience 80%, Ride 38%, Sing 71%, Sleight 37%, Stealth 38%, Swim 29%.

**Advanced Skills:** Craft (Brew Poison) 105%, Dog Handling 67%, Healing 92%, Lore (Poisons) 102%, Lore (Spirit Plane) 112%, Meditation 82%, Oratory 71%, Survival 92%, Teaching 41%, Track 96%

**Common Magic** 101%: Bandit's Cloak 6, Bearing Witness 3, Beast Call 2, Befuddle 2, Bestial Enhancement 6, Bladesharp 6, Cauterise 3, Clear Path 2, Countermagic 6, Countermagic Shield 6, Disruption 6, Dullblade 6, Extinguish 3, Heal 6, Mindspeech 3, Mobility 6, Protection 6, Skybolt 3, Speedart 6, Spirit Bane 6, Thunder's Voice 6, Understanding 3

**Spirit Magic** Spirit Binding 141% (2D10 damage), Spirit Walking 126%

*Fetishes* (all tattooed on his body - touches the tattoo to invoke the spirit):

Right eye tattoo (Tiger eye spirit, Intensity 2, POW 14): Night Sight.

Tattoos on both hands (Tiger claw spirit, Intensity 2, POW 15): Formidable Natural Weapons.

Abdomen tattoo (stone spirit, Intensity 4, POW 26): +4 APs to all locations.

Chest tattoo (Tiger heart spirit, Intensity 4, POW 25): +4 Magic Points.

Neck and mouth tattoos (Darkfang, Guardian Spirit, Intensity 5, POW 31). Neutralize spells up to Magnitude 11.

Abdomen tattoos (Bonegrinder, Gnome Spirit, Intensity 4, POW 26). 10 cubic metre equivalent.

Neck tattoos and ear piercings (Wildwind, Sylph spirit, Intensity 4, POW 27). 10 cubic metre equivalent.

Right forearm tattoos. (King Smilodon, Tiger spirit, Intensity 4, POW 26): Dominate and control up to 4 tigers or similar big cats.

*Spirit Allies:*

Mother Cat. Healing spirit. Intensity 4, POW 23. Can cast Heal Body at Magnitude 4 with a skill of 115% for a cost of 4 Magic Points.

Rikkitikki. Healing spirit. Intensity 4, POW 21. Can cast Cure Poison at Magnitude 4 with a skill of 105% for a cost of 4 Magic Points. Will cure all mundane poisons and any magical ones with a Potency of 105% or less.



Spine Chiller. Ancestor spirit. Intensity 3 POW 22. When summoned is willing to cast the divine spell Fear with a skill of 110% and a Magnitude of 3. Has 3 castings of it.

The Beast. Animal Ancestor spirit. Intensity 5, POW 31. Provides Blueface with his animal possession heroic ability. Blueface spends 5 days per year undertaking service.

Vrog the Tireless. Ancestor spirit. Intensity 4 POW 26. Provides Blueface with his Tireless heroic ability. Blueface spends 4 days per year performing tasks for Vrog.

The Bluefaces. A long line of ancestors who can provide information about almost aspects of life on the planes. Blueface never lets an ancestor possess him, he relies on them for guidance and advice.

### Heroic Abilities

*Possession.* Blueface is able to possess fixed INT creatures by discorporating them to the spirit plane and defeating them in spirit combat. Note that this is done with respect. Many animals recognise Blueface and do not resist. In return he treats them with love and honour. Blueface is able to fully utilise the traits and physical skills of any animal he possesses this way. Note that while possessing a creature, Blueface cannot regenerate Magic Points.

*Self-Resurrection.*

*Tireless.*

**Notable Equipment:** A golden bottle that is always filled with fine wine; Staff with Bluebuck head that allows Blueface to speak with the holder. The staff can fly through the air to return to Blueface. A furry ball which when thrown at a victim acts as a Discorporation attempt at a skill of 130%. A mini pharmacy of poisons and their antidotes with a potency of around 105%.

**Combat Styles:** Dagger 51%, Spear 51%, Thrown Spear 54%, Unarmed 51%

**Weapons:** Dagger (S/S, 1D4+1, 6/8), Short spear (M/L 1D8+1, 4/5), Thrown short spear (L/—, 1D8+1, 0/25m)

### GREYRUNNER RUNEFANG

Greyrunner is Blueface's animal part. He is both a fetch and a living smilodon (*Monster Coliseum* page 168). Blueface can possess Greyrunner's body while Greyrunner is Discorporated and vice-versa. Greyrunner cannot speak or cast magic while he is in his smilodon form. Even for a smilodon, Greyrunner is a huge and impressive beast. While discorporated Greyrunner may cast common magic but while in smilodon form he cannot cast common magic nor can he speak. He is capable of discorporating, casting Bestial Enhancement on his body and then returning to his body. Generally though, while discorporated he uses Befuddle, Countermagic and Heal to support Blueface and may cast Mindspeech to talk with outsiders. Greyrunner could in theory possess a foe he has defeated in spirit combat but he would only do that under extreme circumstances.

STR	40	1-3	Right Hind Leg	3/11
CON	22	4-6	Left Hind Leg	3/11
SIZ	30	7-9	Abdomen	3/12
INT	16	10-12	Chest	3/13
POW	18	13-15	Right Front Leg	3/10
DEX	17	16-18	Left Front Leg	3/10
CHA	16	19-20	Head	3/11

**Attributes:** SR 17, CA 3, Damage +2D6, Move 10m, Magic Points 18

**Traits:** Formidable Natural Weapons; Night Sight.

**Armour** (Penalty 0): Fur (3APs)

**Skills:** Athletics 87%, Brawn 70%, Culture (Own) 92%, Evade 64%, Evaluate 32%, Influence 32%, Insight 74%, Lore (Regional) 92%, Perception 74%, Persistence 76%, Resilience 74%, Stealth 93%, Swim 62%, Survival 84%, Track 108%

**Common Magic** (94%): Befuddle 2, Bestial Enhancement 5, Countermagic 5, Heal 5, Mindspeech 4

**Spirit Combat:** Discorporation 84%, Spectral Combat 94% (1D10 damage)

**Combat Styles:** Formidable Natural Weapons 85% (Bite, Claw, Tusks)

**Attacks:** Bite (M/T, 1D8), Claw (M/M, 1D10), Tusks (M/M, 1D10)



# The World of Spirits

## Muriah

Mistress of disease.

With the appearance of an ugly 10 year old girl, Muriah is easy to underestimate. She is a recent shaman of a disease cult who burns with the need to revenge herself on the people who outcast her. Right now she is carving out a power base among a bunch of broos. If she survives she will be a terrifying prospect for the human settlers in the nearby valley.

STR	7	1-3	Right Leg	0/5
CON	10	4-6	Left Leg	0/5
SIZ	7	7-9	Abdomen	2/6
INT	16	10-12	Chest	2/7
POW	17	13-15	Right Arm	1/4
DEX	12	16-18	Left Arm	1/4
CHA	12	19-20	Head	0/5

**Attributes:** SR 13 (11), CA 3, Damage -1D2, Move 8m, Magic Points 15

**Traits:** Disease carrier (Creeping Chills & Rabies); immune to disease; barren

**Armour** (Penalty -2): Leather jerkin (2AP), Leather greaves (1AP).

**Skills:** Athletics 38%, Brawn 17%, Culture (Own) 72%, Evade 20%, Evaluate 50%, First Aid 26%, Influence 78%, Insight 81%, Lore (Regional) 82%, Perception 51%, Persistence 80%, Resilience 58%, Ride 25%, Sleight 24%, Stealth 76%, Swim 22%, Lore (Diseases) 62%, Lore (Mistress of Disease) 82%, Lore (Spirit Plane) 72%, Survival 51%,

**Common Magic** (89%): Countermagic 5, Demoralise 2, Heal 2, Mobility 5, Spirit Bane 6

**Spirit Magic:** Spirit Binding 89% (1d10 damage), Spirit Walking 79%

*Fetishes* (each one is a tooth belonging to an enemy worn on a necklace):

Walktapus spirit, Intensity 3, POW 20: Regenerates 1 HP per combat round.

Broo spirit, Intensity 3, POW 19: +3 APs per location

Slime spirit, Intensity 3, POW 21: +3 Magic Points

Gnome, Intensity 2, POW 14: 3 cubic metres

Disease Spirit, Intensity 2, POW 14: Creeping Chills

Pain Spirit, Intensity 2, POW 16

*Spirit Allies:*

She has three disease spirit allies who follow her eagerly. Choose your favourites as best fits your setting.

**Combat Styles:** Dagger 38%, Spear 28%, Unarmed 18%

**Weapons:** Dagger (S/S, 1D4+1, 6/8), Short spear (M/L 1D8+1, 4/5)

**Notes:** Should Muriah have time and be facing an opponent who is not immune to disease she will smear her weapons in her own excrement. Anyone wounded by such a weapon is potentially infected by one or both diseases she carries.

## MURIAH'S FETCH

A diseased impala.

INT 14, POW 17, CHA 12

**Attributes:** SR 13, CA 3, Move 20m flying, Magic Points: 17

**Traits:** Disease carrier (Creeping Chills); Life Sense, Magic Sense, Possession

**Skills:** Influence 44%, Insight 50%, Lore (Mistress of Disease) 58%, Lore (Spirit World), Perception 51%, Persistence 74%

**Common Magic** 79%: Befuddle 2, Bladesharp 4, Coordination 4, Countermagic 4, Heal 4

**Spirit Combat:** Discorporate 61%, Spectral Combat 69% (1D8 damage)

**Notes:** her fetch largely protects her from the kinds of threats common in what passes for broo society. While she sleeps the fetch protects her. Should the fetch choose to possess a victim it acts like a disease spirit carrying Creeping Chills.

A vibrant, stylized illustration of a space battle. In the foreground, a large blue and white spaceship with the number '01' is engaged in combat. To its right, a green spaceship is firing a bright white beam. The background is filled with other smaller ships, explosions, and a large red planet. The scene is set against a purple and blue starry sky. At the top, a large, glowing oval frame contains the title text.

# NOBLE ARMADA

## A CALL TO ARMS

**CORE RULEBOOK**

Matthew Sprange

# Conception 2011

By Katrina Hepburn

For us at Mongoose, Conception is almost a working holiday. We come and do our thing in the trade hall, we game (of course) and at some point I make a complete fool of myself by dressing up in some sort of fantastical outfit (which is always fun). But what makes it feel different from any of the other conventions we attend is:

- 1: The length of the convention (Conception is run over 5 days).
- 2: The accommodation (Conception has by far the best we experience throughout the course of the year). We really look forward to the convention because the overall experience is that much more pleasant and we have a nice big chunk of time to burn away when not running the stall and/or games.

Like many gaming conventions, Conception does a lot of work for charity. All those running the show are volunteers and do not get paid, meaning the maximum amount possible is raised for charities. This year a whopping £12,000 in total was raised for charity! £4,000 went to Round Table Children's Wish, £3,000 went to Help for Hero's, £3,000 went to the Marfan Association UK, £1,000 went to Youth Cancer Trust, £500 to the Wessex Air Ambulance and £500 to the New Milton Round Table.

Unfortunately, this year I was unable to get my hand in on any actual role playing games. Every time I checked the games boards for something which caught my eye, they all seemed to be full. Despite being personally

invited to participate in three games! No sooner had I been invited, I went to the boards to find the game in question and sign the sheet only to find they had already been filled and no spaces were available. Next year I may consider wearing running shoes to get my name up on time... However, despite this, I still "got my game on" with quite a few card and board games during the course of the convention.

## Race for the Galaxy

This game might seem mind boggling at first but trust me, once you get into the swing of things it is amazingly simple, you just need to play a few games to get used to the rules first. Each player is trying to build their space empire. Some people prefer an empire built on war, some prefer a society which prospers through production or technological advancement. Whatever your preference of play you can achieve the same goals as everyone else by whatever route becomes the most easily accessible for you depending on the cards you have been dealt. The game is extremely diverse in ways to play it with no two games even remotely similar. The aim of the game: Get the most victory points before someone reaches a tableau of 12 cards on the table. Simple! Or is it?

The more players you can muster up the more interesting it gets. But if you fancy trying the game before you buy it, this is possible too and in the comfort of your own home! Rio Grande Games granted permission to release a Race for the Galaxy AI to the public, which is great for solitaire play and refining your Race for the Galaxy skills. You can check it out and download it for free at [www.keldon.net](http://www.keldon.net). While the digital version



Some of the great organisers at the charity raffle.

might be fun, in my opinion nothing actually compares to the proper game laid out over a tabletop, but it is a good way to try it out before buying the proper version. Check it out! It is worth the look.

### **At the Gates of Loyang**

At the Gates of Loyang is a brilliant little trading game in which you take on the role of a Chinese vegetable wholesaler/shop owner. You are able to produce goods by planting them and later selling them to customers or even back to the seed shop.

Fields, customers, helpers and markets are represented by cards. Each player receives two of these cards per round distributed by a bidding/drawing mechanism in which you end up with one of the cards you draw and one of the cards from a common pool filled by all players. Additionally, to these cards you always receive one field for free each round which are of varying sizes and planting capability (some fields are just not suitable for planting leeks).

After planting, harvesting, and distributing cards, each player can



**Shadow Hunters.**

use as many actions as he wants, only limited by the number of his cards or the number of goods he owns. At the end of his turn, he can invest the earned money on a scoring track, with the cost of advancing up the 'Trail of Prosperity' increases over time. The game ends after nine rounds and the player who is furthest along the scoring track wins. The

rules are simple and it is for 1 to 4 players, but you need to plan well to become the winner. Things can go wrong when you least expect it or if you have not got your strategy right. It is a very good brain teaser which is brilliant to play in a relaxing environment with a few good friends and a few good drinks.

### **Shadow Hunters**

Granted, the game we were playing was a modified version of the game. Normally this game is for 4-8 players, however we ended up playing with 9 players thanks to the modified additions. Also we were playing with characters from the *Supernatural* television series rather than the standard game characters.

In its original form the game is a survival board game where three groups of characters, "Shadows" (Monsters similar to Vampires or Spirits) "Hunters" (Exorcists or Vampire Hunters) and "Neutrals" (ordinary Humans) struggle against each other to survive. You assume a role in one of the three groups of characters and conceal your identity from the others. Your identity



**At the Gates of Loyang.**

# Conception 2011

remains secret until someone uncovers who you are through your actions and through "Hermit cards" or if you reveal yourself by using a special ability.

The key to victory in this game is to identify your allies and enemies early yet remain a secret yourself. Shadows need to kill the Hunters, Hunters need to kill the shadows and Neutrals are stuck in the middle of the war, each character has their own agenda and mission objective. Players can get help through the use of equipment they acquire along the way and the game ends when one group stands victorious or when a character achieves their set objective. The game is best played with a large group of players. The more players you have the harder it is to identify what faction the other players belong to, which makes the game more interesting and a lot more fun.

Of course these were just a few of the games that I experienced over



Ta-da! The Mongoose stand.

the course of the convention. Many more were being played throughout the venue as well as all the role playing games which were going on. Around the Mongoose trade stand Nick was running Hammers

Slammers, Traveller, Living Traveller, Living Glorantha, Paranoia (29 out of 36 clones killed and the quote on page 7 were the result of that particular bout of mayhem), Deus Vult and Judge Dredd (although not all at the same time!). As each slot lasted four hours, Nick was walking around like a zombie by day five...



Happy RuneQuest fans!

And right next to us the BITS (British Isles Traveller Support - [www.bitsuk.net](http://www.bitsuk.net)) stand was running more Traveller and Living Traveller. There were many, many other games being run over the weekend, with freeform LARPS and tabletop games galore. The advantage of attending such a large (and lengthy) convention such as Conception is there is ample opportunity to find a game you love or one you would like a go at because it sounds cool. It is very easy to fill up your days (and evenings) with great games.

The trade hall is a decent enough size with Mongoose taking our place among the dozen or so traders, but the stalls do cater for most gaming needs with role playing games (of course), dice



**Pinned faires? Check. Pickled Cthulhu? Check. Skull Candleholder? Check. Bedlamites are Go!**

(OF COURSE!), boardgames, card games, miniatures, LARP costumes and accessories and various gaming related bits and bobs are all available.

A stall appearing at Conception for the first time was Bedlamite's Boutique. They make a very fine and unusual addition by selling some of the most brilliantly crafted oddities, including: a preserved Cthulhu in a jar! (or some sort of other weird alien from beyond the stars in a jar),

preserved fairies and sprites (these are set up like preserved butterflies similar to the ones you would find in a museum), leather-bound notebooks and even some heavy leather armour pieces.

And of course there was the Bring and Buy, where you can bring your old or unwanted gaming material in an effort to earn yourself some cash or you may end up finding something to add to your own collection which may be out of print or not available

any longer. Always worth a look!

Conception is a brilliant way to kick start off a year of convention gaming madness. It is well organised, does a tremendous amount of charity work and is generally just a whole lot of fun! If you have not attended one yet then it is highly recommend that you make an effort next January. You can check out all the details at their website: [www.conceptionuk.org](http://www.conceptionuk.org).

With luck you will see us there!

# Balancing the Books

By Alex Greene

## Keeping Your Ship's Finances Straight

### Introduction

One of the more intriguing aspects of Traveller is the section on speculative trade. Through trading, a Traveller can venture his way to prosperity, or just as easily become desperate for cold, hard credits in a big way, with the wrong cargo sitting, unsold and unsellable, in his ship's cargo hold. But what about the art of keeping that ship financially afloat?

This article takes a look at the finances keeping ships flying. It looks at the role of the Purser, examines ways crews can create a group identity in financial terms, describes the three master budgets comprising the "books" at the heart of finances, and considers how players and Referees can work to keep the ship's records consistent throughout the campaign.

**Apology:** This article, while by no means an exhaustive look at finances, does dabble in the "off switch" words of commerce and finance that cause most people's eyes to glaze over.

Referees and players who are more of an adventurous bent, who want their games to be full of exciting combat and conflict, may look away now. This article is for those players who love the Traveller trade rules and who may want to keep track of the ship's money from adventure to adventure, even to the point of maintaining the accounts during downtime.

Of course, players who are already experienced in handling finances may consider this article somewhat simplistic. This is not for you anyway. It is for new players inexperienced at book keeping and running finances.

### AUTOMATED ACCOUNTING

Players may want to consider using a spreadsheet program to keep track of their characters' finances on computer. A number of useful financial templates exist, available online for free.

### The Purser: Keeper Of The Purse Strings

The Purser's job might not seem glamorous compared with the roles of Pilot or Gunner, but in the long term, a Purser's role is vital for the ship.

Traditionally, the character with the highest Admin or Steward skills takes on the role – on larger ships the Purser is the senior Steward and is responsible not only for the Stewards under his care, but also for the payrolls of every member of the crew and the ship's books.

On board a free trader, the role may be entirely unofficial, and falls to the character with the highest Admin and Steward skills. Remember player character crews whose ships take on passengers, and who have not allocated space for luxuries, need Steward skill to keep them entertained – see Steward skill, Traveller Core Rulebook, page 58). The Purser gains the keys to the Ship's Locker and is thus in charge of the disbursement of equipment to crew and passengers alike, whether they are weapons or luxuries.

### DEN MOTHER

The life of a free trader is centred around its common areas – the crew mess and the passenger common area. Here, crew and passengers mingle and bond together. Stewards have the responsibility for preparing the most frequent shared activities – meals.





The ability to cook is welcomed on a ship in Jump, where boredom can be rife. The ability to cook well, to provide an entertaining experience for crews and passengers, is cherished. The Purser is in charge of many budgets, including the purchase and storage of the raw consumables comprising the ship's meals. A Purser who cares for his ship may well seek out the local markets during planet fall, looking for foodstuffs – fresh vegetables and fruits in particular – with a long shelf life.

The Purser's main work during flight is to keep everyone entertained, which could involve a wide variety of activities, including:

- Games of Chance: Depending on the size of the ship, anything from running poker sessions in the passengers' mess to betting pools, right up to running a dedicated casino with a string of croupiers, security staff and others.
- Contests: These could range from backgammon or chess tournaments, shuffleboard or quoits, talent contests, cosy Murder Mystery games and holographic gladiatorial combat games through to an actual on board boxing match with a dedicated ring, publicity ("The Mauling In The Marches") and, of course, a running book and a heavy purse for the winner.
- Concerts: Performing artists travelling with the ship could be persuaded to give a performance for the passengers and crew in lieu of actually paying the ship any money for passage. A lot of unsigned bands sign up for such working passage; a canny Purser can usually arrange for a manager, talent scout or publicist to fly with the ship at the same time as part of the arrangement.

The ship gets entertained in flight, the Stewards do not have to work so hard and the band gets a captive audience to make its pitch to sign for a label. Some unsigned bands come with their own fans, booking flights just to be near their favourite acts. This means security, drafting

in Stewards as roadies, arranging supplies of drugs, green candies and so on.

- Fashion: The ship becomes a catwalk for the latest fashions.
- Exhibits: If a ship's Master is known to own a rare and valuable piece of art, sometimes a passenger will book a flight just so they can see that artwork, whether it is a Dali painting all the way from Earth, the last manuscript of the famed alien author and playwright Alechrin or a genuine Szabo living tattoo writhing across the Captain's back.
- High Profile Passengers: Sometimes, the rarity is another passenger; a comedy legend, a famous after-dinner raconteur, the author of a notorious kiss-and-tell autobiography full of scandal or similar. As with the performing bands above, these passengers could pay their High Passage cost in total simply by turning up and saying a few words. Other passengers can pay a high price on board ship for the privilege of sitting at the Captain's table alongside such famous guests.
- Sublegal Entertainments: Large and small passenger vessels alike operate in Jump. While illegal drugs, psionics, pleasure robots and certain adult trades might be frowned upon planetside, in Jump space, a region far outside the jurisdiction of governments, such illegal commodities and activities cannot be prosecuted.

Pursers may find themselves running a number of illegal onboard rackets, sometimes quite openly, because if the passengers must indulge, for the safety of the ship it makes sense to arrange for a controlled environment for such activities, to ensure passengers do not end up overdosing or endangering the ship or the other passengers.

This may include running a line of "companions" or "comfort staff," living and robotic, whose trades (like the trades practised by Larry Niven's Halloprillalar

and Firefly's Inara Serra) use skills not listed on the Traveller character sheet.

## FINANCIAL AND OTHER BURDENS

Planetside, in addition to taking care of replenishment of food and luxury supplies, the Purser has two further duties. First, he is in charge of the basic administration of the ship's finances, such as paying the berthing and warehousing fees and taking the monthly mortgage payments to the bank and submitting annual returns to the authorities, detailing the ship's financial situation over the previous year.

And second, the Purser is the public relations face of the ship, interacting with the outside world, acting as the ship's diplomatic representative, passage booking office and arbiter on which cargoes, and passengers, to allow onto the ship.

Lastly, the Purser is in charge of the most important crew duty of all – the crew payroll. Monthly, the Purser is in charge of each crewman's wages; at the end of the financial year, the Purser works out how much each shareholder in the ship receives in dividends and bonuses.

## DEPARTMENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

On board a free trader, there might only be one crewman with Steward skill to entertain the passengers and hold the keys to the Ship's Locker, while the ship's Master runs the books. Larger ships, ranging from the 800-ton subsidised liners to the colossal 20,000 ton and 50,000 ton superliners and 100,000 ton ultraliners, have more passengers, which necessitates a department of dedicated, qualified Stewards with the Purser designated as the head of that department, answerable directly to the ship's Master.

The Stewards' department is subdivided into a number of smaller sections:

- Administration, which runs the accounts and holds the purse strings;

# Balancing the Books

- Auxiliary Vessels, the Stewards who travel with the ship's boats;
- Cargo, the teamsters, handlers and stevedores who haul the cargo;
- Catering, those in charge of food and beverage preparation;
- Entertainments, the Stewards whose job it is to keep everyone occupied;
- Sales and Bookings, which arranges passenger bookings and advertising;
- Ship's Locker, the staff which maintains the ship's personal equipment stores;
- Staff, the officers serving as the Purser's personal staff.

Each of these sections has a section chief serving in the Staff section, answerable to the Purser.

## Crew As Financial Entity

A ship's crew is more than just a group of individuals working on the same ship, brought together by happy accident. They are a single financial entity, which stands or falls depending on how they

perform during the year.

Crews can form two kinds of financial entity: a limited company (the business is a separate entity from the individuals of the crew) and a partnership. Both kinds of financial entity provide benefits and drawbacks.

### LIMITED COMPANY

The crew forms a limited company, which is considered a separate financial entity from the individuals of the crew. This requires registration of the company with the proper authorities, specifically the Companies Register of the homeworld under whose flag the ship is registered. This document is called the Article of Incorporation.

Registration of an Article of Incorporation costs a nominal one-off sum of Cr. 200 for a free trader (of any type), and Cr. 100 for any type of subsidised liner. Registration of the ship as a business protects the individuals because it limits the liability of the crew to the unpaid amount

on the shares that they own, should the ship cease to be financially liable.

If the ship fails to remain financially viable, the entity's existence as a limited company protects the crew further: by separating the crew's individual personal effects and property from company property, at least if they have to forfeit the ship they can still walk away with the clothes on their backs. And non-shareholders, while they may lose their jobs, at least do not face the prospect of owing creditors money down the line.

### PARTNERSHIP

This is the more familiar crew set up – the crew pool their ship shares (in the form of share certificates, which the Purser keeps) and either receive a monthly dividend proportionate to the percentage of ship shares held, or (for non-shareholders) a flat rate monthly payment depending on their position within the ship (Pilot, Navigator, Engineer and so on).

Partnerships do not require registration with a Companies Register, and if they do not have a registered homeworld (flying under a flag of convenience) they probably will not need to pay taxes, although such stateless vessels are less likely to attract legitimate cargoes and passengers.

The main drawback of partnerships is that in addition to ship shares, each partner has to sink much of their personal money into the ship partnership. If the ship goes under financially, the crewmen stand to lose the lot.

Crews can mitigate this risk by forming a limited partnership – crewmen can either be general partners (hold ship shares) or limited partners (do not hold ship shares). If the ship goes down, general partners take the brunt of the financial failure, sparing limited partners that particular pain.

### CONTRACTS AND AGREEMENTS

For a ship run as a limited company, the crew must sign up to a limited company contract agreement included in the Article of Incorporation. If they possess ship shares they are considered directors in the



company, with the amount of their shares counting as a percentage stake in the company – 15% ship shares means a 15% stake in the firm, for instance.

The majority shareholder is the owner – he may or may not be the Captain in title – but owning shares entitles every shareholder to contribute input on how the ship is to be run, what markets to pursue and so on. The directors are collectively known as the Board, with the Owner taking the role of Chairman.

Non-shareholders, crewmen with no ship shares, are ordinary crew. They are treated as employees of the company, sign an employment contract with the ship / company, and receive a standard salary (which can either be taken from the list in the Traveller Core Rulebook, page 137, or drawn from the formula listed below.

Directors may draw the same level of salary for doing their assigned jobs, and they also receive a dividend which is potentially substantially higher than the standard salaries of ordinary crewmembers. This dividend may be paid annually or quarterly, and the amount paid depends on how many ship shares the director owns, as described below.

A ship run as a partnership runs along similar lines. Partners who have ship shares to contribute are considered general partners (like a law firm), and partners without ship shares are considered limited partners, with limited management rights, but with equal unlimited liability in the event of the business' failure.

Crewmen who contribute ship shares have a higher stake in the business than those without ship shares – but the partnership allows all active members at least one vote, regardless of whether they have ship shares or not, plus one vote for each percent ship share they may hold.

A limited partnership allows non-shareholders limited liability in the event of financial failure, in exchange for their forfeiting all management rights;

shareholders still face unlimited liability, unless they have formed a limited liability partnership designed to protect all partners, general and limited alike.

Creating a partnership requires little more than a document drawn up detailing the form of the partnership, and signed by all present crewmembers.

A crew trading as a limited company may well include clauses allowing Player Characters share purchasing rights, should their individual adventures earn them enough to be able to purchase ship shares, as well as the right to hold onto any cash they independently earn through adventuring. A partnership agreement may include a clause requiring crewmembers sink a percentage of any cash they earn through adventuring towards the common partnership fund, as well as the option to buy ship shares if they have contributed enough cash to buy into the inner circle of general partners.

All contracts and agreements, whether Articles of Incorporation or partnership agreements, contain clauses designed to protect the business entity and individuals in the event of crew changes, the death or retirement of the majority shareholders, the event of the business going under and so on.

Drafting such an agreement requires Admin and/or Advocate skill to verify the document's legal standing:-  
*Draft Article of Incorporation: Admin or Advocate, Int, 1-6 hours, Average(+0)*  
*Draft Partnership Agreement: Admin or Advocate, Int, 1-6 hours, Average(+0)*

Copies of these documents, along with ship share certificates, are placed in the hands of the Purser, who will keep them along with the usual ship registration documentation for presentation to Customs officials.

## Dividends and Salaries

Crews need to get something back from their company or partnership, and that remuneration comes in the form of dividends and salaries. Dividends are paid

semi-regularly, typically on an annual or quarterly basis, and salaries are paid out monthly.

## SALARIES

The salary table on page 137 of Traveller Core Rulebook lists salaries as follows:

Position	Salary
Pilot	6,000
Navigator	5,000
Engineer	4,000
Steward	2,000
Medic	4,000
Gunner	2,000
Marine	2,000

These defaults are useful as a "default" salary guide, but some ships might have a different salary weighting, depending on such variables as the crewmembers' skills (determined by the prestige of flight certificates, medical licenses, certificates of schools completed, engineering qualifications or similar measures of excellence).

Position	Salary
Pilot	3,000 x Pilot skill rating (Pilot-0 counts as Pilot-1)
Navigator	2,500 x Astrogation skill rating (Astrogation-0 counts as Astrogation-1)
Engineer	2,000 x Engineer skill rating (Engineer-0 counts as Engineer-1)
Steward	1,000 x Steward skill rating (Steward-0 counts as Steward-1)
Medic	2,000 x Medic skill rating (Medic-0 counts as Medic-1)
Gunner	1,000 x Gunnery skill rating (Gunnery-0 counts as Gunnery-1)
Marine	1,000 x highest Combat skill rating

The above scheme assumes the crewmen filling these posts have attained level-2 in their required skill. Level-1 skill would qualify the character as a junior crewman, and draw a lesser salary; highly

# Balancing the Books

skilled senior or veteran crewmen, with relevant skills rated 3 or higher, are in correspondingly higher demand and can draw higher salaries accordingly.

Stateroom running costs are charged to the ship as part of its fixed costs (see below) – they are not charged to individual crewmembers, so Marines and Gunners do not end up perpetually penniless just because their staterooms cost exactly the same amount to run as they draw per month.

## DIVIDENDS

Paid out either annually or, more often, quarterly, dividends are the financial reward for having shares in the ship. If the ship does well financially, the crew get paid according to how much of a stake they have in the ship – in other words, their percentage of ship shares.

Each percentage ship share entitles the bearer to that much of the profit allocated for dividend payments. The Captain might make 100% of the profits payable as dividends, but a prudent Captain may choose to allocate a smaller proportion to dividend payouts, keeping the bulk of profits to plough back into the running of the ship – its reserves.

For example, the ship might run to a Cr. 250,000 profit in the quarter – the Captain might plough Cr. 200,000 of that into the reserves, leaving Cr. 50,000 for dividend payouts. Each percentage ship share earns its bearer Cr. 500; the bearer of a 15% share would earn Cr. 7,500 that quarter.

## Running The Books

The following is only a sketchy introduction to the basics of accounting. Accounting in real life is such a vast topic that this article can only provide the roughest introductory outline to players and Referees. Many resources exist online for people who wish to keep track of real world money and balance their books, and it is recommended players and Referees go and look for these tools and resources.

The two things you need to know about keeping a business afloat are: – firstly, where the money comes from; and secondly, where it goes.

Money coming in, whether from speculative trading, freight or passenger shipping or adventuring, is called income: if it is paid to a person, it is called earnings or salary. Cash offered in fixed amounts by governments to subsidised traders in exchange for them operating along fixed routes, hauling mail and so on is called a subsidy.

Money going out is called costs, and include items such as fuel, stateroom maintenance and life support, mortgage and maintenance payments, berthing and warehousing costs, salaries, dividends and other costs.

## ABSTRACTING THE ACCOUNTS

Referees and players might not want to keep track of the running costs and incomes, and simply abstract the process to a simple Admin skill check.

A positive Effect means that the ship continues flying – a high Effect (3+) means that the crew might get a bonus (the dividend is doubled for that quarter, or they get an extra Cr. 1,000 in their wage slips that month).

A negative Effect means that the ship goes into negative cashflow – the crew may have to take a cut in salary, dividends may not be paid at the end of the quarter. A -6 Effect on the check means the ship's finances have gone into meltdown, and they will have to take on a risky adventuring job or go under.

*Balance the Books, Admin, Int, 1-6 days, Average(+0)*

## DOWN TO THE LAST CREDIT

Players and Referees who wish to keep track of all the ship's accounts, down to keeping track of the cost of each round fired or each protein pack consumed in the galley, may wish to run a more detailed book.

Bluebooking, the art of maintaining detailed records of downtime activities in the gap between games, is one method that players can find useful. Invented by Aaron Allston, bluebooking allows players to do things like monitor ship's expenses, take stock of the speculative cargoes in the cargo hold and other similar activities.

Real, working accounting software also exists, and players can easily find and make use of such software, or simply run the books on a spreadsheet.

## BOOKKEEPING

The player must keep track of all financial transactions: every purchase, from fuel and ammunition right down to bathroom tissues; and every credit coming in from passenger bookings and speculative trade.

These sales and purchases are kept in various books in chronological order: day books (sales daybooks record all sales, purchase daybooks record all purchases and so on), ledgers, cash books and the financial journal.

## INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STREAMS

The ship's books are used to keep track of how much cash has come in and from where, how much is currently tied up in stock, what the ship owes in debts and how much cash has actually been spent and to whom.

### Income Streams

These are the ways money comes in, and they include:

- The characters' own: Characters' ship shares, money they sink into the ship from mustering out, cash they invest into the ship from adventuring. Called "equity," "share capital" and "investments."
- Other people's money: Investments and purchase of ship shares by outsiders such as a government (subsidised merchant), money stumped up by the bank to whom the characters owe the mortgage payments. Also known as the ship's debt or the bank's loan capital.

- Profits: Money from a previous period that the crew plough back into the business – also called retained earnings or reserves.

## Expenditure Streams

Here are the ways money is spent. They include:

- Mortgage Payments: The cash paid to the bank monthly
- Maintenance: The monthly life support cost of the staterooms and cold berths
- Berthing and Warehousing Costs: The cost of keeping the ship planetside, and for temporary housing of surplus speculative cargo.
- Fuel: The cost of fuel for the ship's systems.
- Salaries and Dividends: Crew wages and other remunerations
- Other costs: Variable costs such as replacement uniforms, spare parts, renewal of luxuries and consumables,
- Fixed assets: The ship and the equipment aboard it, right down to the ship's weapons in the Ship's Locker, the ammunition for those weapons, the repair and maintenance kits for those weapons and so on.
- Working capital: The speculative and other cargoes in the hold; raw materials, work in progress and finished goods waiting to be sold.

## BREAK-EVEN ANALYSIS

Break-even analysis measures the point at which the income from cargo handling and passenger carrying is equal to all costs incurred, both fixed and variable, up to that point. Break even analysis is essential to a free trader, because it is the point at which the ship ceases to be in debt and starts to make a profit.

Here are the most relevant items to consider when making a break even analysis.

## Fixed Costs

These costs remain constant, month to month. The primary fixed costs are the regular monthly mortgage payment, monthly salaries, the monthly life support

costs for all staterooms and the monthly maintenance.

## Variable Costs

These are recurring costs which you absorb with every unit sold – the highest variable cost being fuel, although other costs such as renewable luxuries, food and medical supplies, spare parts, replacement and spare crew uniforms, ammunition for weapons and replacement and spare weapons also come under this category.

## Decisions, Decisions

Break even analysis enables a Purser to determine the number of High Passages and Middle Passages to accept each flight, whether it is more economically viable to haul freight (guaranteed revenue, but nothing to write home about) or to allocate the cargo space to speculative cargo, and whether or not to go and find a paying Patron and do a job (that the Patron will pay for) instead.

This can be abstracted with the following task check:

*Break even analysis, Admin, Int, 10-60 minutes, Average(+0)*

Success (positive Effect) allows the Referee to inform the Purser of the well-being of the ship, and whether or not to go for the easy road of freight and passengers, or to risk speculative cargo or go on a Patron-initiated adventure instead.

## Master Budgets

When filing an annual return, the three documents accountants look for are the

profit and loss account, the balance sheet and the cashflow analysis.

## Profit and Loss Account

A look at the historical performance of the ship to date, this is the document used as the basis for working out how much to pay the ship share – bearing crew in dividends and how much to put back into the ship.

## Balance Sheet

This is a snapshot of the current financial state of the ship – how much it has (its assets), and how much it owes (its liabilities).

## Cashflow Analysis

Vital for working out future budgets, cashflow analysis is like a financial weather forecast: it can tell the Purser when things are going to get problematical for the ship, requiring the crew to take on a Patron job to make up for cash shortfalls (negative cashflow, which bites into the reserves).

The process of creating these three documents can be abstracted:-

*Create master budgets, Admin, Int, 1-6 hours, Average(+0)*

## Conclusion

The financial aspects of Traveller may fascinate or repel players and Referees. You either love it or hate it. I only hope that this basic outline has whetted appetites and intrigued players enough to want to try running their ships as little businesses, with records as detailed as they want them to be, and see how far they can go.



# The Flying Money Pit

By Alex Greene

## Premise:

The characters begin play looking for a ship or for transport off world. Somehow, they stumble into ownership of an old free trader with a reputation – it is a money pit.

## Introduction

The characters begin the scenario in a public park, feeding pigeons and flagpies with the last of their food. They have literally only the clothes on their backs and their personal comms. If they have assets such as Travellers' Aid Society membership and combat implants, the characters retain them.

One of them has an Ally who owes one of the characters and who will stump up Cr. 50,000 on a one-time basis only, and that is it.

Referee, let them start thinking up ideas to try and raise funds to get off world, before reading this aloud.

*In the midst of your brainstorming, [name a character]'s comm chimes. It is one of [character]'s Contacts. She has some information of use to you.*

## First Act – A Good Word

The characters meet with a Patron at the Rancid Spectrum bar, as directed by the Contacts. The Patron needs an in to a gambling den and one of the characters can vouch for the Patron.

The character must also join the game, which requires a stake of Cr. 10,000 for each player who comes in. The Patron puts up her own cash, and promises to split a portion of any winnings she makes, if she wins.

## Second Act – The Gambling Den

The character can persuade the bouncer to let the Patron and other characters through:

*Vouch for characters and Patron, Persuade, Soc, 10-60 seconds, Difficult(-2)*

The characters, once in, cash in their Cr. 10,000 stake to purchase their way into the various games of chance. Have each character make two Gambler skill checks, and work out how much they win or lose: *Games of Chance, Gambler, Int, 10-60 seconds*

The difficulty determines the odds faced: *Easy(+4) – evens. Winner receives his stake back plus 100% of his stake. Average(+0) – 6/4 on. Winner receives his stake back plus 150% of stake. Very Difficult(-4) – Long Shot. Winner receives his stake back plus 500% of stake.*

The last skill check has a twist. Playing against an inebriated man, the player is encouraged to go all-in: all his cash, against a keycard, the opponent's last asset. The game goes in the player's favour; the character is now in possession of one battered Fast Trader, in addition to whatever else he won.

## Third Act – Berthed

The ship, the *Jarvis*, is currently in Berth 39 at the Starport. The keycard contains the documentation authorising its bearer, the player character, as the Master and new owner of the ship.



When they get to the berth, they will discover the following problems. First, the ship is not spaceworthy. Close, but she needs a full two years' worth of maintenance to get her up and running.

Second, they are now responsible for berthing costs. Berth 39 has been occupied for 18 months, at a cost of Cr. 750 per month.

Third, the *Jarvis* was a disaster as a business. Apart from the physical costs of repairs, she begins with a deficit of Cr. 300,000 on her books from the start.

Third, the ship has the following features due to her age (30 years old; see page 136, *Traveller Core Rulebook*):- Blacklisted, increase all maintenance costs 100%.

Fourth, the Air/Raft is in perfect working order.

Other than the fact that they have 100% ownership and no mortgage, though, they are good to go.

## Fourth Act – Patron

To pay for the ship, in order just to get her airborne, the characters will have to go back to the wealthy Patron whom they helped the previous night. She is amenable to help the characters, but she will need persuasion (a Difficult Persuade check) to fund their repair efforts.

Repairs will take one month. The *Jarvis* is a standard Type A2 Far Trader (page 118, *Traveller Core Rulebook*). Assuming the Patron can be persuaded, the characters will effectively be forced to perform three dangerous missions for her during this month, to work off their debt to her. The Referee can work out what those missions will be.

The Patron will not pay off the financial deficit. That is the characters' job.



## Fifth Act – Forgotten Asset

While looking through the books, the Purser discovers an old receipt for a warehouse on the planet they are berthed on. The account at the warehouse is still active, and may still contain a cargo that can solve their financial crises at a stroke.

The cargo is (roll 1d6):-

- 1 – Luxury goods worth Cr. 100,000.
- 2 – Spare parts for a Type A2 far trader – cutting costs to get the *Jarvis* spaceworthy and airborne to 25% at a stroke.
- 3 – Illegal contraband pharmaceuticals with a street value of Cr, 200,000.
- 4 – Gone; someone had accidentally exposed it to the elements and native bacteria have turned it into a pulpy mess.
- 5 – A consignment of 25 lonely, pre-owned human-looking lifelike pleasure bots, ten female, ten male, five androgynous, each unit worth Cr. 40,000.
- 6 – A previous owner's seventy kidnap victims, all alive, all held in cold storage, each one worth a ransom of Cr. 150,000, or a reward of Cr. 15,000 apiece if they are restored to their families.

## Sixth Act - Complications

The characters will have to pay the warehouse owner's fee, which currently stands at Cr. 120,000. They can either add this to the bills they will have to pay before they can touch sky, or go and visit the Patron again.

Either way, the warehouse owner will want his cash. Up front. Now.

Any illegal cargoes, of course, will necessitate the characters attempting to smuggle the contraband past Customs, an adventure in itself.

## Seventh Act – Resolution

Assuming everything goes smoothly for the characters, they should have themselves a working far trader, a cargo hold full of goods, and a huge collection of debts on their heads. Getting rid of those debts ... that is another adventure.

# Return of the Table...

By Nick Robinson

In a previous article (see issue 50 of Signs and Portents) it was shown how a normally harmless piece of everyday furniture can become a lethal object of fear where Troubleshooter clones are concerned. If there is one thing which is a constant in Paranoia (well, besides the bad food, insane computer, high mortality rate and so on) it is that if you allow R&D to get their hands on *anything* they are more than capable of turning the deadliness up to 11.

## It began with something simple...

Forms.

In quintuplet.

They are what keeps Alpha Complex running in such a smooth and efficient manner. Troubleshooter teams are

always having to fill in forms in order to maximise their efficiency but a recent study has shown the forms submitted by these heroic servants of Friend Computer are often illegible. Sometimes this is because the form in question has been burnt, dissolved, melted or immersed in water but at other times it is (also) because of Commie Mutant Traitor activity.

In order to ensure there will no longer be any excuse for filling out illegible forms R&D have produced a series of experimental devices to improve legibility. When issuing these devices to a team of Troubleshooters the Games Master may wish to have them prove useful and give the Troubleshooters plenty of forms to fill in. Of course, this is only a suggestion. A Games Master may decide to flood the Troubleshooters with a dizzying array of confusing, self-incriminating and/

or contradictory forms to fill, or laugh manically as the Troubleshooters are forced to carry a heavy, cumbersome piece of furniture around Alpha Complex for no good reason.

A Mark III Writing Facilitator is the first the Troubleshooters will have the good fortune to field test. They will also have the opportunity to test later models one after the other. What could possibly go wrong?

## The Mark III

The Mark III is a simple table, designed to have half a dozen individuals using it to comfortably fill in a form whilst out on a mission. Of course being able to seat six Troubleshooters means the table is large and heavy, being very difficult to carry. It also is extremely awkward to get through narrow doors and up (or down) stairs.

**Advantages:** A good solid table. Form filling is much easier. If turned on its side it makes reasonably good cover.

**Disadvantages:** If used as cover this valuable piece of R&D equipment is easily damaged. It is also very heavy and if a team is forced to flee an individual may want to leave this equipment behind so he can escape. Leaving valuable equipment behind is, of course, Treason, especially if the it is left behind and falls into the hands of Commie Mutant Traitors.

## The Mark IIIa

The Mark IIIa is an improved version. It has small wheels fitted to the bottom of each of its legs to enable a group of Troubleshooters to move more quickly, if needed.

**Advantages:** The wheels make pushing the thing a lot easier.

**Disadvantages:** The wheels rarely go in the same direction, causing the table to veer off in the most inconvenient manner without a moment's notice. Perhaps it will knock a fellow Troubleshooter (or, far worse,



A Metal Table. Troubleshooters will thank you for having to carry such an item.



a High Clearance Citizen) into the path of a speeding Warbot. It still has the same problem as the Mark III with doors and stairs. And slopes are now an additional, severe problem. Not that the Troubleshooters are likely to encounter any slopes when using a Mark IIIa, honest...

## The Mark IV

After thorough field testing of the Mark III and IIIa it has come to the notice of Friend Computer that Troubleshooters keep using the tables as cover, causing untold damage to valuable equipment. As a result a self-righting mechanism has been fitted. This device means if the table is turned on its side it will quickly right itself. This little nugget of information may or may not be passed onto the Troubleshooters.

**Advantages:** No longer will the table be subject to quite so many damaging laser blasts.

**Disadvantages:** No longer will the table be usable to protect Troubleshooters from quite so many lethal laser blasts. The Mark IV will attempt to right itself at the most inopportune moment. It may even attempt to do so if the table is currently standing in the correct upright position. It will manically attempt to push itself upright using various attachments, these are likely to forcefully hit Troubleshooters. Perhaps its thrashings will cause damage to members of the team, and possibly pieces of equipment, bots or High Clearance Citizens. It may also push any inconvenient big red buttons marked with such phrases as 'Ejection Switch', 'Self-Destruct Mechanism' or 'Do not push this button. EVER'.

## The Mark V

Any clones assigned a Mark V Writing Facilitator will be glad to hear the problems with the Mark IV have all been ironed out. However further field testing has shown form legibility has not improved to the degree projections indicated they should. One problem, a lack of writing implements, has been identified and the Mark V has these in abundance, storing them safely until they are required...

**Advantages:** You will never run out of pencils. And the self-righting mechanism now works without malfunctioning, more or less.

**Disadvantages:** The Mark V writing implement dispenser does have a small problem, however. It fires out its store of pencils at a very high velocity, sometimes at a very high rate of fire. These are more than capable of causing death and injury. And the dispenser will, of course, never malfunction and fire off the missiles, um, pencils, at an inconvenient moment.

## The Mark VI

With the earlier models it was reported they slowed Troubleshooter teams down, allowing Commies to escape justice. R&D has come up with an elegant solution, the Mark VI has its own propulsion system.

**Advantages:** No one needs to carry it.

**Disadvantages:** It has wheels, so it has to be carried up stairs. And because of the propulsion system is much heavier than before. Also it is remote controlled, and directions on how to use the remote is above the Troubleshooters' Clearance. It would probably be mean to point out that some Commie Mutant Traitor may have his own remote, able to over-ride that of the team. Such fun!

## The Mark VIa

The Mark VI but with a bot brain instead of a remote control.

**Advantages:** The table can now act independently of the Troubleshooters.

**Disadvantages:** The table can now act independently of the Troubleshooters.

## The Mark VII

With its stability, bot brain and transportation system some bright spark realised the Mark VIa would be a perfect weapons support system if some guns were added.

**Advantages:** ...

**Disadvantages:** A bot with superior firepower will now accompany the Troubleshooters. It is also a stickler for forms. If someone does not fill out a form correctly then it will use its firepower with extreme prejudice. Did anyone mention the Mark VII has a form for every occasion?

## Additional Models

Of course, it may not all end with the Mark VII. We just thought we SHOULD probably stop torturing players (and Troubleshooters) with such furniture related mayhem.

Of course you may wish to sock it to them. We applaud your single-mindedness in creating misery for your group. But what else could go wrong, you ask?

Well, the table could be designated an equipment carrying module. No longer would clones have to carry around heaps of very heavy equipment. Of course the table will run off with it all at the earliest opportunity.

Wings. You can always add wings to your table. Or rockets. Or both. Imagine your party of Troubleshooters clinging on for dear life as the table reaches speeds close to the speed of sound before coming to a sudden halt (as in sudden impact with a very large, solid object. Like a Mark V warbot).

Another favourite of Troubleshooters everywhere are cameras. And transmitting equipment. Oh, imagine the fun and joy when treasonous activity by any of the Troubleshooters gets reported to Friend Computer in real time. Imagine the looks on your Player's faces when they realise the table has inbuilt secret cameras. They will be so thankful for the experience. Trust us.

So have fun. Inflict death and destruction on as many clones as possible. And don't forget to give them the added joy of back pains and hernias...

# The Enterprise

By Peter Cakebread and Ken Walton

## ...TO BOLDLY VENTURE WHERE NO GENTLEMAN HAS HERETOFORE VENTURED

The following extracts are from *Quintessence*, the fourth volume of the Kingdom & Commonwealth Campaign for *Clockwork & Chivalry*. There are no plot spoilers, though anyone playing in the campaign may want to avoid reading so as not to spoil the fun of meeting John Wilkins in person!

## Wilkins Answers Questions

How will we breathe beyond the Earth?

*"There is pure elemental air all the way to the Moon. Those who have been to the tops of high mountains have difficulty breathing because the air up there is so pure – the air the angels breathe, you might say – but once they have acclimatised, they have no trouble."*

How long will it take to get to the Moon?

*"It is approximately 250,000 miles to the Moon. At the average speed of a flying swan, on which I based my calculations for the **Enterprise**, it will take around four months."*

What will we find on the Moon?

*"Ah, that's the exciting part. Since it is known that there are mountains and seas on the Moon as has been proved by*

## Reverend John Wilkins

Wilkins is a very unlikely priest. Though trained in theology, and for a short time vicar of his home village of Fawsley (near Daventre in Northamptonshire), it is as an inventor that he is primarily known. He is officially the chaplain of Viscount Saye and Sele's estate, but his pastoral duties take a poor second place to his constant tinkering with Clockwork. Father of the Clockwork Revolution, he has also found time to write a book on the possibilities of a voyage to the Moon, and with the help of funding from the Viscount and his friends, has not only designed, but actually built, a moonship. In between these major projects, he has managed to devise a universal language and invent a metric system of measurement, though neither has, as yet, gained much popularity!



STR	13	D20	1-3	Hit Location	AP/HP
CON	14		4-6	Right Leg	0/6
SIZ	13		7-9	Left Leg	0/6
INT	19		10-12	Abdomen	0/7
POW	15		13-15	Chest	0/8
DEX	13		16-18	Right Arm	0/5
CHA	12		19-20	Left Arm	0/5
				Head	0/6
<i>Combat Actions</i>	3	<i>Typical Armour</i>	None		
<i>Damage Modifier</i>	+1D2	<i>Traits</i>	—		
		<i>Skills</i>	Art (Clockwork Design) 155%, Craft (Clockwork) 120%, Craft (Engineering) 120%, Craft (Mechanisms) 135%, Lore (Logistics) 100%, Lore (Mechanical Philosophy) 100%, Lore (Theology) 90%		
<i>Movement</i>	8m	<i>Combat Styles</i>	Unarmed 50%		
<i>Strike Rank</i>	+16	<i>RP</i>	70		
<b>Weapons</b>					
<i>Type</i>	<i>Size</i>	<i>Reach</i>	<i>Damage</i>	<i>AP/HP</i>	
Unarmed	M	L	1D3+1D2	As for arm	

the English astronomer Thomas Harriot with his telescope (and Galileo too, of course, though I believe the Englishman was first) it seems likely that there will be people of some sort living there. It seems unlikely that God would create an entire world and then not populate it. There are some who theorise that the Moon may, in fact, be Eden. If God created the Garden to be populated by many humans, it would need to be large. Once Adam and Eve were cast out of the Garden to the Earth, it was left empty. If this is so, then the Moon will be a place of great abundance, full of animals that live in peace and harmony with each other."

#### What's the weather like on the Moon?

"Another interesting question. The day lasts fourteen days, and the night another fourteen, so the days must be very hot and the nights very cold – but I believe that clouds and cooling rains will temper the heat, and the Earthlight that will constantly bathe the near side of the Moon, reflecting sunlight from our oceans to warm the lunar night, will prevent it getting too cold. I imagine that the far side of the Moon, which never sees the Earth, will be unimaginably chilly, however."

#### What about Alchemy on the Moon?

"As you may know, I studied Alchemy for a time. It is my belief that the Moon contains much more of the elusive fifth element, sometimes known as Quintessence or Aether, which is not to be found on Earth. Whether it is made entirely of Quintessence or merely a mixture of the new element and the familiar elements of Earth remains to be seen. It is possible that new magical forms will be achievable – new spells with previously unlooked-for powers, as well as Aether Elementals. It is a shame really that no Alchemists have been invited along, but don't let Cromwell know I said that. I am married to his sister, and she'd never let me hear the end of it!"

#### Has the Enterprise been tested?

"Well, not exactly. How do you test whether a ship can fly to the Moon, other than by flying it to the Moon? But it's closely modelled on the flight of a swan, and they've been flying reliably since God created them."

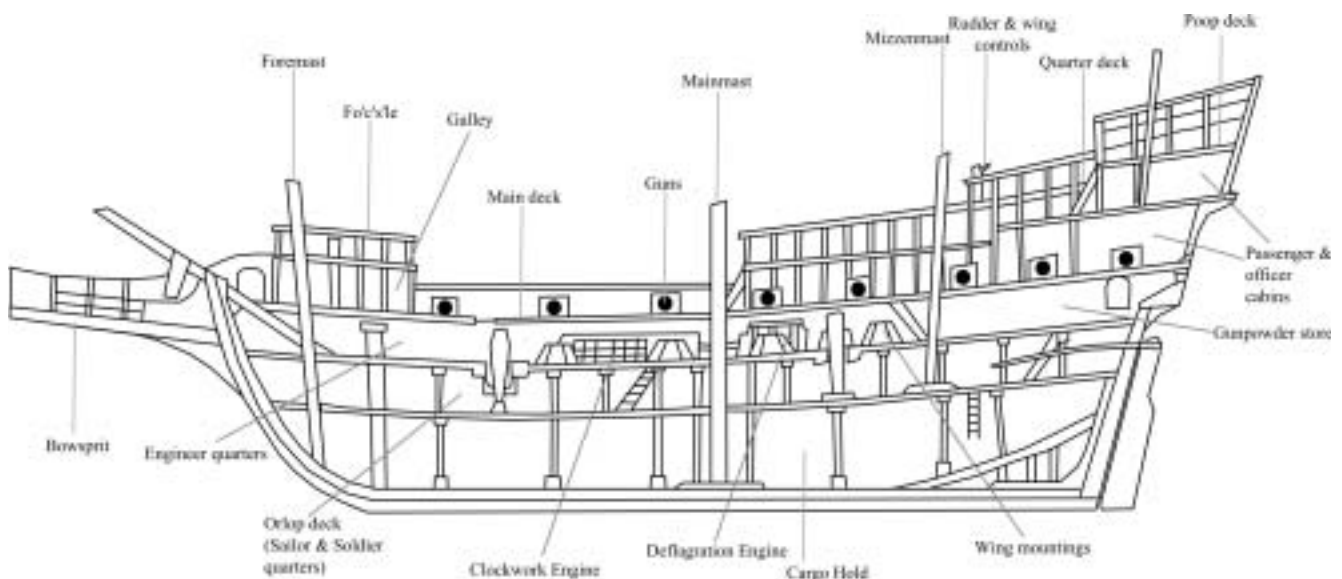
How does it land? "You will, of course, need to find an ocean or other body of water. But that should be no problem, as we're pretty sure there are large seas on the Moon."

# THE ENTERPRISE

- Cost: Unknown
- Complexity: 10
- Size: 100
- Hit Points: 90
- Speed: 140 kph
- Armour: 6
- Weapons: 20 cannons

The *Enterprise* is a flying ship, converted from an existing vessel by John Wilkins. In design, it resembles a privateer, with three masts and clinker-built wooden hull. The biggest difference which will be noted is in the massive articulated wings which extend on either side of the ship; made on a light framework of wood, with "sinews" of rope and complex gears within, they are covered over with canvas onto which thousands of swan feathers have been sewn.

The wings are, of course, powered by Clockwork. However, on a long voyage, such as the trip to the Moon for which Wilkins designed the ship, there would be no sensible way to rewind the Clockwork powering the wings, were it not for Wilkins' other invention – the Deflagration Engine. This massive engine (5 x 3 x 3 m) works by feeding carefully



The *Enterprise*

# The Enterprise



measured quantities of gunpowder into cylinders which, when ignited by flints, drive a camshaft which in turn rewinds the Clockwork mechanism. The Deflagration Engine is very noisy, and produces vast quantities of noxious smoke, and is – it goes without saying – incredibly dangerous in the hands of an untrained operator! But, if fired up for an hour, once a day, it can keep the *Enterprise's* Clockwork engine wound up for a whole day's travel, allowing it to stay aloft for weeks if necessary.

The top speed on the *Enterprise* in sustained flight is 140 kph, though it is obviously slower on short flights.

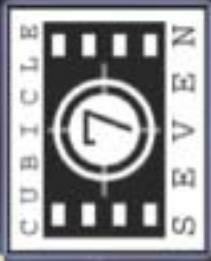
The *Enterprise* is basically a 40m long, three-masted privateer adapted to flight. The gun deck has been sacrificed to make room for the Clockwork machinery that controls the wings and the Deflagration Engine, which rewinds the Clockwork on a daily basis. The rest of the ship has also been converted, partly to provide for extra passenger cabins, partly to allow the carrying of cargo – this is, after all, a mission of exploration and potential trade, not of war. Nevertheless, Abel has insisted in taking light cannon, strapped down to the top deck, in case the need to defend the *Enterprise* arises.

The cargo deck carries the ship's supplies, a large amount of barrels containing food and drink. In addition, there is an abundance of trade goods – an inordinate amount of wool, trinkets and beads; a plentiful supply of common trade items, such as swathes of cloth, eating utensils and hand weapons; as well as generous samples of more exotic trade goods, including spices, cotton, silk, indigo dye, saltpetre and tea.

And there is gunpowder – lots of it – without which the Deflagration Engine will not work.

# CLOCKWORK & CHIVALRY

[www.clockworkandchivalry.co.uk](http://www.clockworkandchivalry.co.uk)



London, the largest city in Europe. To some it is a wonder of the world, to others it is Babylon, the sink of all vice and depravity. Cromwell's capital and home of Parliament, it is a vast, overcrowded city, to which people from all over England flock to make their fortunes or lose them.

As you walk its streets on a foggy winter's evening, you wonder what the future holds in store. Your briefing with Sir Reginald Perkinson and Henry Ireton was short and to the point. The renegade Clockwork Alchemist Lady Arabella Blackwood (sometimes known as Lady Silver) has stolen an experimental Parliamentary Clockwork flying ship, and was last seen heading for the Moon. Now a massive merchant vessel, the Enterprise, is setting out in the same direction. You are to join her crew in an attempt to find out what the woman is up to. Your mission is secret, known only to the ship's captain, the famous Dutch explorer Abel Tasman, who has defected from the United East India Company for the chance to lead the voyage of a lifetime. Tonight you are to meet him in the Turk's Head Coffee House for a briefing.

But somewhere along the way, you have gotten lost. Maybe it's the fog, or maybe it's the map of London your patrons gave you, which doesn't seem to have been updated for several decades. You're headed for Cornhill, a couple of blocks behind the docks, but somehow you seem to have become lost in a maze of twisty alleyways, all alike. The fog is thick here, cutting visibility to less than ten metres. High stone walls loom on either side, windowless and blank.

Suddenly, behind you, comes the whirr of Clockwork, as several devices, as yet unseen, spin into action. Before you have a chance to react to this, there is a bestial roar from ahead, and a massive bear looms on its hind legs out of the mist...

**Roll for Initiative!**

## Quintessence

*Episode IV of the Kingdom & Commonwealth Campaign*

Increasingly Alternate History for RuneQuest II

March 2011

# Mass Battles

By Jacob DC Ross

While Traveller is not always associated with large-scale battles between massive space fleets or incredible tech-equipped armies, the Traveller setting does present many engines of war that sometimes beg to be let loose upon hordes of the enemy. However, as Traveller is a role-playing game, players and referees may not desire to spend hours upon hours rolling for every single missile, defensive screen, beam weapon, or sand canister fired in a 300-ship engagement. To that end, this article presents a streamlined set of rules for conducting massive battles that will not take an entire weekend, or even an evening, to finish.

Referees can use the rules in this article for battles in which the player characters participate, or to simulate large battles taking place outside of the characters' location but which will affect the campaign or the characters in some manner. Referees are free to use any, all, or none of the optional rules presented after the main rules in the section below.

## The Battle Setup

### Step One

When determining the course of an epic battle, the first thing to do is to total up the Force Strengths of each side. The first step in this process is to find the total Structure strength of all ships on each side in a space battle or to find the total number of soldiers on each side of a planetary battle. In a planetary battle where combat vehicles are present or when one or more sides uses fortifications, every five Structure points of vehicles and fortifications count as a single man for the purposes of this step. Next, compare the totals and divide them both by factors of ten, rounding up, until the number of the smallest force is either in double digits or is a single digit of five or greater.

For example, in an epic battle where one side has 990 Structure points and the other has 670, the total of each would be divided

by 100, leaving one side with ten and the other with seven. This is done to determine the "hit points" of the different sides, so it is desirable to divide down to manageable numbers. The above example could divide the forces only by ten, in which case one side would have 99 and the other 67, if the referee and players wanted a much longer battle.

*The young Sword World officer Ulrich von Hoppner has decided to prove himself to his superiors by assaulting a minor Darrian space laboratory. His fleet of fighters and a warship has a Structure point total of 1,000 and the brash commander feels confident in victory. The Sword World fleet approaches the laboratory to find it defended by a single warship with a Structure point total of 500. For this battle the Sword World fleet has a total of "hit points" equal to 10 while the Darrians only have a total of five. Things are looking dire for the Darrian laboratory.*

### Step Two

In this step, various factors are considered to determine the Force Effectiveness of each side in battle. The Force Effectiveness is used to show how well each side can actually fight in the battle.

First, determine the advantage of superior numbers. This is done by calculating the ratio by which the larger force outnumbers the smaller force, using the Force Strength rating. The ratio is added to the Force Effectiveness of the larger force.

*Ulrich smirks as he realizes that his fleet outnumbers the Darrian warship. His Force Strength of 10 is twice as high as that of the Darrians, so he adds two to his Force Effectiveness, bringing it to two. The Darrians add nothing to their Force Effectiveness.*

The second consideration is the Tech Level of each side in the conflict. If both sides are using equipment or ships of the same Tech Level, then nothing is added to the Force Effectiveness, but if one side has the advantage over the other, then

the difference between Tech Levels is added to the Force Effectiveness of the technologically-superior side.

*Ulrich's fleet is not even close to state-of-the-art, with each ship in his task force having TL 11 technology. The Darrian warship is incredibly advanced, using TL 16 technology. The difference between the TLs is five, so the Sword Worlders currently have a Force Effectiveness of two, while the Darrians have a Force Effectiveness of five.*

Next, determine the training and condition of the soldiers on each side. This rating is assigned a number, as shown in the table below.

### Training and Conditioning

Force Training Number	Force Training and Condition
-3	Sickly or completely untrained warriors. Pacifists forced to fight.
-2	Peasant rabble. Untrained and nearly useless in combat.
-1	Rookie soldiers or soldiers in training.
0	Regular, disciplined soldiers. The average for most battles.
1	Veteran soldiers or new soldiers with advanced or academy educations.
2	Special forces. Very effective.
3	The best of the best. Composed exclusively of battle-hardened veterans and extremely competent officers.

*It turns out that Ulrich is an academy student, about to graduate at the top of his class. He wants to really impress the brass, so he has convinced members of his class to join him in an unsanctioned mission. Ulrich's fleet has*

a training and conditioning rating of one, giving their force a current Force Effectiveness of three. The Darrian laboratory has just received a top-secret priority assignment, and is thus being guarded by a ship filled with the best crewmen in the Darrian navy. The Darrians thus have a training and condition rating of three, giving them a current Force Effectiveness of eight.

At this stage, each of the force commanders may make a Leadership throw in order to inspire their men. Note that in the case of an ambush, only the ambushers may make this throw, as the element of surprise keeps the other side from immediately marshalling forces. The Effect of this throw is added to the Force Effectiveness. In the case of a failed roll, the commander has botched his speech and actually demoralized his troops; the Effect is thus subtracted from the Force Effectiveness.

Ulrich has the drop on the Darrians, and as an officer-in-training he has been taught to be an effective leader. Ulrich throws Leadership, rolling a nine, thus succeeding by one. The Sword Worlders now have a Force Effectiveness of four. The Darrians can make no Leadership throw, and thus remain at Force Effectiveness eight.

### Step Three

With both Force Strength and Force Effectiveness calculated, it is time for the confrontation to unfold. The force commanders each throw appropriate Tactics, and adding the total of the Tactics throw to their side's Force Effectiveness. The Effect of each roll, before adding it to Force Effectiveness, will then subtracted from the Force Strength of the opposing side at the end of Step Three. If any commander fails their Tactics throw, then the negative Effect of their throw is taken from their own Force Strength, as they have made a serious blunder in leading their men and potentially causing a disaster.

Additionally, if the new total of Force Effectiveness for one commander is higher than the new total Force Effectiveness of



the other commander, then the difference in their totals is subtracted from the total by which they must reduce their Force Strength at the end of Step Three. Remember to factor in such conditions as weather and low-light for the tactics roll. Following the resolution of Step Three, another Battle Turn begins.

Ulrich is competent in battle, with Tactics (naval) 1 and an Int DM of +1. He throws an 8, for an Effect of two. The Darrian force will have to subtract two from their Force Strength at the end of Step Three, reducing them to only three! However, the Darrian commander is a brilliant strategist, with

Tactics (naval) 3 and an Int DM of +2 and throws an 9, for an Effect of six for a total of 22 when added to his Force Effectiveness of eight. The Darrian commander's roll was eight higher than Ulrich's, meaning he commanded his men so well and utilized greater technology and training that his warship received virtually no damage. Ulrich will have to subtract six, due to the Effect of the Darrian commander's Tactics Throw, from his Force Strength, leaving him at only forty percent strength and with a lower Force Strength than the Darrians!

It seems that in this case discretion is the better part of valor. Ulrich will have to order a full retreat or face destruction. It looks like

# Mass Battles

*Ulrich will no longer be looking forward to being class valedictorian, if he is not immediately arrested and court-martialed!*

## Step Four

If the battle is not conclusively decided, then repeat Step Three until the fighting ceases. If the damage done to the sides of the battle changes the ratio of Force Strength, then the numbers advantage of the Force Effectiveness must be recalculated as in Step Two. As appropriate to the game session, each turn of battle can last for 1D6x10 minutes or 1D6 hours. Referees are encouraged to give rousing and exciting narration after each Battle Turn, bringing the battle to life.

## Battle Options

While the above rules can be used to hasten large-scale epic battles, it can be quite dry and does not involve the players directly in the action, unless a player character is the force commander. To flesh out the battle, additional options are presented below.

## Unit Types

Referees who want a force's composition of units to affect its performance may use this rule. While any fleet or army may be considered to have men filling each of these roles, in order to utilise these special units a force must have an "elite" unit, such as a crack scout team or medical staff with the highest training and best technology available. Any roll the unit is instructed to make is with a DM of zero. Referees should determine whether or not each force has any of the following special units:

**Boarding Team:** The unit may deploy to board an enemy ship or large vehicle. To determine whether the boarding craft reaches its target, roll against a difficulty of 9. Resolve the boarding using the simplified boarding attack rules in the *Traveller Main Rulebook*. If successful in capturing the ship then the ship is removed from the Force Strength of the opposing fleet.

**Engineers/Medics:** Each Battle Turn the unit may make a roll against a difficulty of 10. If successful then their force may increase its Force Strength by one, although this may never increase a Force Strength above its starting value, nor may it ever restore more than half of the damage done to a force.

**Heavy Artillery/Ortillery:** Each battle turn the unit may make a roll against a difficulty of 8. If successful then add the Effect of the roll to the damage done to the opposing force. This damage is separate from the final Tactics roll made by commanders.

**Scouts/Saboteurs:** Each Battle Turn the unit may make a roll against a difficulty of 10. If successful then they may grant a +1 DM bonus to their commander's Tactics roll or impose a -1 DM penalty on the opposing commander's Tactics roll.

## Traps

In the cases where traps could be utilised on the field of battle, this rule can be implemented. The person responsible for setting the trap throws a Difficult (-2) Trade (traps) or Mechanic (traps). The Effect of this roll is then added as a negative DM to the task of finding or avoiding the traps in battle. In space the traps are detected by a Sensors throw while on the ground Sensors or Recon may be used. Any character who spends a Battle Turn searching for traps may not participate in a battle encounter, as presented below.

If a trap is discovered, then it can be avoided, although the Referee may rule in certain circumstances that this will be impossible. If a trap is not discovered, then it may be deployed. A deployed trap goes off in the same phase that the commanders make Tactics rolls. The trap makes its own roll, adding the skill of the trap setter as a positive DM, or subtracting three in the case of an Unskilled Roll. The roll has an Average Difficulty and the Effect of the roll is added to the Force Effectiveness of the side for which the trap was utilised for that Battle Turn only.

## Tech Levels

The rules above present a general use for TLs in combat. However, if Referees desire deeper mechanics, then they can use this option. Referees may determine that a difference in TLs between the opposing sides grants a defensive bonus. In that case, the difference between the TLs is subtracted from the amount of damage dealt to the high TL force in the Step Three of a Battle Turn.

## Battle Encounters

One way to engage the players in a large-scale epic battle while still streamlining the process is to incorporate the Battle Encounters Table. Each player may roll 1D6 on the Battle Encounters Table once per Battle Turn in order to participate in the battle, as well as to possibly have change the outcome. Players roll on this table after Force Effectiveness has been determined, but before commanders make their Tactics roll. If a result describes a situation that does not apply to the current battle, such as referring to an allied ship in need of assistance when the players have only one ship in a battle, then the Referee may describe the action differently but can use the mechanical result of the roll.

If using the Traveller supplements *Mercenary* or *High Guard*, then the Referee may allow players to qualify for medals or citations if they make sufficiently high rolls from the Task Rolls on the Battle Encounters Tables, just as if they were generating a character. Depending on the odds facing the players, the Referee may choose to increase or decrease the difficulty of the Task Rolls on the tables. Many results will give a bonus to further Task Rolls later in the battle. This is to show the effects that come with success in battle.

## Engineers/Medics

Rather than roll on a specific Encounter Table, characters in this category may act as the Engineering/Medic special unit



above. However, when making their roll for the turn, the characters may use their Engineer or Medic Skills and the difficulty is 10. PCs use their own DM for the roll, rather than the DM of zero for non player character Engineer/Medic units. Every turn they must roll 2D6 and on a 2 or 3 they are injured.

## Gunnery/Artillery Battle Encounters Table

### D6 Result

- 1 **Heavy Fire!** The enemy is firing on your position and your only option is to return fire. You must throw Gunner or Heavy Weapons 10+ or be injured or your ship is hit. If successful then you may add half the Effect to your next Task Roll this battle.
- 2 **Pinned Comrade!** Enemy fire has trapped a comrade. If you can roll Gunner or Heavy Weapons 10+ then your return fire has eased pressure on your comrade. Gain a Contact.
- 3 **Furious Volley!** An enemy fire unit concentrates full power on your location. You must roll Gunner or Heavy Weapons against an enemy gunner who will have the same DM as you. If you fail you are injured or your ship is hit. If you succeed with an Effect of less than 3 the enemy will vow to get you next time. Gain a Rival. Success with an Effect of 3 or more will earn you accolades from your superiors.
- 4 **Missiles Inbound!** Enemy missiles are approaching. You must throw Gunner or Heavy Weapons 10+ or you are injured or your ship is hit. Half the Effect of your roll, if positive, is added to your next Task Roll in this battle.
- 5 **Suppressive Fire!** You target a strategic enemy unit. If you can throw Gunner or Heavy Weapons 9+ then the enemy force may not benefit from a special unit of your choice during this battle turn.
- 6 **Weak Point!** You direct your fire to the enemy force's weakest point. If you can throw Gunner or Heavy Weapons 10+ then you may add the Effect to your force's Force Effectiveness this turn and half the Effect to your next Task Roll this battle.

## Infantry Battle Encounters Table

### D6 Result

- 1 **Flanked!** An enemy light assault unit has the jump on you. Unless you can throw Gun Combat or Melee Combat 10+ you are injured. If you succeed then you add half your Effect to your next Task Roll in this battle.
- 2 **Wounded Comrade!** Your comrade has been hit. If you can throw Medic 9+ then you stabilise them and gain a Contact if they survive the battle.
- 3 **Intense Opponent!** An enemy soldier is gunning only for you. You must throw either Gun Combat or Melee Combat against the enemy, who will have the same DM as you. If you fail you are injured. If you succeed with an Effect less than 3 then the enemy escapes but remembers your face. Gain a Rival. Success with an Effect of 3 or more will earn you accolades from your superiors. And a dead opponent.
- 4 **Enemy Charge!** The opposing force is making a wild charge. You must throw Gun Combat or Melee Combat 10+ or be injured. Half the Effect of your roll, if positive, is added to your next Task Roll in this battle.
- 5 **Downed Enemy!** An enemy vehicle or soldier is disabled on the field near you. If you can throw Athletics 9+ followed by Gun Combat or Melee Combat 10+, then you have successfully reached and protected the enemy. At the end of the battle you will have a prisoner or may release them to gain a Contact.
- 6 **Forward!** Your unit must charge the enemy's weak point. You must throw Gun Combat or Melee Combat 10+ or be injured. If you succeed you may add the Effect of your roll to your army's Force Effectiveness this turn and half the Effect to your next Task Roll this battle.

## Marines

Marines aboard ships can resolve the success of their boarding attacks or their efforts to repel boarders using the simplified boarding

# Mass Battles

attack rules in the *Traveller Main Rulebook*. The Referee may decide whether a marine detachment is boarding or repelling. While engaged in combat the marines can use the Infantry Battle Encounters Table.

## Pilots/Drivers Battle Encounters Table

D6	Result
1	Outmanoeuvred! An enemy pilot has gained an advantageous position. If you can throw Pilot 10+ then you successfully evade the pilot. If successful you may add half the Effect to your next Task Roll in this battle. If you fail then the negative Effect is added to the enemy's Force Effectiveness this turn if you are in a warship, or if you are in a fighter your ship is hit by enemy fire.
2	Imperilled Comrade! An allied ship is in danger. If you can throw Pilot 9+ then you can position your ship to protect them. If you fail then roll 1D6 and on a 1-2 the negative Effect of your failed roll is added to the enemy's Force Effectiveness this turn.
3	Dogged Enemy! An opposing pilot has his heart set on you. You must throw Pilot against the opposing pilot, who will have the same DM as you. If you fail your ship is hit, and if you succeed with an Effect of less than 3 the enemy pilot escapes but holds a grudge after his vessel is shot down. Gain a Rival. Success with an Effect of 3 or more will earn you accolades from your superiors.
4	Incoming Fire! Enemy fire is endangering your vessel. You must throw Pilot 10+ or your ship is hit. Half the Effect of your roll, if positive, is added to your next Task Roll in this battle.
5	Disabled Enemy! An enemy vessel, or an enemy in a vacc suit, is drifting in space. If you can throw Pilot 9+ twice, then you have successfully reached the enemy and manoeuvred them away from the fight. After battle you will have a prisoner or you may choose to release them and gain a Contact.
6	Prime Opening! You have a chance to place your ship in position to damage the enemy. If you can throw Pilot 10+ then you succeed and may add the Effect to your force's Force Effectiveness this turn and half the Effect to your next Task Roll this battle.

## Saboteurs/Scouts

Rather than rolling on a specific Encounter Table, characters in this category may act as the Saboteurs/Scouts special unit above. However, when making their roll for the turn they instead roll either Pilot or Stealth 10+ and then either Sensors or Recon 10+. Player Characters use their own DM for the roll, rather than the DM of zero for NPC Saboteur/Scout units. Additionally, Saboteurs/Scouts may search for traps every Battle Turn. Every Battle Turn they must roll 2D6 and on a 2-4 they are injured.

TRAVELLER

# THE THIRD IMPERIUM



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# The Sick Knight's Tale

By Gareth Hanrahan

This is a mission for first- or second-rank Hieromonks, and is suitable for beginning characters. It is set in Normandy, close to Mont St-Michel.

## Précis

The Sick Knight of the title is Bayard, a Norman landowner and warrior. His young son Galot was sickly and weak when first born, and everyone believed the child would soon perish. When the boy miraculously recovered, Bayard gave thanks to God and vowed to go on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land with his servant Hamund. He left his estates in the care of his wife Flore and his brother Berolt. While Bayard was away, Berolt tried to claim his brother was surely dead and pressed Flore for her hand and her estates.

After three years, Bayard and Hamund returned from their journey, but now it was Bayard who was deathly ill. He was stabbed by a drunken sailor and the wound festered at sea. Again, though, the Lord seemed to intervene and Bayard was restored to health. Since that day, though, Bayard has changed – he banished faithful Hamund from his service and now quarrels with the local priest, Adero, over a relic that the knight brought back from the Holy Land.

The Order becomes involved when Adero writes to the Bishop of Avranches, complaining that Bayard is now accusing Adero of stealing the holy relic. Adero protests that he is utterly innocent and begs the bishop to intervene. The bishop sends in the Order...

## The Terrible Secret

When the infant Galot was dying, Flore turned to the boy's nursemaid Rosamund for help. The old woman was a witch

of some power and was able to restore the boy to health by sacrificing a horse. Since then, Flore has secretly supported Rosamund as the old woman rebuilt the local witch-cult.

When Bayard came back on the brink of death Flore once again begged Rosamund for help. If her husband died then his wicked brother Berolt would claim both Flore and the lands, and no doubt Galot would meet with a tragic accident, clearing the way for Berolt's own seed to inherit the estates. The knight's wounds were too great for his body to be healed but the witch was able to animate his body and entrap his soul. Bayard is dead, but he has not stopped moving. To maintain this state of half-death, Rosamund must regularly sacrifice animals to fuel her spells.

Worse, Rosamund has come to realise that her magic does not keep Bayard animated, it keeps him in check. Without her rituals, the necromantic spirit she bound to Bayard's body would take over, turning him into a murderous abomination. If her spells fail the thing she has created will kill her and everyone else in Chevas.

The reanimation magic is also vulnerable to disruption by other sorcery or faith. Flore stole the relic and blamed the priest to keep her dead husband away from the Christians. She arranged for him to quarrel with Hammund as only the retainer knew the true extent of Bayard's wounds...

## 1. The Bishop's Letter

The Hieromonks are called to the Tower of Gabriel in Mont St-Michel by the Prior of Letters, and given their mission.

## The Witch-Cult

The Witch-Cult follows the tradition of the Rider, a servant of the Lady of the Woods. They primarily worship the spirits of horses but also practice blood magic and human sacrifice.

**Subversion:** 20%. The cult is lead by Rosamund and counts about two dozen villagers as members. Lady Flore would not see herself as a member, but does effectively support the cult.

**Fanaticism:** 40%. The witch-cult is still rebuilding itself after being almost eradicated by the Order.

**Concealment:** 30%. Rosamund has hidden her own traces moderately well but the cult's use of magic and sacrifice is too extensive to conceal.

**Force:** 30%. Two dozen sturdy peasants, equipped with better weapons thanks to money from Flore.

**Supernatural:** 50%. Rosamund is a powerful witch and she has several spell-using acolytes. The cult has necromantic powers, raising the dead if needed. Bayard is also technically a supernatural asset of the cult.

## Rituals

Once every few days, cult acolytes take a cow from the herds (or, if the magic needs special reinforcement, a horse), lead it into the woods, and ritually sacrifice it by cutting its throat, then removing its heart. The heart is then brought to a secret altar in the woods. These regular sacrifices maintain the magic animating Bayard.

Every two weeks, the cult meets at that altar for a secret ceremony. Rosamund presides over these gatherings.

## The Prior of Letters

*It is after sext on the fourteenth day of September and the rains wash over the Mont St-Michel like the tears of God. The sky is a grey cloak, and all the spires and towers of the fortress have become little mountains wreathed in silver streams. A young initiate limps hurriedly towards you. ‘Brothers, Master Benjamin asks that you attend him in the Tower immediately.’*

The initiate, Jarod, was wounded in a training exercise a few days ago and has been made one of Benjamin’s aides until the wound heals.

*Inside the Tower of Gabriel, it is mercifully warm – Benjamin hails from the hotter climes of Spain and keeps a good fire burning in the grate. He peers blindly at you as you enter. ‘The Hieromonks,*

*Master’ says the initiate. ‘I know that’ snaps Benjamin. ‘Now run and get more wood. It’s freezing in here. Run, run!’*

*The old monk gestures vaguely that you should sit for a moment but there’s no space to do so – every desk, chair and other surface in the tower is covered in books and documents. Benjamin fumbles around as if looking for a letter, then mutters a curse under his breath and turns back to you. ‘Listen well, Brothers. Our friend the Bishop of Avranches has requested we intercede in a matter. He received a letter from a priest in the parish of Chevas, one Father Adero. It’s around here somewhere, but no matter, I can recite the relevant sections from memory.*

*Let me see, what was it.*

*Holy father, begging your indulgence, blah blah blah, eternal humble servant and other pieties. Ah. “Lord Bayard of Chevas returned from his pilgrimage to the Holy Land not three months ago, bringing with him a relic of great holiness. Truly, the place is blessed, for the good knight brought back a stone from the very sepulchre where Our Saviour lay buried for three days before the miracle of the Resurrection, a stone from the very tomb of Joseph of Arimathea! I begged Bayard that the stone be brought to the church for feast-days and he initially seemed agreeable to my plea, but now the holy stone has vanished and Bayard accuses me of the crime. I am wholly innocent”... and then there’s an awful lot more protesting about how innocent this Father Adero is and how cruelly he’s being treated by this Bayard.*

*You may think it a trifling matter, and in truth, it may be exactly that – but the bishop has asked that we recover the relic and find the culprit. Chevas is no more than three days from the shore, so you should make haste.’*

Benjamin ushers the characters out of the Tower. If they have questions, ask the Master of Initiates or check the archives or something.

## Preparation

The characters can pick up any equipment they need from the Order quartermasters. If they really want to load up on explosives and crusader blades, they can.

## Research

Clever players may wish to check the Order archives before departing. Call for a Lore (Occult), Lore (History) or Lore (Regional) check. If successful, the character finds a report written by another Hieromonk two centuries ago, describing her efforts to eradicate a



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witch-cult in the woods near Chevas. The witch-cult practised animal and even human sacrifice, and had an altar in a clearing in the woods. Unfortunately, the records are incomplete and do not give the location of the altar.

## 2. The Village of Chevas

*As you approach the village, the road winds through a forest. You hear a hunting horn, and the thunder of hoofbeats, and then a man stumbles out of the woods just ahead of you. He is bloodied and breathing heavily; he has a knife in one hand. 'Help me! Oh merciful God, help me! Hide me!'*

The young man is obviously a poacher; his name is Eric. The forests nearby are the preserve of Lord Bayard. Eric is being chased by Bayard's brother, Berolt, and some of Berolt's men. The characters have only a few seconds to react before...

*A trio of horsemen follow the fleeing peasant out of the woods. At the head of the trio is a bearded man in fine clothes. 'Where is that dog? I'll see him hang for stealing from my brother's lands!'*

The bearded noble is Berolt; he is accompanied by two of his churlish thugs.

If the characters protect Eric, then Berolt will try to intimidate them into handing the poacher over, but he doesn't care enough to start a fight with some holy men over some peasant boy. (If the characters are not wearing monk's habits, then Berolt may be less willing to compromise.) If they hand Eric over, then Berolt smashes the young man's face with a mailed gauntlet as a punishment for poaching, but does not kill him. The point of this little encounter is to introduce Berolt as a morally questionable figure.

If the characters question Eric, see *The Peasant's Tale*, below. If they convince Berolt to calm down and question him, see *The Wicked Uncle's Tale* in section 3.

### Arrival

*The estates here are clearly prosperous; the harvest this year is bountiful and there is good hunting in the surrounding woods. The manor of Bayard – a small castle surrounded by a wooden palisade – is on a hillside above the town. The small village church is just ahead, across the graveyard.*

Around two hundred people live in the village. The place seems quiet and relatively untroubled. The characters' first destination will probably be the small church, where they can stay with Father Adero.

### Questioning Witnesses

Depending on your tastes, the various tales can be obtained through roleplaying, through Influence, Insight and Streetwise tests, or through a combination of the two. Asking discreet questions is the best approach to solving the mystery of Chevas – charging into Bayard's manor will just anger the lord.

### The Village Priest's Tale

Father Adero welcomes the characters and offers them shelter. He assumes initially they are monks from Avranches who were sent by the bishop, and will be confused and alarmed if they are carrying obvious weapons or ask too many questions about monsters or the supernatural. His account of what is going on in the village is tinged with self-righteous indignation at being accused of stealing a holy relic, but the characters can pick up the following clues from his tale:

- Bayard is – or was, anyway – a good Christian man. He went on

pilgrimage with his loyal retainer, Hammund, to the Holy Land to give thanks to God for healing his son Galot.

- Galot is now seven years old, and is still sickly.
- While Bayard was away, his brother Berolt tried to claim the estates – and Bayard's wife, Flore! Berolt was as venal and sinful as his brother was good. Why, if anyone were to steal the relic and sell it, it would surely be Berolt.
- Bayard returned a few months ago. He was very sick – a wound he suffered on the journey home had festered – and he believed he would soon perish. He called on Adero to hear his confession and administer the last rites.
- Soon after that, Bayard made a miraculous recovery. Since then, though, he has acted strangely. He quarrelled with his brother (no great surprise to anyone), but also dismissed loyal Hammund from his service. The last straw was accusing Adero of stealing the relic.
- The relic is a stone from the holy sepulchre, the size of a man's fist. Adero saw it only once, when giving the final blessing to Bayard. It was kept in a locked chest in the small chapel at Bayard's mansion.

If asked about the occult, Adero says the peasants do complain of stolen animals and strange fires at night, but personally he blames Berolt and his ruffians. While Bayard was away, Berolt acquired a number of roguish brutes and hellions as friends.

## The Retainer's Tale

Hammund can be found in the village easily, especially if a character has a keen nose. Since being fired by his master, the retainer has become a drunk. Buying him a drink is the easy way to get his tale; sobering him up takes longer, but gets a more coherent account of his adventures in the Holy Land. If questioned while drunk, then intersperse the following facts through rambling tales of heroism, betrayal, and loyalty spurned.

- It all started when young Galot was born. The child was small and sickly – little wonder, that Flore is from Burgundy, and they are strange down there. She was never a good Norman wife.
- Bayard begged God to spare his son's life and promised to pray in the Holy Land if the Lord intervened. The Lord smiled on Bayard's prayers, and as soon as Galot recovered, Bayard made preparations to travel to Jerusalem.
- They travelled by road to Venice, and then took ship to the Levant. There were many adventures along the way, many of which Hammund patently made up (*'and then the sea-dragon attacked us...'*)
- En route, they heard that Jerusalem had fallen and never made to the holy city. In compensation, Bayard purchased the relic from a Jew who sells such things.
- All told, they were gone for more than two years.
- On the journey back, Bayard quarrelled with a Spanish sailor over a game of dice; the Spaniard stabbed Bayard in the forearm.

The wound was infected, and proved beyond Hammund's skill to heal. By the time they reached port and could find a doctor, the rot had set in. Bayard believed he was dying, and begged Hammund to bring him home so he could see his wife and son one last time.

- Bayard made it home alive. Lady Flore was heartbroken to see her husband so ill, and would only let a few people into the manor – a few trusted servants like Hammund and Galot's nurse Rosamund, the priest Adero, and Bayard's brother Berolt.
- Soon after he recovered his strength, Bayard called Hammund before him and said that Hammund was too old and weak to continue as Bayard's shieldbearer. He was given a cottage and a few measly coins and sent away. It's not fair!

If questioned about the occult, then Hammund attributes the holy influence of the stone with keeping Bayard alive. Perhaps the stone was stolen by some vile cur who wishes to hurt the master?

If the characters specifically mention animal deaths, then Hammund recalls a strange incident that took place when Galot was ill. Bayard's prize warhorse, Thunder, was found dead in his stall. The animal's body was drained of all blood. The whole tragedy was forgotten as Galot began to recover a few day's later.

## The Peasant's Tale

Asking Eric the poacher – or any other villager – about events in the village elicits a confused tale. Most people agree on a few facts, but there are plenty of differing opinions and wild rumours (which are noted in brackets).

- Young Galot was very sick, and it is a miracle he is still alive. (The boy was cursed by a witch/Berolt tried to kill the boy/Berolt's actually the boy's father/it is the same illness that struck down Bayard.)
- Bayard brought back *something* from the Holy Land. (It was a Holy Stone/the Grail/a piece of the True Cross/he never went near the Holy Land, he was whoring in Italy after being cuckolded by his own brother/it was medicine for Galot.)
- Berolt was riding around the village like he was lord of the manor while Bayard was away. (Berolt is a rapist and a monster/ he is not so bad/he arranged to have Bayard stabbed, hoping to inherit the estates/Flore is having an affair with Berolt, and he was in her bedchamber every night while Bayard was away.)
- Father Adero is a good man (he stole the relic because he was jealous of Bayard/he used it to curse Galot/ he used it to curse Bayard/it is not a relic, it is treasure.)
- There are witches in the woods. Sometimes, they steal cattle. (It is not the witches, it is Berolt's men/ Berolt's men *are* witches/Berolt's men are werewolves, and so is he!/ Witches *are* werewolves, too!)

## The Old Man's Tale

If the characters look for someone with knowledge of the area around the village, then everyone points them towards One-Eared Maric. This old woodsman knows the land better than anyone. Maric is Eric's father, so his initial reaction to the characters depends on how they handled

# The Sick Knight's Tale

the confrontation between Eric and Berolt earlier. If they handed his son over to Berolt, then Maric spits in their faces and refuses to speak to them unless they somehow atone for their deeds. If they saved Eric, then he welcomes them in and treats them to some twice-poached venison.

Maric remembers his grandfather telling tales of the bad old days, when the folk of the village were not good Christians. They worshipped a white horse in a secret forest glade in a section of the woods said to be haunted. Grandfather even showed him that woodland, once. It stank of death.

Maric will bring the characters to the woodland, but only if they pay him well. If the characters head for the woods, see Section 5.

## Clues in the Village

Characters can spy on the herds around the village at night to catch the cultists stealing cattle. They can then either interrogate the cultists or follow them to the altar in the woods. If they try interrogation, remember that the cultist's Fanaticism gives them a bonus to resisting intimidation and torture. See Section 4, *The Woods*.

## 3. The Manor of Bayard

The manor is a small castle, home to Bayard's family and a handful of guards and servants. Most of the guards are now loyal to either Berolt or are secretly members of the cult.

Unless the characters can come up with a good reason for them to be allowed to speak to Bayard, the guards will turn them away at the gate. Possible justifications include:

- They are representatives of the

bishop of Avranches, here to investigate the accusation of theft against Father Adero.

- They are pilgrims, come to see the newly recovered relic.
- Here is a large bribe.

## The Sick Knight's Tale

Bayard resembles the ruins of a castle after a blaze; the walls and battlements are still standing, but they have been ravaged from within. He is terribly gaunt, hollow-eyed and slow of speech. His shield-arm is immobile, a legacy of the wound that nearly killed him. The only time he shows any emotion at all is when speaking of his beloved son, Galot. Bayard never receives visitors without his wife being present; he admits that after his illness, he is not as attentive as he once was, so he relies on his wife Flore to help him run his estates. Throughout a conversation with Bayard, Flore will be there prompting and helping him.

Courtesy checks are needed to deal properly with Bayard; the knight does not accept impoliteness. Those who anger him, especially by insulting his wife's honour, will be thrown out.

Bayard's tale resembles that of Hammund, but with more honesty and fewer tall tales

- After the Lord saved his son, he vowed to pray in Jerusalem.
- The fall of the holy city put an end to that; he considered fighting against the Saracen, but felt he had a duty to return home first.
- He purchased the Holy Stone from a Jewish mystic who assured him it was the very stone on which the

saviour rested his head in death.

- He was attacked by a drunken Spaniard on board ship, wounded, and took gravely ill.
- He recovered his strength on seeing Flora and Galot.
- He is displeased by his brother's actions in his absence, and loathes most of Berolt's followers. Things will have to change.
- The Holy Stone was in the chapel in the castle. The priest was the only person to visit the castle between Bayard's return and the stone disappearing.

He disavows any knowledge of witchcraft or sorcery. He has seen only one supernatural occurrence, when God healed his infant son.

Anyone who makes a successful Medicine test in Bayard's presence notes the smell of rotting flesh; his wound is still rotting.

## The Wife's Tale

Flora, Bayard's wife, is a prim, delicate woman, whose meek appearance conceals a surprisingly hard personality. She prefers to work through her husband or other figureheads, but she is much more willing to do what is necessary to survive or to protect her family – such as making deals with witches. If interrogated by the players, she tries to defer any questions to Bayard. While talking to the players, she sews nervously. She is a skilled seamstress, spending most of her time making clothes for Gelot.

Despite her reliance on Flore and her debt to the cult, Flore remains a faithful Christian. Through good roleplaying



and a helping of good Catholic guilt, the characters might be able to get her to confess her sins. She turned to Rosamund to save her child, and then later to save her husband, but if reminded that she has imperilled both their souls, then she could be convinced to turn on the cult.

If interrogated, she claims:

- Gelot's recovery was a miracle, as was that of Bayard
- She denies any suggestion that she was involved with Berolt; her brother-in-law is a... dear friend, nothing more. She looks at Bayard as she says this, as if begging him to say something. A successful Insight test suggests she was expecting him to give her permission to complain about Berolt.

See also *Flore's Misdirection*.

### The Boy's Tale

Young Gelot is seven years old. For a miracle child, he is still sickly and weak. Unlike his father Bayard and his uncle, Gelot has no aptitude for combat and spends most of his time in his room, playing with his nurse Rosamund.

### The Nursemaid's Tale

Rosamund is the villain of this adventure but the characters first encounter her as a seemingly innocent nursemaid in Gelot's rooms. Rosamund is a large, motherly peasant woman with a placid smiling face. Her grandfather told her about the black monks who wiped out the previous cult, so if the characters are not disguised, Rosamund will recognise them as a threat before they find her – see Section 5, *The Witch Cult*.

If questioned, Rosamund claims to know nothing. She did her best to heal Galot when he was sick as an infant,

and admits to using some folk charms that her grandmother taught her, but obviously it was God's intercession which saved him. She fears Berolt and his men, and suspects one of them may have stolen the Holy Stone.

### The Wicked Uncle's Tale

Berolt may recognise the characters if they confronted him on the road outside Chevas; if so, his initial reaction to them is likely to be one of anger. He will only answer questions if forced to do so, or if he believes his cause will be helped by them (or if the characters accuse his men of stealing the Holy Stone).

Berolt's tale is the obverse of his brother's account. According to Berolt:

- Gelot was healed, but it was hardly a miracle. Look at the boy – he is a weak little runt still. Berolt tried to toughen him up while his father was away, but Gelot will never make a good warrior.
- While Bayard was away, Berolt and his men protected the family estates. These are dangerous times; without Berolt, Chevas and the surrounding lands would have been conquered thrice over.
- When Bayard returned wounded, Berolt was ready to take over the estates and marry Flore, but he was overjoyed when his brother recovered. Does anyone doubt that he loves his brother?
- The Holy Stone is, in Berolt's opinion, a useless lump of rock. Bayard is a great knight, but he was never the sharpest of wits; in the past, he gave money to dozens of beggars and prophets and supposed saints. No doubt the man who sold him the stone had a

dozen identical relics waiting for the next poor fool.

If the characters question Berolt after Flore's Misdirection, then the knight continues to mock the Holy Stone, saying none of his men would be foolish enough to believe in the stone or try to sell it. He is a sinner and an unjust, unchaste man, but he is no liar.

### The Brute's Tale

Berolt has a half-dozen retainers – mercenaries, brigands, warriors – who serve as his thugs or drinking buddies. Their names are Alain, Roderic, Clerebald, Folcard, Gefroy and Loyset, but they are all much the same, being brutish thugs who are for nothing except wenching, drinking and fighting. Since Bayard's return, they have found Chevas a lot more boring.

If questioned, any of the brutes gives much the same story – they did not take the Holy Stone, have nothing to do with any of the strange events in the village, and preferred things when Berolt was ruling the roost and they could do whatever they wanted.

### The Stable-Master's Tale

The characters may wish to question Bayard's ostler, Bors, especially if Hammund told them about the strange killing of the warhorse Thunder six years ago. Bors remembers the incident vividly – the horses are closer to him than children.

- It was indeed when young Galot was an ailing infant.
- Thunder was attacked during the night. The attacker cut the horse's neck twice and the animal bled to death.
- Bizarrely, there was no sign that

# The Sick Knight's Tale

the horse fought back or tried to escape, and Thunder was a mean beast. It is as though he simply gave himself up to the knife.

- Bors tried to find the attacker, but everyone was distracted with Galot's recovery. The one clue he found was a small wooden cup, covered in blood, as if the attacker collected the horse's blood.

A Lore (Occult) test suggests that the blood of a strong stallion could be used in a potion to renew health or strength.

## Searching the Manor

To search the manor, the characters need to either get permission from Bayard (unlikely, as his strings are being pulled by his wife, who has every reason not to let the characters poke around) or do it in secret, by avoiding the guards. The latter course requires a Very Hard (-40%) Stealth check during the day, or a Difficult (-20%) test at night. If this test is failed, the character will be discovered by one of the guards and have to talk or fight his way out or else be arrested.

A character who makes it past the guards can make a Perception test to search the castle. If the test is successful or a critical result, pick one of the clues below for the character to discover.

- **Flore & Rosamund:** Flore meets with Rosamund at night – which is rather suspicious, as they could easily meet during the day. A character who eavesdrop on their hurried conversation hears Flore worrying about her husband's 'black moods' and Rosamund promising that she will try to deal with the matter, and warning Flore to beware of the black monks.
- **Rosamund and the Servants:**

Rosamund meets with two of the servants, who are secret members of her witch-cult, and sends them off to 'get another offering'.

- **Bayard:** A character spying on Bayard when he is alone learns that the sick knight suffers from spells where he is a lunatic, raving about shadows and the ghost of horses.
- **The Holy Stone:** A character who gets a critical Perception test or searches a storeroom where Lady Flore keeps her sewing materials, they find... the Holy Stone, wrapped in swaddling clothes. The evidence would suggest Flore took the stone, but there is no proof of this.

## Flore's Misdirection

As soon as the characters' investigation starts targeting the castle instead of Father Adero, then Flore gets worried and tries to deflect their suspicion. She has the Holy Stone, kept well away from Bayard, but she needs to get it even further away. Her plan, therefore, is to plant the stone amid the belongings of one of Berolt's followers, and then hint to the Hieromonks that they should investigate the thugs.

## Bayard's Madness

This event triggers if the characters press Bayard too much, attack Flore, or if the action is sagging. The spells that control the spirits within Bayard temporarily fail. The knight begins raving about ghost horses that dragged his soul back from the land of the dead, all awash in the blood, the blood. He does not recognise anyone except Flore, and may mistake the characters for Saracens, thieves or even spirits come to steal his soul. In his raving, he may give away important clues (*'the witch, she did this to me! Blood, more blood, chains of*

*blood to keep HIM bound in my head!'*), or attack the characters.

[[[ Box text ]]]

## The Holy Stone

This fist-sized lump of stone has no supernatural properties whatsoever. It is a fake relic. It does exude a faint but pleasant smell of spices and oils, reminiscent of the balms used in preparing the dead, but that is because the stone was soaked in a bath of perfume to give it a proper 'odour of sanctity' before being sold to the gullible Bayard. Other than the smell, it is just an ordinary stone.

[[[ End box ]]]

## 4. Into the Woods

Characters may choose to investigate the haunted woods. If they go in, they may not come back...

### Sacrifices

The cult has been sacrificing cattle to fuel Rosamund's spells. The cows are taken from the fields, led a short distance into the cover of the trees, and then their necks are cut and their blood drained into a bowl. The heart is then removed to be placed on the altar deeper in the woods. Usually, the cultists butcher the cow in an amateur fashion to salvage whatever meat they can from the carcass; if pressed for time, they leave the meat for scavengers.

### Wandering the Woods

If the characters have Maric the woodsman with them, then he can guide them to the altar in the woods. Otherwise, they have to make their own way through the forest – a perilous proposition. The Hieromonks must make a Hard (-40%) Track or Lore (Regional) check to find their way; if this check is failed, the characters are lost for 1D4+1 hours.

## The White Horse

Call for Perception tests. The character who succeeds by the largest margin catches a glimpse of a beautiful white horse – perhaps even a unicorn – moving through the trees. This is the manifestation of one of the cult's spirits. The horse drifts ahead of the characters through the dark woods, as if guiding them to safety. In truth, the horse-spirit intends to lure the characters into an ambush. Buried in the dark woods are the remains of previous generations of cultists, sworn to defend the sacred ground of the cult. These undead are animated by the same spirits as those which maintain Bayard's half-life; they are shambling skeletons, encrusted with bog-muck and held suspended by invisible hands. Many of the corpses show signs of having died violently, as they were killed originally by the Hieromonks of two centuries previously.

If the characters follow the horse, it leads them right into the middle of the worst possible place for an ambush – the dead attack the characters when they are in the middle of a marshy section, where all movement is reduced by 50% and all DEX-based skill tests are penalised by 20%. The undead are not affected by these penalties.

If they do not follow the horse, the spirit tries to possess one of the Hieromonks and runs off with his body, luring the other characters into the ambush.

There are three zombies per player character. The zombies try to grapple the characters and drag them down into the mire.

## The Altar

The cult's altar is a slab of white stone at the foot of an ancient oak tree. Nailed to the oak tree are the skulls of dozens, perhaps hundreds, of horses. The white stone is marred by a small pile of red leathery cow hearts. These hearts are weirdly shrunken and dry, as if sucked clean of life.

During the day, there is no-one here. At night, a pair of cultists from the village may visit the altar site to leave offerings of hearts to fuel Rosamund's spells. Once every two weeks, the whole cult gathers here under Rosamund (such gatherings are the best time for ambitious characters to round up all the heretics).

Damaging the altar or taking the cow hearts will disrupt Rosamund's spells; depending on how much damage the players do, this will result in either Bayard going temporarily mad, or escalating matters up to Section 6, *Knight of the Dead*.

## 5. The Witch-Cult

The cult is not going to stand idly by while the Hieromonks investigate their evil deeds. The cult's responses are detailed below, from their first reaction to their final desperate strike. Use a response if the characters are treading too close to the cult, or if the action is slowing down.

## Spying on the Characters

Rosamund was told a few stories in her youth about the black-robed monks who wiped out the cult two centuries ago. If the characters arrive in town wearing their robes and run around investigating the cult, then she remembers these tales and realises the cult is once again under attack. She orders her followers to spy on the characters. The Hieromonks will be watched everywhere they go by cult members. In the village or around the castle, it is easy enough for the cultists to watch the monks without being spotted – Hieromonks may make a Hard (-40%) Insight or Streetwise check to realise they are being watched. Out in the woods or roads, though, it is much harder for cult agents to follow without being spotted – use opposed Stealth vs Perception checks.



## The Cursed Horse

The cult has a measure of control over horses thanks to their worship of equine spirits. If the characters are riding at any point, then a hidden cultist will use a spell to command the horse to bolt, dragging the rider on a wild and likely suicidal ride. The character may make a Hard (-40%) Ride check to drag the horse back under control, or a Hard (-40%) Athletics check to leap to safety, taking only 1d6 damage if successful. If either check fails, the horse hurls itself and the rider into a ditch, inflicting 3D6 damage to the rider.

If the characters do not have horses, then the cultist uses magic to command a cart horse to charge towards the characters and furiously trample them.

## Horrors of the Dead

If the cult is absolutely desperate – the characters have captured Rosamund or the cult altar, or are obviously about to

# The Sick Knight's Tale

do so – then they have no choice but to turn to the dead. The cultists call on the zombies in the forest to attack the characters. Calling up the dead in this fashion outside the cult's sacred woodland requires great power, and that means multiple human sacrifices. If possible, the cult will use captured Hieromonks, but more likely they will be forced to use innocents – non player characters like Father Adero or Hammund are obvious targets.

The summoned undead stumble into town and surround wherever the characters are (probably the village church or the castle). There are five undead per player character. If the situation has escalated to this degree, the characters will most likely have to eliminate everyone in the village.

## 6. Knight of the Dead

Depending on how clever the players are, there are two ways to enter the end-game of this adventure. If the players are cautious, subtle and put the clues together, they can work out that Rosamund is the source of both Galot's and Bayard's miraculous recoveries and confront the old witch in secret. If the characters blunder around and alert the cult to their presence, then they will have to hack their way through waves of zombies before confronting Rosamund.

### Confronting Rosamund

The best way to confront the witch is to catch her unawares. They could, for example, shadow her when she travels from the castle to the woods and put a knife to her throat there. Rosamund spends most of her days at the castle,

taking care of Galot. (The characters really want to avoid confronting Rosamund in Galot's presence – pulling swords in the same room as a seven-year-old child results in the characters being attacked by Bayard *and* Berolt and all their guards and thugs).

Rosamund is not the most diabolical or strong-willed of cult leaders. She will use all her spells against the characters, and will even use Galot as a hostage if she has to, but she has no grand plan for conquering the world. She was a wise-woman with a few healing spells learned from the old cult, nothing more, until Flore begged her to rescue Galot from death's door. Really, she is in over her head. The resurrected Bayard is almost beyond her ability to control – it was one thing to pluck a sick child out of the jaws of death, but Bayard was truly dead when she brought him back, and she has bound him to a dark spirit to keep him alive. Given a choice, she would let Bayard die, but if she does so, she loses the support of Flore and hands the domain over to Berolt. Her plan, until the Hieromonks show up, is to keep Bayard alive for another ten years at most, until Galot comes of age and Berolt has no claim left.

If the characters confront Rosamund, her response is dictated by the actions of the characters. If they are conciliatory and open to negotiation, then she outlines her problem – the risen Bayard requires constant spells to keep the death spirit under control, and if she stops the sacrifices, he will become a monster. If the characters attack her, she tries to use innocents like Galot as a shield and blasts them with *palsies*.

### Flore's Plea

Again, if the characters are getting too close to the cult and Flore's attempts at misdirection fail, then the noblewoman may act to protect her family and Rosamund. She sends the nurse away under guard, and then summons the Hieromonks to meet her in secret. She tells her version of events – the nursemaid saved Galot using magic, and did the same to Bayard. It was sinful, but it saved her family and her husband's lands from his cruel brother, Berolt. Bayard's return has gone wrong, and in time Rosamund will find a way to let him pass on without giving the death spirit control of his body, but until then she begs the characters to let the cult be.

### The Knight of the Dead

The final battle of the adventure can be triggered in several ways:

- The characters anger Bayard so much that his control slips, letting the death spirit have free reign over his body.
- The characters arrest or kill Rosamund or the lesser cultists, or destroy the altar. Without regular sacrifices, the spells controlling the death-spirit slips over time.
- The characters work out or are told that Bayard must die.
- Bayard is placed under great stress – say, by having his castle surrounded by zombies.

In any of these cases, Bayard becomes the Knight of the Dead when the death spirit takes control. His skin sloughs off in places, revealing the rot within. Tendrils of dark energy snake around his limbs, animating him like a puppet. His voice echoes as though coming

from deep underground. His strength increases tenfold, and he hungers for death and mayhem. Left unchecked, the Knight of the Dead will slaughter everyone in town, beginning with his own family.

The Knight of the Dead is a powerful foe, as he can only be killed by utterly dismembering Bayard's body. If the characters have not yet defeated the zombies, then the Knight takes control of the undead, too.

### Defeating Bayard

The most direct route is to utterly destroy Bayard's body, but this is a difficult proposition – the Knight is a skilled and supernaturally strong warrior. There are several ways the characters can approach the battle without directly confronting the knight.

- **Alliance with Berolt:** Berolt's reaction to events depends on what he thinks of the Hieromonks. If the characters have antagonised him, then he may even blame them for the outbreak of supernatural activity and assume that the best thing to do is kill them. Otherwise, they may be able to convince him to lead his men against the zombies, the cult and his brother's walking corpse. If the characters do not convince Berolt to aid them, then he and his men stay hiding inside the castle.

- **Disrupting the spells:** If the binding spell slipped, then it can slip further. Rosamund had Flore hide the Holy Stone because the Christian faith weakens the spells she placed on Bayard. If the characters can lure Bayard to the village church, he becomes vulnerable to Wounds. He must also make a Persistence check in addition to any other effects when Divine Magic is used nearby; if this check is failed, the Knight of the Dead is stunned for 1D3 Combat Actions.

- **Sacrifice:** The characters can aid Rosamund in performing a sacrifice, or enact the rites themselves to rebind the death spirit. Doing so correctly restores Bayard to sanity, at least for a while.

- **Reaching Bayard:** Another option is to try to reach Bayard's own soul within his dead body. This takes excellent roleplaying to appeal to the Knight's better nature. Bringing out Hammund to remind Bayard of his oath to see his family one last time before he died, or showing the effects of his horrific transformation on Galot can help with this approach. If the characters do enough to reach Bayard, then the knight kills himself.

## 7. Aftermath

The characters' mission was to prove Father Adero's innocence of the crime of stealing the Holy Stone. They must also decide how to deal with the cult – they can just eliminate Rosamund and destroy the altar in the woods, in which case the momentarily resurgent cult will fall back into obscurity, or they can wipe it out completely by destroying the altar, killing Rosamund and the other cultists, and digging up all the graves in the wood and scattering the bones.

The other question that the characters must resolve is the fate of Bayard's family. With Bayard finally dead, Berolt will try to seize the lands and his brother's wife, as is his right. Flore fears that Berolt will be a cruel lord and husband, and especially worries that he will have Galot murdered to make way for his own heir. (If Berolt learns that Galot was cured by the same black magic that resurrected Bayard, the probability of Galot meeting with an unfortunate accident becomes a certainty.) However, the Hieromonks have no grounds for interfering with the village as soon as the cult is gone; Berolt may be a cruel brute, but his evil is that of men, not devils, and there is no supernatural or heretical component. The only impediment to leaving Berolt in charge is the players' own consciences.

# The Sick Knight's Tale

## Appendix: Characters

### Bayard

The crusading knight has returned from the Holy Land, mortally wounded. His body is sustained by necromantic spirits and continues to rot from within. The values in brackets are for Bayard once he becomes the Knight of the Dead. In this form, he is immune to the effects of wounds and can be killed only by reducing his chest, abdomen or head to a negative hit point total equal to *three times* their starting positive total.

Bayard		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	14 (24)	1–3	Right Leg	5/5 (5/7)
CON	13 (23)	4–6	Left Leg	5/5 (5/7)
SIZ	12	7–9	Abdomen	5/6 (5/8)
INT	10	10–12	Chest	5/7 (5/9)
POW	13	13–15	Right Arm	5/4 (5/6)
DEX	10	16–18	Left Arm	5/4 (5/6)
CHA	14	19–20	Head	5/5 (5/7)

Combat Actions	2	Armour: Chain (5 points)
Damage Modifier	+1D2 (+1D6)	
Magic Points	13	
Movement	8m	
Strike Rank	+11 (+4 in armour)	Notable Skills: Athletics 49% (59%), Courtesy 54%, Influence 62%, Language (French) 70%, Language (Latin) 20%, Ride 53%, Resilience 40% (50%), Perception 43%, Persistence 55%, Survival 43%, Track 42%

### WEAPONS

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Sword & Shield	M	L	84% (94%)	1D8	4/8
Shield	L	S	84% (94%)	1D4	6/12

## Berolt

Berolt is not as skilled a warrior as his brother but he is still a fine combatant.

<b>Berolt</b>		<b>1D20</b>	<b>Hit Location</b>	<b>AP/HP</b>
STR	15	1–3	Right Leg	2/6
CON	12	4–6	Left Leg	2/6
SIZ	14	7–9	Abdomen	5/7
INT	9	10–12	Chest	5/8
POW	10	13–15	Right Arm	2/5
DEX	10	16–18	Left Arm	2/5
CHA	8	19–20	Head	5/6

Combat Actions	2	Armour: Chain & Leather
Damage Modifier	+1D2	
Magic Points	10	
Movement	8m	
Strike Rank	+11 (+6 in armour)	Notable Skills: Athletics 60%, Courtesy 30%, Dance 40%, Influence 42%, Language (French) 70%, Ride 56%, Resilience 45%, Perception 33%, Persistence 35%, Survival 43%, Track 40%

### WEAPONS

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Sword & Shield	M	L	70%	1D8	4/8
Shield	L	S	70%	1D4	6/12

## Rosamund

The de facto head of the witch cult, Rosamund's powers are comparatively limited. It is only her connection to Lady Flore that makes her really dangerous.

<b>Rosamund</b>		<b>1D20</b>	<b>Hit Location</b>	<b>AP/HP</b>
STR	8	1–3	Right Leg	0/4
CON	10	4–6	Left Leg	0/4
SIZ	9	7–9	Abdomen	0/5
INT	12	10–12	Chest	0/6
POW	17	13–15	Right Arm	0/3
DEX	13	16–18	Left Arm	0/3
CHA	14	19–20	Head	0/4

Combat Actions	3	Armour: None
Damage Modifier	+0	Equipment: None
Magic Points	17	
Movement	8m	Sorcery Spells: Animate (Wood), Command (Horse), Hinder, Intuition, Invisibility, Palsy, Regenerate
Strike Rank	+14	Notable Skills: Evade 40%, Influence 40%, Insight 60%, Spirit Binding 50%, Spirit Walking 60%, Survival 40%, Track 60%, Tradition (The Rider) 74

### WEAPONS

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Knife	S	S	33%	1D3	3/4

# The Sick Knight's Tale

## Zombies

The risen dead servants of the cult. Like the Knight of the Dead, the zombies are immune to the effects of wounds; to destroy one, a character must reduce the hit points of the zombie's Head, Chest or Abdomen to a negative total equal to three times its starting positive hit points.

Zombies		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	15	1-3	Right Leg	1/3
CON	5	4-6	Left Leg	1/3
SIZ	10	7-9	Abdomen	1/4
INT	1	10-12	Chest	1/5
POW	0	13-15	Right Arm	1/2
DEX	7	16-18	Left Arm	1/2
CHA	3	19-20	Head	1/3

Combat Actions	1
Damage Modifier	+0
Magic Points	0
Movement	6m
Strike Rank	+5

Armour: Rotting flesh, 1 point

Equipment: None

Traits: Formidable Natural Weapons

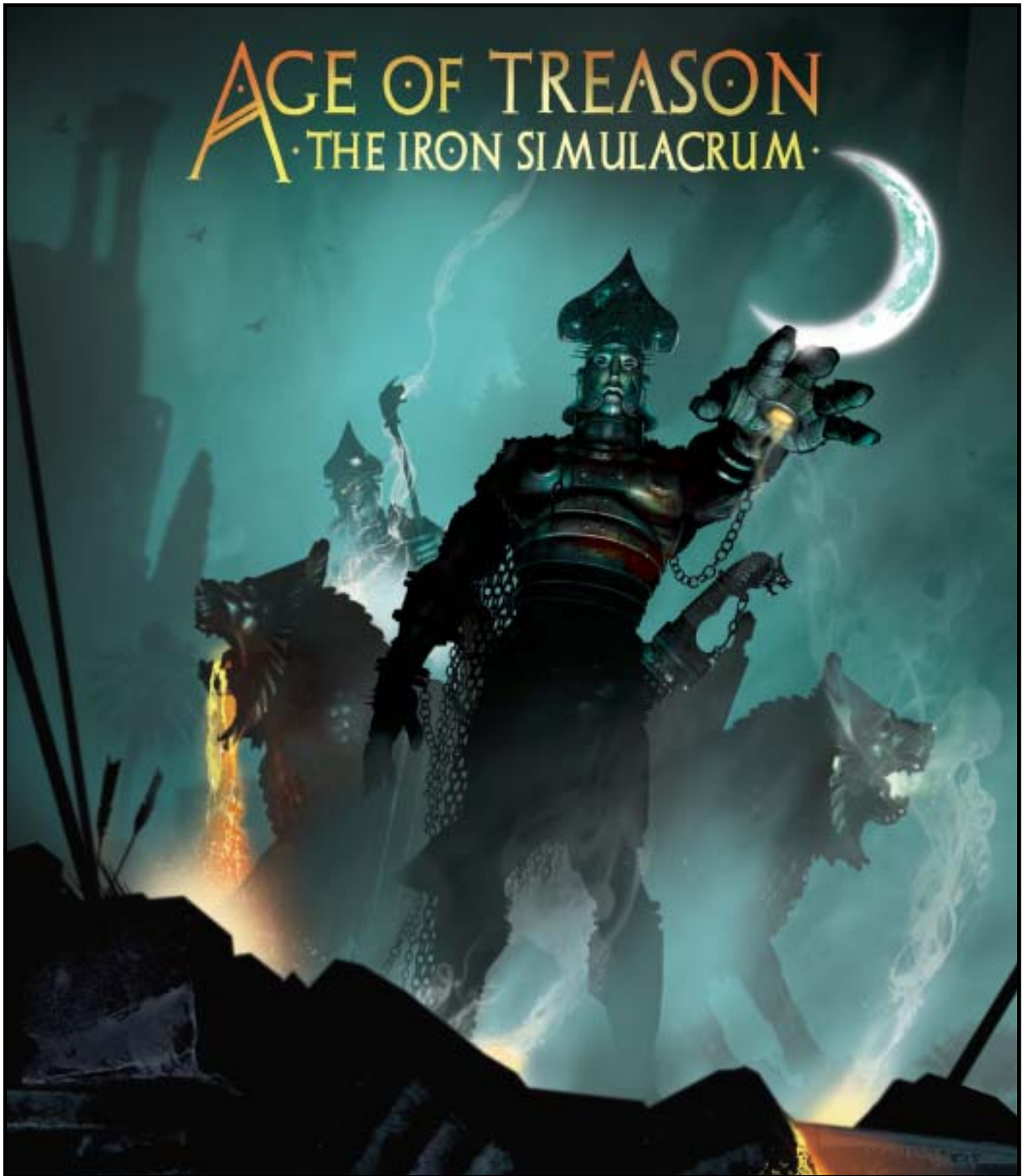
Notable Skills: Stealth 30%, Unarmed 50%

## WEAPONS

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Claw	M	S	60%	1D4	As per Arm
Bite	S	T	40%	1D6	As per Head







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# The City of Lof: Uncovered Part II

By Andrew Black

## PLACES OF INTEREST

### NOBLE DISTRICT

This area consists of some of the oldest houses of Lof and the most prominent people of the region. Occupants of the Noble District are typically delineated from founding merchants of the old glory days of Lof. Typically the nobles have old money, but might not have earned it recently. Most of the houses in this district have beautiful architecture, but not all have been maintained as well as outside appearances might indicate – the spending habits of some nobles have outstripped their income.

The streets of the Noble District are well lit roadway lanterns, tended by city illuminators; the streets themselves are heavily policed by the city watch to ensure the area remains clean and only those meeting a certain dress code may walk the streets unhindered. Those not dressed as to 'fit in' are helpfully instructed as to how to make their way to wherever they belong. Those who reject such help will receive a less friendly and more forceful communication.

### CALORDEN BOSICH ESTATE

As the current Head Alderman of City Council, this merchant is the leading member of several city merchant guilds and has ample connections across Northern Magnamund. As Head Alderman, he possesses the key to the city Catacombs and for good reason keeps it locked away. He is the overall ruler and spokesman of the City of Lof and the Northland Marches and therefore the most politically powerful individual in all of Lof.

The grounds of the House of Bosich in the Noble District are exquisite and perfectly manicured and security exceedingly tight. Constantly busy maintaining his multiple business interests, significant opposition has formed against him in council. His opponents (quietly and subtly) accuse him

of having divided interests, whereas his supporters point out that his international interests provide benefits to Lof. This conflict occasionally surfaces openly in city council, but mysteriously is never recorded in the city minutes.

It is rumoured that Bosich has a relationship with Lady Victoria.

### HOUSE OF COUNCILMAN DURMAN KARSETH

A prominent merchant of the whaling industry, he is the most recent entry into the ruling council of Lof. During his youth as a shipmate a Kaltersee behemoth destroyed his ship and Durman narrowly survived. Since then, he is consumed with killing the Behemoth and this outward hatred has propelled his fortunes throughout his life. His ownership of the Kaltersee Whalers Company, a highly profitable venture, supplies Lof with raw materials for various other merchant industries. Councilman Karseth is a staunch supporter of improving the Warehouse and Slums District since his political base is largely in this area.

### HOUSE OF COUNCILWOMAN LADY LEURHMAN

Lady Leurhman is a member of the ruling council of Lof by virtue of her deceased husband's lineage to the original council. She has by and large outlived her usefulness to the council but remains nonetheless for she is a talented political operator. A powerful member of the council, her subtle sway seemingly manages to maintain the status quo and she is not amenable to change. Congenial on the surface, she is a quiet leader in the council chambers; the old grey dogs of the council have long ago learned to not step on her toes. Making an enemy of her has its dangers. Councilman Durman Karseth openly argues with her and can never seem to figure out why legislation he introduces dies in subcommittee. Her residence is elegant but in need of funding for maintenance.

### HOUSE OF LORD- COUNCILMAN VALTEEN

Retired from the Durenese Navy, Lord Kalan Valteen has graduated to the ruling class of Lof. He played his cards in a fashion that is the current mould for all Lof Naval Officers striving to climb the ladder of success – serve with distinction in the military, simultaneously build alliances with several merchants, progress in stature and wealth, buy or build a merchant company, retire from the military, hobnob with the bigwigs and finally get elected to the ruling council.

Politically, Lord Valteen is one of the few members who carries genuine concern for the Slums, but also balances this with the needs of the military and merchant sections of the city. In council, he carefully builds political capital to swing votes on legislation he considers critical to Lof as a whole. He is popular with the commoners and they whisper hopes that he may be the next Head Alderman. His residence is rather bare of ornamentation; years of naval officer simplicity are not easily scoured away.

### GERARD BARDOF PROPERTY

A primary partner of Lof Hem and Darn Company, Lord Bardof regularly travels to other cities in Magnamund demonstrating the latest clothing wares. His residence is well maintained and always fully staffed with valets, a chef and other staff. An overly confident man, he is rumoured to have some deal in the works to eject Durman Karseth from council and conveniently have himself voted in.

### GARDEN RESIDENCE OF LADY VICTORIA

Owner of the Veagle and Delmantle Antiquities, Lady Victoria periodically visits Lof to check on recent acquisitions and provide direction to the firm. An avid archaeologist, Lady Victoria made good on her interests by purchasing and expanding her company by creating a



market for rarities, with nobles in Lof and other cities keen to buy her wares. Lady Victoria can either be found dressed in her adventuring gear or just as likely having a night of fun at one of her favourite inns, the House of the Kaltersee Lord, or if she is in a more licentious mood, The Shabby Abbey Inn. She is always accompanied by her manservant and able bodyguard.

Born of Lencian descent, her money has entitled her to 'Lady' status in the city of Lof. Effervescent in personality, when

not abroad adventuring or at a different Durenese city, Lady Victoria is often entertaining merchants and other high ranking personalities in the city. Her high tales and beauty provide a fresh breath to the city which seems to only know hard work and cold winters. Lady Victoria's estate in the city is the perfect place for entertaining guests. Out of the kindness of her heart, she periodically takes in the poor and underprivileged to stay on her estates in Lof, Port Bax, Blave, and Ryme. She travels among several cities of Magnamund, but has Port Bax as her primary home.

As owner of Veagle and Delmantle she is both capable of high communication with nobility, and local street jargon with commoners. She is so well thought of in the city that some consider her to be a future possibility for a seat in city council, the first non-Durenese to be considered.

Lady Victoria periodically consults with Head Alderman Calorden Bosich at his estate or, by invitation, with the city council on various matters of importance.

#### THE SPOTTED OWL

Without exception the finest dining establishment in Lof, the Spotted Owl maintains an exquisite collection of wines and cuisine. Only one with the airs of nobility could dine at this fine establishment. It is frequented only by residents of the Noble Districts, well-to-do merchants and Durenese military officers seeking to climb a rung on the city social structure.

#### RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT WEST

The residential section nearest to the west city gate houses an upscale residential area. The finer houses are found along the road facing the West Noble District. The houses in this area tend to have older and more original decoration versus the Spartan appearances of the eastern portion of the city, as the western area has historically been spared from destruction.

The middle to upper-middle class living here has quality living arrangements; there are no slums in this area. The city itself is a safe place to live, but this area is significantly occupied by families of Durenese Navy officers and soldiers, and has perhaps the lowest incidence of crime of any city in Magnamund.

#### HOUSE OF THE KALTERSEE LORD

This inn and tavern is frequented by locals and foreign sailors alike. The food and drink is only average, but to find what is going on in the city, nation or elsewhere on the worldly, this is a good place to visit. The proprietor is a stocky former navy sailor

# The City of Lof: Uncovered

named Carthas who makes it clear that rowdiness is not tolerated.

## WARHORSE & CASTLE

The well lit and staffed Warhorse and Castle is an upscale dining establishment and inn. It has a good enough reputation that even some nobles and merchants frequent it and mix with the commoners. This provides a mutually beneficial arrangement, as these interactions provide the merchants and nobles information they would not otherwise have direct access to and assists them in making decisions on their investments; likewise it gives commoners and naval officers a means to ascend further on the social ladder. The Warhorse & Castle inn has 12 rooms, often fully occupied by travelling merchants.

## GATE OF THE HONOURED

Through the West Residential Area, a grand entrance to the Naval Ward is demarcated by a large set of ceremonial gates. Built within the large gates are a smaller set of gates. The smaller entrance is always used and is guarded at all times; only those with military clearance may pass. The larger gate only opens during a large war requiring large bodies of troops and materials to pass; when the large gate opens, it is said that the West District women wail for three days as it signifies that many Durenese lives likely will be lost.

To commemorate the Durenese sacrifices over the years, a memorial building was constructed around the great gates. The interior contains military memorabilia and marble tablets engraved with the names of local veterans who served from the First Darkland War and is kept up to date. The crowing glory of the gate is the statue of 'The Steadfast Sailor' above its great dome. Supported by a circle of 8 columns, each symbolizing a clan of Durenor, the lofty bronze statue stands over 5 meters tall and weighs 3,500 pounds. It depicts a young sailor at the end of the First Darkland War, one foot resting on a ship anchor, one arm

grasping a naval harpoon, and the other triumphantly waving a sword. On the first of Perthro, during the celebration of Knight's Maern, a solemn military ceremony is conducted at the gate for fallen Durenese soldiers.

## LOF HEM AND DARN

This large building is a prototype textile factory owned by the merchant Calaria and his partners. The rural area surrounding Lof, as well as overland and maritime traffic, bring raw materials – wool from the Durenese Northland Marches, silk from Southern Magnamund, and miscellaneous hems from the local region. These basic materials are transformed by a workforce of women and children to hand produce fine lace, embroideries, common clothing and high-end fabrics. Exporting the finished goods has financially helped Lof in general and the owner Calaria and his partners in particular. In noble circles Lofware clothing is considered a durable and desirable product. The workers here, largely constituted by sailors' wives without other means of support while their husbands are out to sea, are reasonably well paid but grossly overworked.

## MILITARY BRATS HOUSE

Officially known as the 'Holding House of Young Hearts', this large dormitory and work centre is a temporary storage location for Durenese children when the father is too often at sea and the mother too busy making financial ends meet. As it is well known fact that undirected Durenese youths with excess time on their hands get into mischief, Holding House provides their hands with ample work.

Depending on the nature of the (financial) arrangements with the parents, the Holding House can significantly develop the leadership and character of their charges, or sell child labour services to the highest bidder. Some entrepreneurial children concoct clever means of escape and find mischief and adventure.

## MERCHANT DISTRICT

This district consists of many tall buildings and merchant houses, some open to the public for transactions, others private enterprises conducting business throughout Magnamund. The Merchant District is geared toward being a place where business may transact peacefully and one may find virtually any mundane item available here. In the event of trade or financial disputes, trained law officers bring fast and efficient resolution to simple problems. More complex problems are referred to city courts or lawyers.

## FISH MARKET

Fish of all sorts are sold and exported to the Lastlands and beyond. Salted and iced, any commercially viable breed of fish can be bought or sold here. Smaller local fishing villages bring their wares to Lof and are paid in gold or barter items. For the commoners, this is a meeting place where stories and news may be swapped and other trades occur.

## GLYNWOOD BEER COMPANY

Once a tavern owner just as any other, Remy Glynwood got too many complaints from sailors on long-voyages that his beer went foul by the time they reached a far port. In response, clever Remy invented a unique beer designed to ferment in the cask while en-route. 'Steam Beer' as it came to be known from the eager gush of vapour upon opening, gave him a competitive advantage as he could produce more beer and did not need ice. Remy's Glynwood Inn now focuses exclusively on packaging his special beer for long-voyage ships, but occasionally he opens the doors for customers from the street to try his wares – always considered a lucky day.

## LOF SPICE COMPANY

Several spice merchants conduct business in the city; none have the broad selection of the Lof Spice Company. Imports from all the corners of Magnamund arrive here in bulk and are repackaged for transport

to other destinations via overland and maritime routes. The company maintains a professional storefront where anything from medicinal Laumspur to cooking flavourings may be bought. Occasionally, more rare selections are available, but a waiting list typically prevents the store from having it available to the general public. Rumour has it that owner Ramsden Nathar is considering relocating to Port Bax and is in negotiations with city hall for less tax on his imports.

#### ALTHEMAR'S APOTHECARY

Maintaining a symbiotic relationship with a number of other city merchants and other unconventional resources in the Slums, Hengist Althemar specializes in potions, salves and concoctions. Whereas other alchemist-types try to outdo each other making a better Laumspur or Alether potion, his focus is solely on making an all-

new, all-purpose, all-in-everything potion from Kalte lichenin that will make him rich. His efforts have left him mostly broke and can barely cover the payments for his store in the Merchant District. Despite never meeting the man, he blames Madin Rendalim for stealing his idea for Althemar's Elixir. However he does have a potion that allegedly helps with hemiplegia in one out of ten patients. The nine others got severe diarrhoea. He also promotes strange and unusual treatments such as phlebotomy, artesian aqua therapy, and elimination of phrenological deformities. Visitors to this store are not likely to get what they want, but often get more than they need.

#### LJUK TRADING COMPANY

A branch office of the larger Ljuk trading post company, this office specializes in precious gems, Kalte furs and other items from the northern icy wasteland. It serves

as a clearinghouse for both commercial and retail sales from Kalte. This business does not maintain a storefront, but sells its goods to other merchants. Its current owner, Edgard Aline, is a sharp and aggressive man who commands respect and frequents the Warhorse & Castle Inn for information that can assist his branch office. He also is known for his charitable nature within the local community.

#### THEIRN LEATHER AND FURS

Highly dependant on the desirable furs of the Ljuk Trading Company, Jourdain Theirn produces both common and high end leathers and pelts with his tannery, including well made leather armour. His storefront in the Merchant District is well cared for. However, his tannery in the Warehouse District, where the tannery busywork happens, is not. Jourdain is a thin and anxious man; those speaking to him are advised to get to the point quickly.

#### KALTERSEE WHALERS COMPANY

After nearly dying in a whaling incident, young Durman Karseth worked his way up by his bootstraps and eventually founded the Kaltersee Whalers Company. His fleets of hunting ships return to port with whale, dolphin, common fish, and other salted meats. Occasional sea encounters with Kaltersee Ice Barbarian raiding parties, pirates, storms and wreckers are threats to his business.

#### ULPIAN'S SHIP, TACK & SAIL

Need a ship rebuilt or freshly constructed? Then this is the place to be! With a jovial sprit and natural love of building and repairing ships that is reflected in the work ethic of his workers, foreman Ulpian Esme will help any way he can. His wet and dry docks are always available to help repair the largest of ships down to the smallest of boats. With his many connections in the ship making industry, his time is usually short, but his temperament virtually never is.



# The City of Lof: Uncovered



## GRANATH BLACKSMITHERY

For all metalworking needs in the local area of good quality, Skeg Granath will try to provide a fast turnaround if something is not already stocked in his shop. Although the quality is not quite as good as exquisite Durenese-Blave Steel he nonetheless produces sturdy blades. Other blades imported from other Magnamund ports of call have found their way in his shop and are for sale.

## BRANCH OFFICE OF VEAGLE AND DELMANTLE

If one were to adventure near or abroad, visiting this store could yield a useful artefact, and for a few crowns more, information or speculation on how an artefact could be made useful. Veagle and Delmante specialize in rare art and antiquities, some of which have magical properties. Some wares on display are simply relics from ancient Magnamund civilizations, some are red-herring knickknacks from the far flung lands of Telchos or Azanam, and some goods are simply locally esoteric in nature. Periodically, Lady Victoria, owner of the

company, will visit with booty from her adventures.

## BRANCH OFFICE OF PAGDEN, BRAMAN, AND MINTAS

Priding themselves as the best and most professional surveyors and mapmakers in all of Magnamund, inside the local PB&M branch office can be found maps of virtually all major populated areas of Magnamund, including surveys, land plat ownership diagrams, and occasionally obscure anecdotal or derived maps of things such as the Barrakeesh sewer system. Certain maps can only be obtained for a special fee and retrieved from the central office in Blave, and even then only if the patrons are well known by the local branch managers.

## SPANZER TRAVEL OFFICE

The 'Grand Loop' refers to the circular overland route connecting the major cities of Lof, Treask, Durwood, Ryme, Blave, and Port Bax. For many Durenese citizens, travelling the Grand Loop is considered to be a lifetime achievement. Some couples,

having saved their entire life to pay for the trip, return home and shortly thereafter peacefully die having fulfilled a life dream. Apart from an extensive overland travel network within of Durenor, the company has connections to custom configure travel arrangements to most civilized portions of Northern Magnamund, and limited parts of the south. Certainly if one wants to travel in relative safety and has a deep pocket, Spanzer Travel can arrange it. The company also acts as a commercial correspondence courier.

## DOCTOR MORLISH

Herbalish-Doctor Morlish owns a large medicine and ambulatory shop on Harrow Street close to the Slums and serves the city, most notably with his house calls. An exceptionally charitable man, he even makes visits to the Slums district and is revered as a saint in that area of the city. His philosophy is that if a limb can be saved, unless gangrenous, every attempt must be made to do so. Many a Durenese soldier owes their life and limb to a second opinion from Doctor Morlish. He also serves as the city coroner in suspicious deaths. In recent years, he has become apprehensive of a multitude of odd wounds and mutilated corpses brought to his attention which seems to suggest a serial killer (or more than one) is in the city. He does not speak openly of these concerns to uninvolved parties, however.

## PORT CITY ROPE MAKERS

Anything can be made from rope, and the front window display proves it with a mannequin constructed entirely of hemp cord! Ships often go to Port City Rope Makers to restock their basic needs. A variety of different and specialized types of rope can be found here, including a few magical ones!

## LAWYERS/ADVOCATES

Sprinkled throughout the Merchant and West Residential District are various Lawyer and Advocate offices. Considering the tangled web of law systems in the city, if one gets into any kind of legal trouble, it would be wise to have arrangements made with lawyer friend or two.



LONE WOLF

Multiplayer Game Book



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# SHIPS OF HOUSES DECADOS AND HAWKWOOD

By Matthew Sprange

## House Decados



Destroyers are considered by many to be the smallest of the 'true' warships, and the Tupok'ta of House Decados adds much weight to the argument. Its turreted EM pulse guns will fry even tough enemy shielding within seconds, allowing the slug guns on its decks to slice through an opponent's hull, causing serious damage with each salvo.

The Tupok'ta is a familiar sight to enemies of Decados, and few look forward to battling against this well-balanced ship.



With its distinctive crescent shape, the Mantis lacks the speed and agility of many of its rivals but more than makes up for it with its gun decks and turret packed with blasters. A squadron of these ships will prove to be more than a match for many ships much larger in size.

The Mantis retains the ability to act as a general purpose ship of a Decados fleet, able to attack, board and run gauntlets as demanded.



Despite its ungainly appearance, the Lucretzia is surprisingly agile and fast. Its cavernous troop compartment can carry ten troops into boarding actions, and clever admirals often replace these with power-suited Marauders.

Despite only sporting light blasters, the Lucretzia is capable of adding its weight of fire to any attack, and is especially good at stripping enemy shields for other vessels to launch their own weapons. Its multiple grapple guns ensure no opportunity for boarding is ever missed.



Designed to beat the explorer-level ships of other fleets, the Reaper raider is larger, better armoured and shielded, and packs more weaponry too. All of this for only a slight increase in production cost and a little less speed.

In battle, Reapers tend to travel in packs, hunting down stray vessels and tearing them apart while avoiding the guns of bigger ships. With far greater endurance than heavy fighters, Reapers are true military vessels in a class of their own.



## House Hawkwood

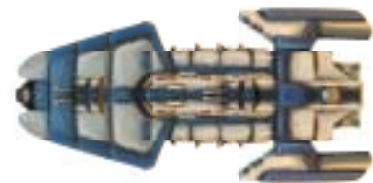
Sleek and deadly, the Vladimir Cruiser features a lethal array of lasers and blasters to rip enemies apart, and carries a contingent of the awesome Marauders for boarding.

Cruisers are powerful line ships A Call to Arms: Noble Armada, capable of hammering the enemy or launching boarding actions as required.



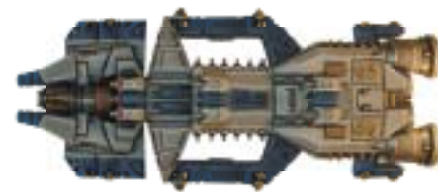
The Griffin destroyer builds upon the Hawkwood ethos of turret-mounted missiles to soften an enemy up in the early stages of battle, combined with withering laser fire to strip armour off hulls.

A capable warship, the Griffin is the pride of any captain chosen to command it. Whether it is part of a fleet or engaged in a lone action where a frigate just won't do, the Griffin has a reputation for performing superbly.



Also used by the forces of the Empire itself, the Maestekulos Dreadnought has a fierce arrangement of weaponry, including the short-ranged but utterly devastating meson spinal mount.

Its close link to the Empire has served House Hawkwood well, as the presence of this mighty dreadnought in their fleets demonstrates.



A classic among frigate designs, the Hornet is a common sight in Hawkwood fleets, and is versatile enough for almost any mission profile.

Its turret mounted missile launchers allow it to attack heavily shielded vessels with impunity, while its deck lasers are accurate enough to stop any enemy from escaping their fire. With the addition of experienced troops and a grapple gun, the Hornet is also a capable boarder.



On paper, the Wayfarer gives a lot of ground to the more aggressive Reaper of House Decados, but Hawkwood admirals are well aware that firepower is not always everything.

The Wayfarer is used as a force multiplier, with its experienced crews and highly developed sensors allowing it to act as a scout for much larger ships, pinpointing the enemy, detecting stealthships, and painting targets for ginsus much bigger than its own. Its own survivability is enhanced by its speed and agility, allowing it to shake off even a pack of raiders.



Based on a larger hull than the Hornet frigate, the Darius mounts less weaponry overall but carries a complement of fearsome marines into battle. Built to engage enemy ships directly and board them, the Darius is capable of overwhelming even a destroyer with its troops.

Galliot such as the Darius are often prime targets for enemy fleets, as they can cause so much damage despite their smaller size, so a wise admiral will keep his Darius squadrons in reserve or within stellar debris until the time to strike is right.



# Kat's Tales

By Katrina Hepburn

The following tale includes spoilers. If you are ever going to play Beltstrike do not read this. Also, the characters and events in this piece are fictional. Any resemblance to any person, living or dead, is entirely coincidental. And they would also have our sincere condolences.

## The Gathering of the Players

It was a dark and stormy night. It is traditional to start off tales like this. But it was. Honest. Winter in Swindon is pretty much dark and stormy half the time, and cloudy and windy the other half.

Sandrine and I ran like mad towards the main door of Mongoose Hall. Tonight we would be starting a new Traveller campaign and did not want to be late. We did not want to get wet either, but hey, that's the weather for you.

As we entered into the offices we saw the rest of our Traveller team. Nick was at his work desk mulling over a few bits and bobs to do with work, Andy was munching on a donner kebab from the local take away and our Lord and Games Master, Matt, was sitting casually at his desk browsing the net. Now everyone was present and accounted for, we could begin our latest roleplaying campaign.

One of the things I love about Traveller character generation is the fact you can die before the game even begins. It is difficult to do, mind you, and I have never seen anyone manage to do this before this session. Nick, in his first Traveller game for quite some while, managed this feat. Twice. Failing all but one of his Survival rolls (and the one time he succeeded he ended up with an Event causing him to lose 1 Endurance!) he promptly managed to maximise the damage from a series of injuries, losing his physical stats five or six at a time. This was much to everyone's

amusement. Matt was insistent that each of us should write a brief background to each character and go in as much depth as possible before the scenario would begin.

### A brief run down

#### of the characters:

**Cassie.** Played by myself. A psion with teleportation and telekinesis.

**An-Lee.** Played by Sandrine. A colonist. Bram saved her life once. As he likes to remind just about anyone and everyone.

**Gabriel.** Played by Andy. A belter. Also the ex-partner of Cassie.

**Bram.** Bram Mostly. Played by Nick. An agent and belter. Apparently was a hero in his distant past.

The campaign is set outside of the Imperium, where Jump capable travel is unknown and the Tech Level is just 9. Also psions are generally considered a myth and hence there is no law against them...

## The Adventure Begins

Gabriel (Andy) was contacted by the Lothrain Free Company for the possibility of a work contract. It seemed simple enough: surveying on an old mining station left derelict for several decades. He knew he would need help and decided to ask the help of a few select members on what would be a relatively small team. His first contact on the list was Bram Mostly (Nick). (Who apparently you may have heard of. He was the hero of Tacoma 5.) After a small chat on the comms, Bram told Gabriel of another potential team member, a colonist by the name of An-Lee (Sandrine), which could be really helpful in a surveying contract. Deciding to go with Bram's suggestion, Gabriel needed just one more person. Looking at the profiles of Bram and An-Lee, he decided he wanted someone with a few skills other than the standard norm. He contacted his old flame: Cassie Rhomjin (Kat). He knew she desperately needed work and she had a few 'unusual'

skills at her disposal, skills that could come in handy, and after a short chat he finalised the paperwork. After the team assembled and were interviewed by Lothrain we were given the contract and sent on our way in one of the company's ships.

After a seven day trip to the mining station, everyone seemed a little on edge. The attempted culinary experiences provided by Cassie had not sat well on the stomach. It was apparent she was no cook so most of the crew had reverted to using the sealed ration packs. Gabriel had challenged Galin: the ship pilot to a little wager halfway through the trip, he had won and had then berated Galin throughout the journey as being a second rate pilot. But they both still seemed friendly enough to each other despite the fact the constant boasting was already fraying the tempers of the rest of the crew. On approaching the old station, standard sensor sweeps commenced. Aside from some minor odd scanner readings, the place seemed exactly as described: abandoned and derelict. Gabriel assembled the team and began preparations to dock.

It seemed at the time, the most sensible thing to do would be to try and get the stations power up and running so that searching the rest of the station could go a little more easily. Sensor scans showed the power plant as being completely dead. It was decided that the group should split into two teams. One team consisting of Cassie and An-lee started surveying the hanger bays and a second team consisting of Gabriel and Bram were to try and get the power core working.

As An-Lee was performing standard sensor sweeps, Cassie decided to take a look around. Her technical experience was limited, she was sure she was brought along on this trip as a safety measure just in case muscle was needed because the rest of the team were all far more suited to the task than she was. As she checked out one of the landing bays she discovered an



**The Mining Platform**

unknown ship docked there, she realized this might not be such an uninteresting trip after all.

"I think we have a problem here guys."

"What's the problem?" Bram said as he clicked the button on his vacc suit helmet.

"There is a ship in the second hangar bay. It's..."

"Cassie? Come back. What do you mean, a second ship?"

The comms went silent as a gun was pointed at Cassie's head. Two crew of the unknown vessel had found An-Lee and Cassie. Their vacc suit visors were mirrored so their faces could not be seen. Cassie was forced to rethink her earlier thought, if she ended up dying on this rust bucket of a station this trip would be really disappointing.

The moment the comms had gone dead the guys knew trouble was brewing. Gabriel and Bram made their way back to the ship, looking to equip themselves properly for hostile action. (Bram had foolishly left his weapons back on our ship, stating there

would be no need to bring them onto a derelict mining station like this). Opening a hatch on the way back they stumbled into two more of the unknown vessel's crewmembers and a short fire-fight ensued. Despite being less than competent with any sort of firearm Gabriel managed to dispatch the two pirates. It seemed reasonable enough to assume the girls had been captured and they would need to attempt some sort of rescue and now they were able to get properly equipped to deal with the situation.

An-lee and Cassie were thrown onto the floor of the pirate ship cargo bay next to one another. Their hands were bound, their helmets were removed as a third pirate entered through a door in the opposite end of the bay.

"You, come with me." she said as she lifted Cassie off the floor by her bonds and dragged her off towards the cockpit of the ship.

Once in the cockpit she removed her helmet and ordered Cassie to go over the comms to tell her team to surrender. A look of confusion came over her face as she noticed Gabriel floating towards the cockpit in a vacc suit outside the ship. The pirate captain placed her pistol on Cassie's forehead as he landed on the viewscreen of the cockpit.

"Tell your people to surrender!" she ordered Cassie again.

Cassie watched in disbelief as Gabriel turned on his vacc suit's video recorder. He then proceeded to pull out a blowtorch from his belt and started trying to make a hole in the viewscreen of the cockpit.

"This is the worst rescue ever." Cassie stated as she closed her eyes in concentration.\*

The air around her started to shimmer and buzz slightly. Then nothing. She opened her eyes and looked around.

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*\*Readers familiar with previous articles featuring campaigns run at Mongoose will no doubt remember worse rescues than this, often resulting in the immolation of the individual to be rescued. Do not worry, there is plenty of time for this to happen later and for Kat to realise the incorrect nature of her rather rash statement.*

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# Kat's Tales

"Crap." She said as she closed her eyes and began to concentrate once again.

After seeing this, both the pirate captain and Gabriel had turned their attentions towards her. Gabriel with his camera and the pirate captain with a reinforced grip.

The air began to shimmer and buzz again and in the blink of an eye Cassie had vanished. Her clothing and equipment fell to the floor at the pirate captain's feet as she re-materialised behind her and grabbed her weapon. Gabriel stared into the cockpit and drooled slightly as he watched a very naked Cassie place the gun to the temple of the pirate. Yep, Andy was roleplaying a bit of a perv.

"Stand down." she said with a creepy sort of calm as the pirate captain placed her hands on her head. Gabriel sidled around to the airlock nearest the cockpit and called Bram. Once inside the ship a surprised pirate was shot by Bram and then dragged into the hallway of the ship.

"Don't you know who you're dealing with? I'm Bram Mostly!"

The boys made their way into the cockpit just as Cassie slid on the last piece of her vacc suit and they saw the pirate captain shackled with the cuffs that Cassie had been bound in earlier. After a brief conference it was decided to free An-Lee from the two pirates in the cargo hold before moving on to secure the rest of the ship. As Bram (unaware of Cassie's ability to teleport) moved off Gabriel indicated to her it would be a good idea to use her ability to get the jump on the pirates. She agreed.

Cassie closed her eyes and began to concentrate. Her voice coming over the comms with a slight echo as she began to shimmer and teleport.

"Go!"

A look of surprise and confusion came over the face of An-Lee as she saw Cassie jump on one of the pirates holding her hostage. She had not seen her enter the cargo bay and almost instantly Gabriel and Bram burst through the door and opened fire.

Well, one thing was certain. Bram Mostly can shoot. Both pirates fell dead in a blaze of laser fire.

'You don't mess with Bram Mostly!' At least he IS consistent.

There were two remaining pirates still in their quarters. These were surprised and did not offer any resistance. Perhaps they realised who they were dealing with (Bram Mostly!). Either that or Bram's strategy of pointing his laser a few inches from their heads when he had the drop on them was a persuasive argument for them to surrender.

It was not long before Bram collected all the surviving pirates together. Gabriel suggested using the airlock of the ship as a makeshift prison cell. This way they could all be easily jettisoned should the need arise. A total of four pirates had survived though one was seriously wounded and after Bram had tried applying some first aid to his wounds it was apparent that without any experienced medical crew member, he would not survive for long.

'Meh' said Bram.

The team gathered to discuss how to continue and it was decided that the best course of action would be to finish what we came here to do, complete the surveys and take the surviving pirates back with us on the return journey to hand over to the authorities. Gabriel also commented that if torture was needed for any reason then they could always subject them to Cassie's cooking.

In two groups working twelve-hour shifts another six days would pass to complete the surveys of the station. It all could have been accomplished much sooner had it not been for Cassie and Gabriel picking up the slack work of An-Lee and Bram who kept fumbling over the stations electronics. On the fifth day, Bram came across something worrying: a dead body frozen in the vacuum of space on the mining station, with what looked like a bullet wound to the head.

There was little to indicate who it was, save for an odd tattoo on the upper part of its right arm which simply said 'Yorath'. It was agreed that we would simply add this find in the survey report and continue to get this job over with as quickly as possible. Later that day, stumbling upon an extremely odd placed medical bay which seemed more like a genetics lab and a data chip which turned out to be Yorath's diary, things began to seem even more ominous on what was supposed to be an old mining station. Yorath's diary explained that the mining station had been going through some bad administration and according to the dates, the mining platform had been shut down just two weeks after the last diary entry. But again, the team decided to just place all the information in the report. At this point we just wanted to get the job over with. Come the end of the 6th day, all surveys finished, we were glad to be seeing the station drift into the distance.

One day into the return home an unexpected transmission came over the comms:

"SOS, Distress, We need help! Is anyone on this frequency? Over."

"Crap." Cassie said as she sighed and rubbed her forehead.

*\*Readers familiar with previous articles featuring campaigns run at Mongoose will no doubt remember worse rescues than this, often resulting in the immolation of the individual to be rescued. Do not worry, there is plenty of time for this to happen later and for Kat to realise the incorrect nature of her statement.*

# News Extra

# SALE!

## Out of Print Items

Here at Mongoose we are planning oodles of new miniatures games for a 2011 release - and that means it is time to clear the warehouse of lots of boxes of older, now out of print goodies.

Our loss being your gain, we are proud to present a range of older Mongoose products, all at very keen prices that are going to keep you in gaming goodness for months to come!

Items on sale include:

SST Grizzly and Cougar Exosuits  
Battlefield Evolution box sets  
RuneQuest 1st edition  
D&D 4th edition supplements  
Babylon 5 RPG  
2000AD graphic novels

Prices start from just 99p!

**New Items Added!**

# Armed and Dangerous

By John R White

A short encounter on the streets.

## Control

++ Item++

++Assault in progress++

Man attacking citizens on Dove Lane. Units in vicinity to respond. Perp is armed and dangerous.

## Enter the Judges

The players will be the first unit to reach the scene. If a judge attempts a Geography (Mega-City) test or a Streetwise test and scores 6+ they will be aware that Dove Street, aka 'Crab Slab', is a city bottom location in the sector's red light district. They will arrive at the location almost immediately, any requests for PSU footage will fail as the surveillance cameras here are regularly vandalised.

On rounding the corner the Judges will immediately notice an angry man in a business suit; he is screaming and brandishing an arm as a club. Various citizens (many in the work clothes needed for this area) are fleeing in various directions or are demanding entrance

into establishments with security doors. A dishevelled red head, in fishnet tights and a long, white polyprop' mac is leaning awkwardly against a wall. She is missing an arm and blood is leaking from the empty sleeve. If a judge specifically asks if the liquid is blood, a Recon roll of 8+ will determine it looks like black oil.

Unless the Judges act quickly the madman proceeds to attack other nearby citizens. As there are citizens on the street sides, any attempt to use auto-fire from bike cannon that misses will hit innocent people.

When a Judge nears the maimed slabwalker, she will suddenly moan "Love you" and proceed to grapple the judge in a frenzied manner whilst trying to inset a tongue down their mouth. At this stage the clenched judge will probably notice a few more details. One side of her head, previously turned in the opposite direction, and masked by her hair, has a gaping hole through which an array of wires can be seen (also she is wearing skimpy lingerie under her mac). Her behaviour program is damaged and she will ignore any attempts to order her to desist from her 'assault'.

## The Perp

**Dwayne Peachey** Unemployed citizen and 'futsie'.

Str 6/9\* (0/+1), Dex 6/9\* (0/+1), End 5, Int 9/2\* (+1/-2), Edu 6, Soc 5 (-1)

\* Stats whilst suffering Future Shock syndrome.

Skills: Admin 0, Computer 0

Equipment: Droid arm (treat as club).

Armour: None

Desperation : Will not surrender ( Normally +5).

Dwayne, is a slightly built man with a pencil moustache. He is a married man with three children and a keen believer in the Church of Grud.

## The Victim

'**Tin Lizzie**' SexMek Pleasure Droid

Str 7, Dex 10 (+1), End 10/5\* (+1/-1), Will 10

\*Reduced stat due to damage.

Skills: Athletics (Co-Ordination) 1, Carouse 2, Persuade 1, Streetwise 0.

Personality: Seductive (dominant personality)/Compliant.

Armour: 1



## Background to the Incident

Unemployed, like most citizens, Dwayne has been fortunate enough to secure an interview as a clerk at the 'Bookworm' book-chain office. He obtained a suit on hire purchase and took a zoom to the nearest station. Unfortunately he completely misread a map he was sent, found himself lost and the hour for the interview was rapidly approaching. Dwayne started to panic. A few minutes ago he looked up from his crumpled map and was appalled and disgusted when he saw what type of street he was on. Consequently he hurriedly left towards the first intersection he could see, frightened of being indentified. To his horror he was intercepted by a slab-walker who propositioned him. At this point he totally flipped, pushing the walker aside so violently her head smashed into the nearby wall. As she fell down to the slab Peachey was now in full blown future shock, he has just torn an arm off the fallen walker and is prepared to take out his frustration by smiting all the sinners he can see.

## Aftermath

Hopefully Peachey will be subdued. A Judge observing his actions for a round and making a test of Psychology 6+ or Medic 10+ should be able to determine the perp is currently in a state of future shock syndrome and a danger to himself and others. The correct sentence to administer would be to have Peachey placed in a psychiatric facility until he can be cured. Judges must move quickly to secure witnesses, though if some are questioned they can give a report of Peachey's sudden violence.

Peachey's briefcase is nearby, it contains a marmunce spread sandwich and the Holy Book of Grud. An Investigation 8+ roll will be needed to notice a piece of synthi-paper with an oil spill on it, this is a letter referring to the interview. If contacted the Bookworm office can confirm that Peachey has just missed a scheduled interview.

If his wife is contacted she will be shocked and distressed on hearing of his condition.

If she is told that he was in the Red Light district the Judge must roll Persuade 10+ to calm her, otherwise she reacts badly, the extent of her emotions is up to the Games Master, either she storms off, with her mother in tow, to try find and berate her husband, or she takes an overdose of sleeping pills.

'Tin Lizzy' is licensed to work in the area and is registered to *Earl's Girls* a front company for one of the criminal outfits who milk a large revenue from the district.

## Debrief

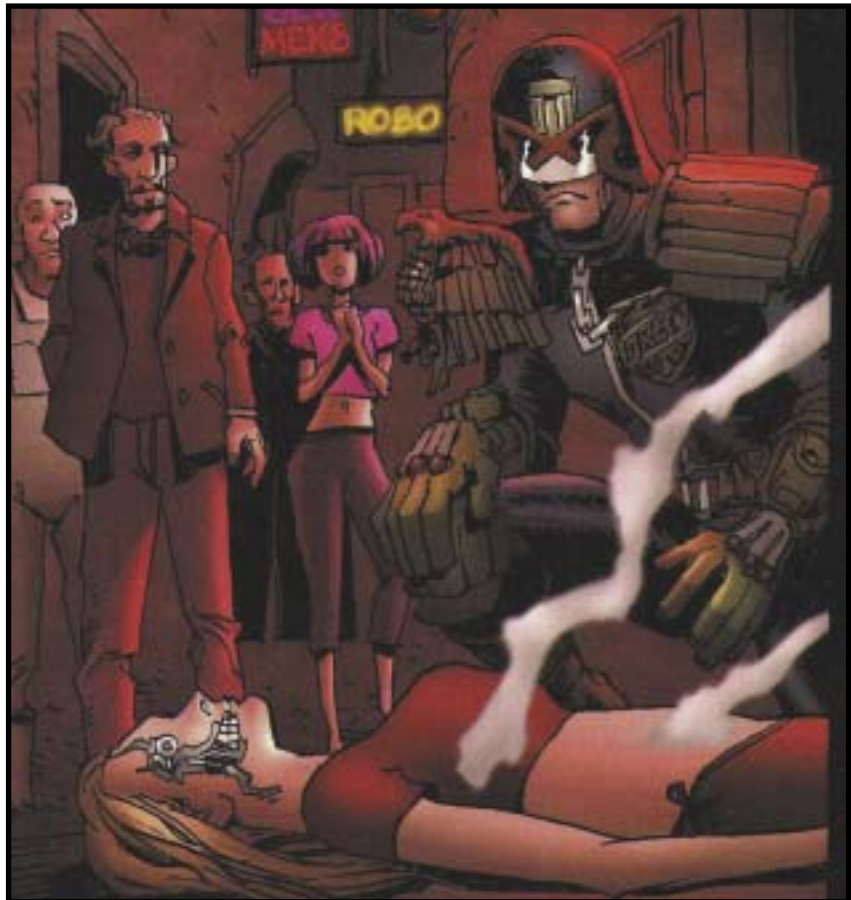
If innocent bystanders are hurt due to any rash action by the Judges they will be in serious trouble back at the Sector House. Likewise if they give Peachey a normal custodial sentence and have not managed to diagnose his mental condition or failed to refer the case to a Justice Department medical expert.

## Extra Complications

The following events might occur to make this an especially memorable case for the Judges.

The Judges are filmed by a journalist or else a comm picture is taken by a citizen and soon circulates through citizens' computers and the media. This could lead to all sorts of embarrassment, from an underground news-vid edited to show Judge brutality to a Judge finding a holo-pic of his grapple with a pleasure droid in his locker and receiving the nickname 'Romeo' (or something wittier or more embarrassing) amongst his colleges.

If the Judge makes a call to the Bookworm offices and mentions the interview they are overheard by a citizen who realizes there is an interview slot which now lacks the interviewee. Within minutes hundreds of citizens converge on the Bookworm office and a full blown job-riot escalates as frustrated citizens fight among themselves to try to gain entrance.



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