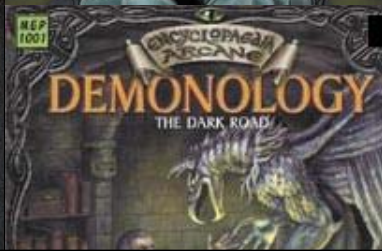
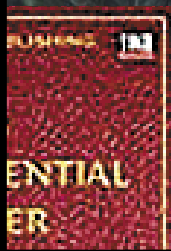
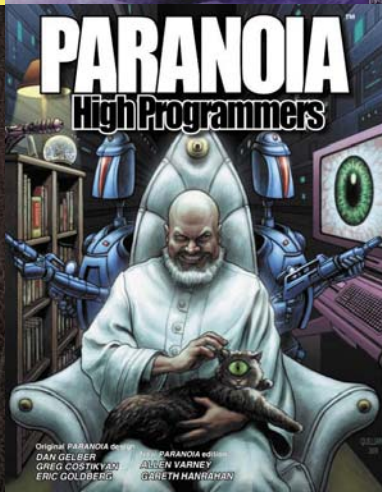
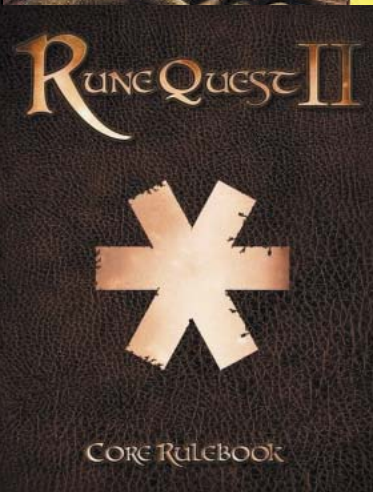
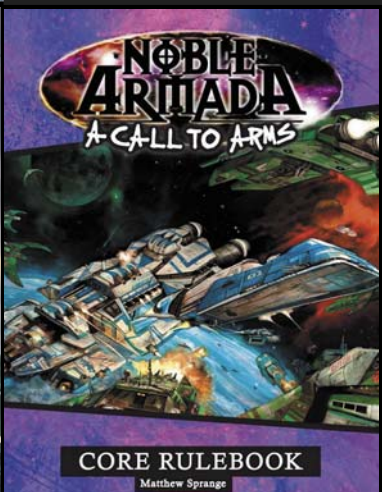
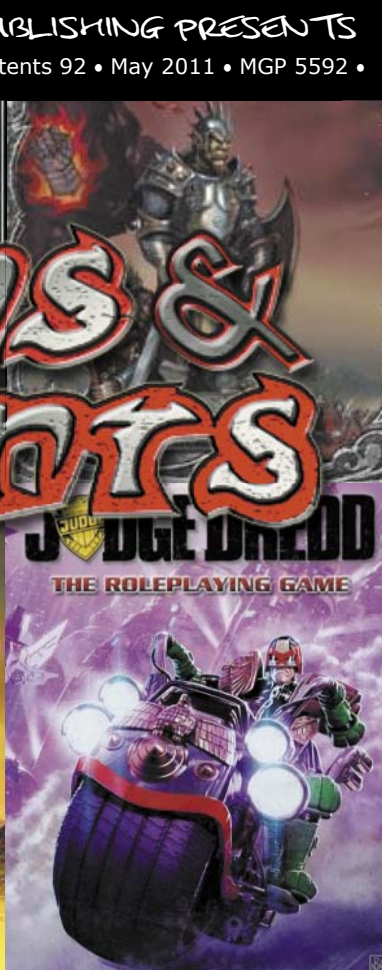
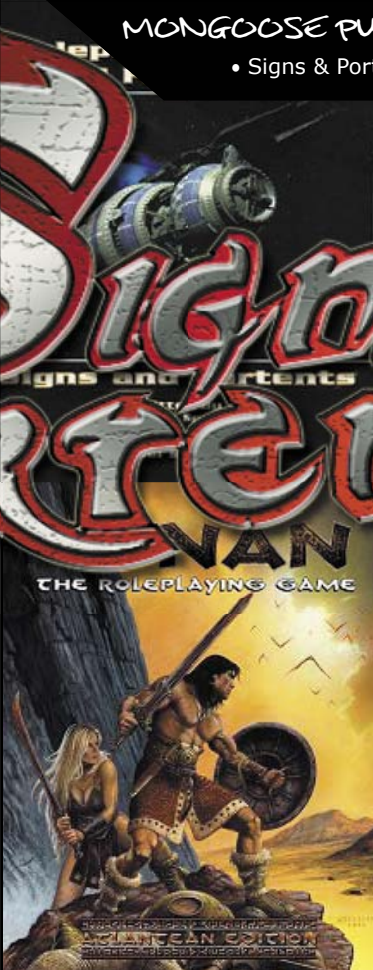
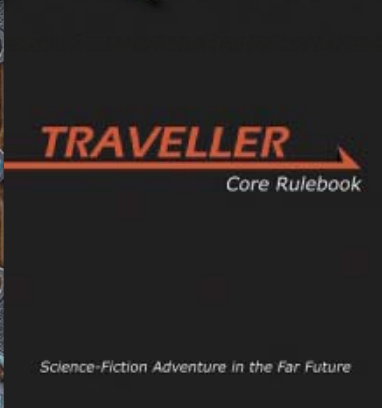


Signs & Portents

This Month: Adventures for Lone Wolf, Traveller, RuneQuest, Judge Dredd, Earthdawn and much more



Mongoose 10th Anniversary Issue Adventure Special

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Editorial



Chaos! Death! Opportunities for unbound wealth!

Life as a world threatening megalomaniac is certainly not dull. For the 10th anniversary of Mongoose Publishing I have decided to allow you all to share some of my experiences in some small way. No, stop covering, it's all right!

All I meant to say was this month you can take part in one of the multitude of adventures within this issue. Adventure into the unknown in Lone Wolf. Track down ruthless killers in Judge Dredd. Retrieve powerful artefacts in Earthdawn. Walk down old (ship) corridors in Traveller.

In other words I give you multiple opportunities to blow up stuff and then nick loot from the still cooling corpses you leave behind.

Have fun. I know I do!

Nick

Credits

Editor

Nick Robinson

Managing Director

Matthew Sprange

Mongoose Studio Staff

Charlotte Law, Will Chapman, Sandrine Thirache and Kelly George

Graphic Design

Will Chapman

Interior Artists

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Cover Art
Mongoose through
the years.

Contributors

John R White, Katrina Hepburn, Darren Pearce, Carl Walmsley, Bruce Mason, Nick Robinson, Ken Walton, Peter Cakebread, Matthew Sprange, Jacob DC Ross

Mongoose News

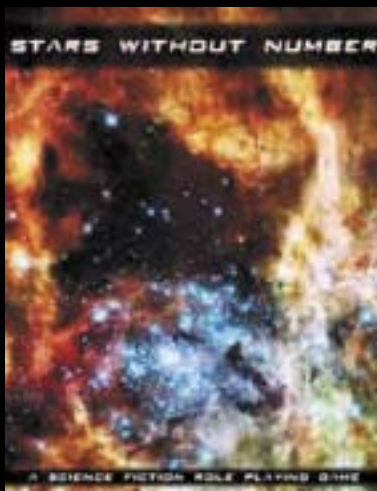
By Nick Robinson

Stars Without Number - In Stores Sept '11

You have seen the PDF, now prepare for it to appear in your local stores.

In conjunction with Sine Nomine Publishing, Mongoose is bringing the Stars Without Number RPG to mainstream distribution and your local stores.

Stars Without Number is a science fiction RPG inspired by old-school gaming aesthetics. Quick and familiar game mechanics are supported by extensive tools, tables, and tips for creating unexplored stellar sectors, enigmatic aliens, ferocious xenomorphs, and scheming interstellar factions. Game masters can take advantage of one hundred sci-fi



adventure seeds designed to interlock with a world generation system involving five dozen descriptive "world tags", each fleshed out with examples of friends, enemies, places, things, and complications appropriate to the tag. Resource tables for random generation of names, NPCs, religions, political parties, architectural styles, and room furnishings excel in generating the kind of fast, smooth content that sandbox gaming demands.

You can find more information (as well as free PDFs!) at;

http://rpg.drivethrustuff.com/product_info.php?products_id=86467

Stars Without Number will be published in September (though copies will be available at Gen Con) with the first supplement, Skyward Steel, following in October.

A Noble Duel

On May 7th, Mongoose Publishing is throwing open its doors to hold the first official tournament for A Call to Arms: Noble Armada. A Noble Duel will pit players against one another in a series of games to decide who is the greatest of the Noble Houses!

You can download the tournament pack from <http://www.mongoosepublishing.com/minature/detail.php?qsID=1957>

To book a place will cost just £5 - you can either send the payment to paypal@mongoosepublishing.com, call us with card details at 01793 434488, or send a cheque to the address below. Whichever way you do it, please let us know which fleet you are planning to use on the day.

Mongoose Publishing, 52-54 Cricklade Road, Swindon, Wilts, SN2 8AF

This is a great opportunity to meet and play with like-minded gamers, and everyone always has a great time at these events. The Mongoose store will be open with a few new goodies, and prizes will be given for the finest nobles at the event!

A Noble Duel will be held at Mongoose HQ in Swindon, UK, and a map can be downloaded from;

<http://www.mongoosepublishing.com/pdf/officemap.pdf>

Facebook for S&P

The Facebook page is going strong and is the place to go for upcoming news about Signs and Portents. The group name is 'Signs and Portents Magazine' and we hope to see you there.



Convention Diary

RolePlaying Conventions 2011

UK Games Expo *

3rd – 5th June

Clarendon Suites, Edgbaston, Birmingham
www.ukgamesexpo.co.uk

Gencon 2011 *

4th – 7th August

Indianapolis, Indiana, USA
<http://www.gencon.com>

Concrete Cow 11½

17th September

The Old Bath House, 205 Stratford Road, Wolverton,
Milton Keynes
http://www.mk-rpg.org.uk/Concrete_Cow

Indiecon 2011

3rd – 6th November

Hobourne, Naish, Christchurch
<http://www.indiecon.net/>

Dragonmeet 2011 *

26th November

Kensington Town Hall, London
<http://www.dragonmeet.co.uk/>

Other Conventions 2011

Claudia Con *

13th – 14th August

Renaissance London Heathrow Hotel, Hounslow
<http://www.claudiaconuk.com>

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.

Wargaming Conventions 2011

A Noble Duel *

7th May

Mongoose Publishing, 52-54 Cricklade Road, Swindon, SN2 8AF
<http://www.mongoosepublishing.com/miniature/detail.php?qsID=1957>

Triples

21st – 22nd May

English Institute of Sport, Sheffield
<http://www.sheffieldwargames.co.uk/site/node/1>

Campaign

4th – 5th June

Thecentre:mk, Milton Keynes
<http://www.mkws.org.uk/index.php?s=campaign>

Battlegroup South

2nd – 3rd July

Bovington Tank Museum
<http://www.battlegroupsouth.org/wp/>

Attack!

23rd – 24th July

Devizes School, The Green, Devizes
<http://www.ddwg.org.uk/>

The Awesometer

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

AWESOME

Nick Robinson's TOP 5 Diseases

- Vampirism. Because Vampires are cool.
- Lycanthropy. Because werewolves rock and turn it up to eleven!
- The Red Death. Because we all love Poe.
- The Black Death. About the only thing with a higher kill score than your average adventuring party.
- The Yellow Polkadot Death. Hmm, I may be stretching things a bit here...



You have the fastest ship in the quadrant.



But only on a Wednesday, it appears...

GRUESOME

The Timeline

A guide to get your tails wagging for future Mongoose releases

May: Flashbacks Redux Redux

July: Enter the Zhodani

August: Van Graaf

PARANOIA

TRAVELLER

PATH

ROLEPLAY

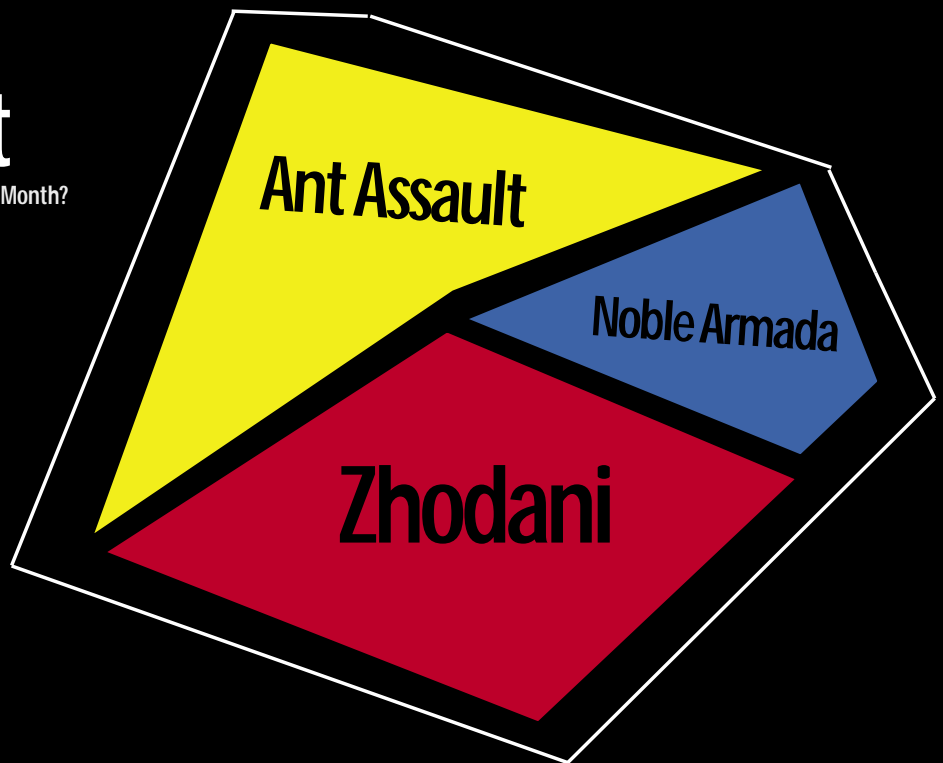
Quote of the Month

'I didn't try to kill him, it just happened that way

Kat's interrogation of an innocent barman (WHO HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THE PLOT) goes horribly wrong. Not that I'm bitter or anything.

The Time Chart

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



's Journal of Adventuring

September: Fleets of the Fading Suns

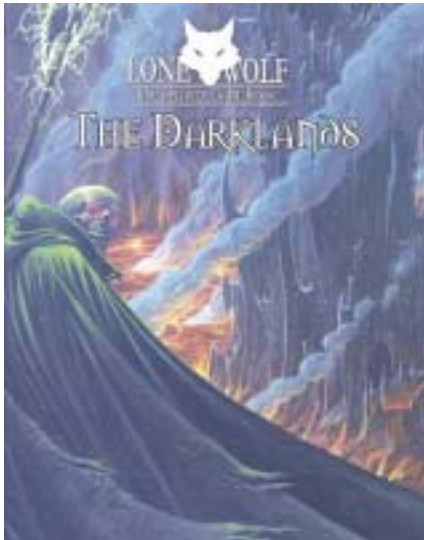
October: Vam Graaf's journal of Strongholds

PATHFINDER
ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE



PATHFINDER
ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE

May 11 Releases



Softback
Price: \$19.99
Format: Softback (128 pages)

Welcome to Darklands, the book about this most terrible country and the vile beings that rule that blasted scar on the face of Magnamund. This text will definitely list the Darklords in all their ebon glory, with their powers, their provinces, and their legions in detail. By the time you have finished reading this tome of terror, you will know the ways of evil on Magnamund much better than you did before. You will know which Darklord rules in the domain of Nightmares, which one revels in the applications of torture, and what horrors churn to be awakened in the underhalls of Helgedad.

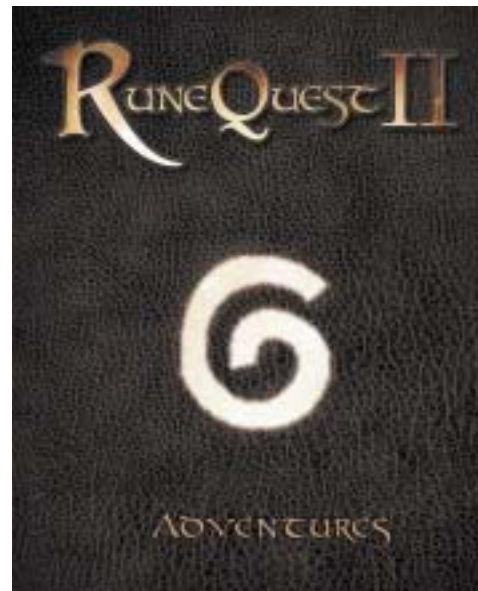
To defeat the Darklords and stop the press of evil, great legends will have to arise. Great powers will have to be mastered. More importantly, great heroes must answer the call of battle. Can you be such a champion? Can you resist the lure of evil power and fight for the Light? And ultimately, will you have the courage to venture where the road of heroes must eventually go?

Dare you enter the Darklands?

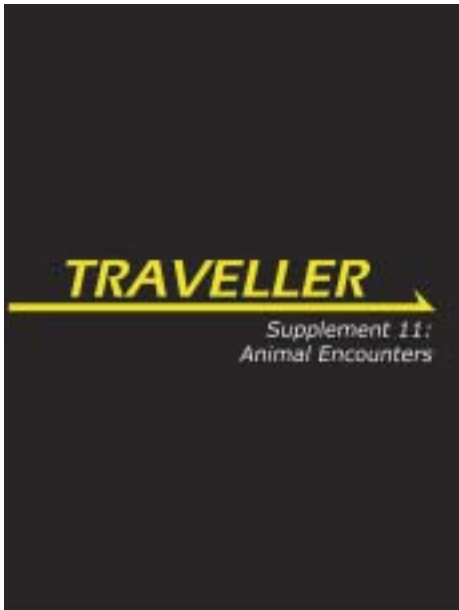
Pre Order Now

RuneQuest Adventures
Price: \$29.99
Format: Hardback (140 pages)

From the pages of Signs & Portents comes the very best scenarios published for RuneQuest, all updated and revised for the current rules set. In this book you will find adventures, both short and long, that can be dropped into any campaign at a moment's notice, be it set in Glorantha, the Young Kingdoms, 13th Century France or a world of your own making!



Pre Order Now



Once players start venturing out from the safety of civilisation and into the wilderness, they will be confronted with all manner of exotic and strange fauna. From deadly predators that will stalk a heavily armed party for weeks before making their lethal ambush, to harmless furballs that make for good pets, *Animal Encounters* will allow a referee to create new creatures to populate his worlds, each tuned specifically to its environment.

As well as providing many examples of animals already discovered on distant worlds, *Animal Encounters* not only provides a complete system for referees to create their own, but also a chapter on very strange animals, such as those that live in super-dense gravity environments, or those that can be found floating in the higher reaches of the atmosphere in a gas giant.

Critters in Traveller will never be the same again!

Supplement 11: Animal Encounters
 Price: \$24.99
 Format: Softback (96 pages)

Pre Order Now

A mini-campaign for the Lone Wolf Multiplayer Gamebook, *Corruption of Ikaya* sees the players travelling to the Ice Wastes of Kalte to discover the fate of Kai acolyte Greyshadow and delegates of a Sommlending merchant house. Along the way, they will face Giaks, cross the Kaltersee, face saboteurs, visit the Ice Fortress of Ikaya, battle Frostwyms and Ice Demons, all to face a terrible evil that may ensnare them in its own plans.

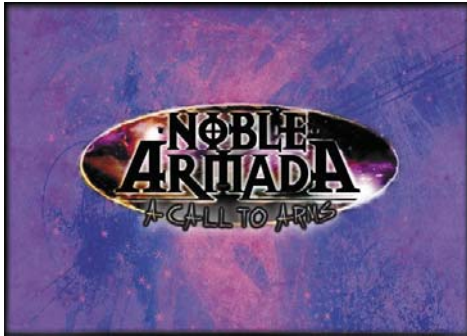
Suitable for all character classes.

Corruption of Ikaya
 Price: \$19.99
 Format: Softback (108 pages)



Pre Order Now

May 11 Releases



A pack of 50 datacards for A Call to Arms: Noble Armada, this pack features enough datacards to use every ship in every fleet box set, plus datacards for every other ship featured in the main rulebook. Each datacard features useful areas for recording a ship's damage, critical hits, weapons and boarding actions, and is laminated so dry-wipe pens can be used to note down anything that affects your ship.

The back of every card features a handy reference of the Critical Hit tables, and also included are three Fleet Roster Cards, allowing you to track the most important features of your entire fleet.

Noble Armada Datacards
Price: \$19.99

Pre Order Now

Hawkwood Osprey Heavy Carrier
Price: \$24.99



Pre Order Now

A Noble Duel



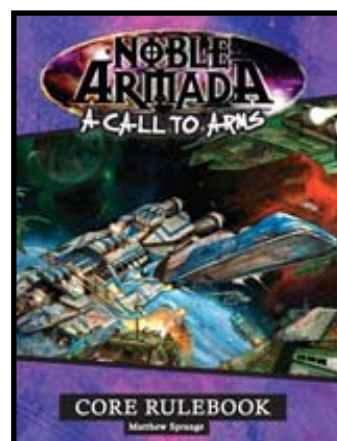
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A Noble Duel will be held at Mongoose, 52-54 cricklade Road, Swindon, SN2 8AF and a map can be downloaded from: <http://www.mongoosepublishing.com/pdf/officemap.pdf>



Can House Li Halan hold back the hordes of House al Malik?

Determine the future of the universe!

Let battle commence!



The Mongoose: Ten Years Young

By Matthew Sprange

A Potted History of the Mongoose

Mongoose Publishing is 10 years old this month. It is funny to think, 10 years ago, of how it all began. During that time, we have been up, down... sideways. Let me take you back into the hallowed halls of history, to a chance meeting in the recesses of a shadowy public house in Wiltshire...

Kicking It Off

Actually, the meeting was not much of a chance. An old friend I had known since primary school had just left the army and was getting disenchanted with his chosen career in mobile communications. A year previously, we had discussed launching a company behind a fantasy miniatures game, but had discarded the idea as too expensive.

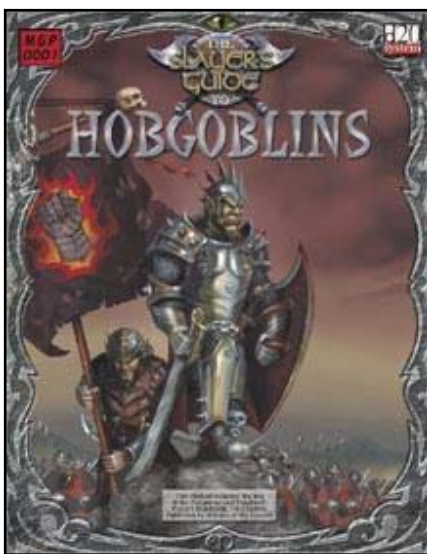
So, at the tail end of 2000, we started chatting once more about starting up our own games company. Wizards of the Coast had released their famed D20 Licence, and we started knocking around ideas. Soon, we had a business plan, and were ready to venture forward.

The rest, as they say, is history but there were at least *one hundred* other companies that had either released D20 books or had announced them. However, there were three things in our favour.

- We had scraped enough funds together to release three books, one month after the other, even if we received no income from the first in the meantime. This meant distributors, retailers and gamers could all see we were serious in what we were doing.
- Everyone else (aside from one very early release by White Wolf and a stand alone RPG that is better off not being remembered...) were releasing scenarios. We made the cunning decision to release a not-scenario.
- We actually had a business plan.

So, in May 2001, we officially announced the launch of the Slayer's Guide to Hobgoblins, a small 32 page booklet that thoroughly detailed one monster. We printed 3,000 copies and sold out within a month, reprinting immediately.

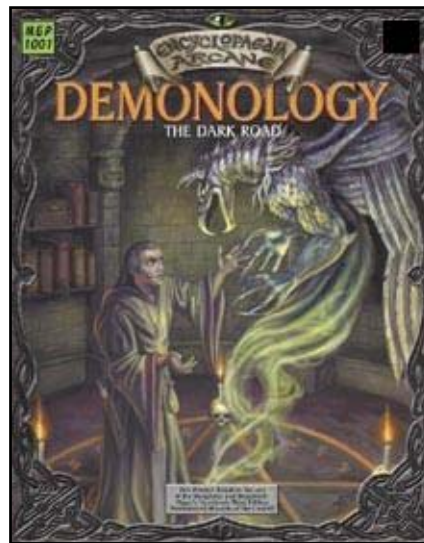
It was the start of something good...



Summer 2001

We continued with our business plan, releasing Slayer's Guides for Gnolls and Centaurs. Following the plan, we then released the first of our Encyclopaedia Arcane books, a series that covered variant magic types - to my knowledge we were the first third party publisher to release a 'rules' book for D20, rather than background or scenarios. The first in this series was Demonology.

This too had been part of the plan. The Encyclopaedias were 64 page books, twice as large as the Slayer's Guides. With bigger books, we could charge more, and grow faster.



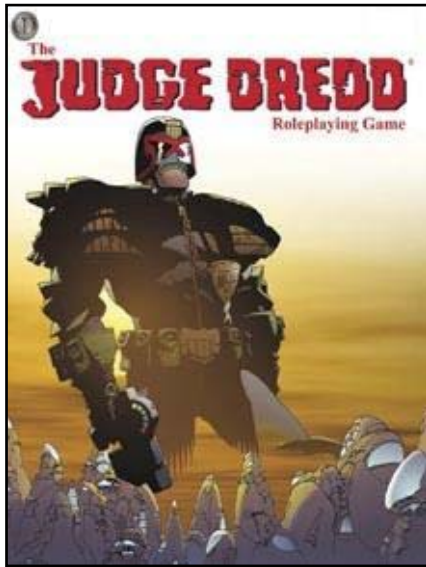
October 2001

This is when we departed from the original plan. There we were, enjoying very healthy sales figures for each of our releases, and it gradually began to dawn on us that if we were earning X from selling a book a month, then we could earn 2X if we sold two books a month. In October, we had our first joint release, the Slayer's Guide to Troglodytes and Seas of Blood, a naval warfare supplement that continued being used under the Open Game Licence by other publishers quite late into the D20 cycle.

December 2001

By this time, we had started to get ambitious. What about a hardback book? What about colour? What about a standalone (almost) RPG? And how do these licence things work anyway?

All this culminated in our first meeting with Rebellion, computer games developers and publishers of 2000AD. We had an idea that we could publish a D20 version of the Judge Dredd RPG. However, we had no idea how to actually go about getting a licence. A few phone calls were made, and we found ourselves in Oxford, explaining some rather vague ideas about how we would go about producing the book.

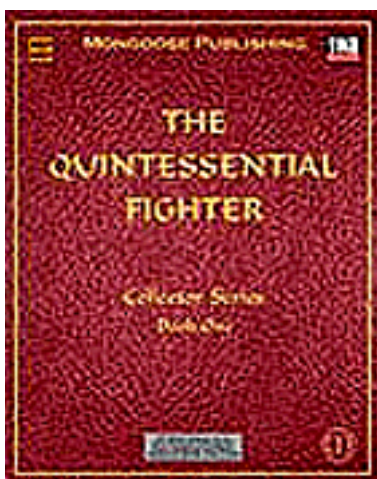


Fortunately, the CEO of Rebellion was an old roleplayer himself (started off with Tunnels & Trolls, just like myself and Alex). A deal was made, and Judge Dredd appeared in May 2002, our first hardback, with a dash of colour to boot!

It was at this time we also saw the pitfalls of using freelance writers and started employing our own full-time.

January 2002

This is where everything really changed. We thought we had done well up to this point, but nothing prepared us for the next wave – the Quintessentials. Even after the Encyclopaedias, few other publishers had jumped on to the ‘rules’ bandwagon for D20



and, again according to my memory, no one had yet done anything aimed solely at players. This was to end with The Quintessential Fighter, a book no fighter-playing player should ever be without.

Backed up with advertising in Dragon magazine, this series sold in *lumps*. We had originally planned to do just four (Fighter, Rogue, Cleric and Wizard) but when we saw the demand, we quickly extended the line. By the time Rogue had come out, we were averaging a book sold every thirty seconds!

The Quintessentials were to run for three years, month in and month out, and totalled thirty six books. They were also the first series we launched to earn more than a million Dollars.

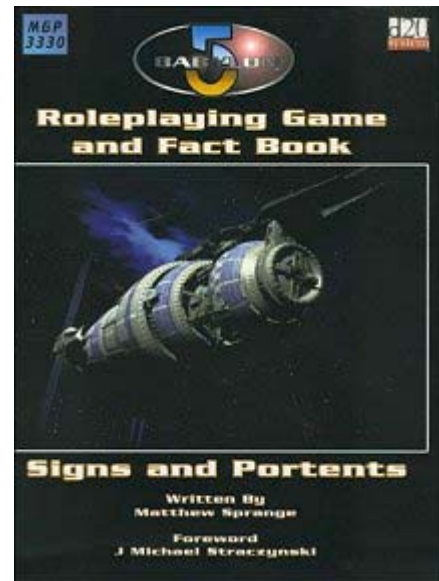
With the Quintessentials behind us, we were quite pumped up as a company. We hired our first full-time editor, expanded our writing staff (soon to build up to four full-time members), and moved the company out of our respective houses, and into a property we were able to purchase ourselves.

July 2003

So, we had produced Judge Dredd, and a Slaine RPG quickly followed. We were hungry for more. Perhaps we could try some sort of TV or film tie-in?

We targeted Warner Brothers and their hit TV series, Babylon 5. By this time, Babylon 5 was a memory for most, but we figured enough gamers would remember it fondly to be worthwhile and, just as important, that Warner Brothers would consider it a ‘dead’ property... and so it would be cheap.

Well, cheap is not exactly how I would end up describing it, and we lashed out a serious mid-five figure sum for the privilege. It was also somewhat interesting going to Warner Brothers offices in London and pitching to them, though having the Judge Dredd book to hand helped immensely.



In July, we launched the D20 version of Babylon 5. We were to retain the licence for the next six years and, in that time, produced over 40 books. Overall, it exceeded even the Quintessentials in sales.

July 2003 II

Also in July, we launched Signs & Portents, with issue one coming with a free Slayer's Guide to Minotaurs! S&P would remain in full colour print for 25 issues, before becoming the online freebie you know and love today.

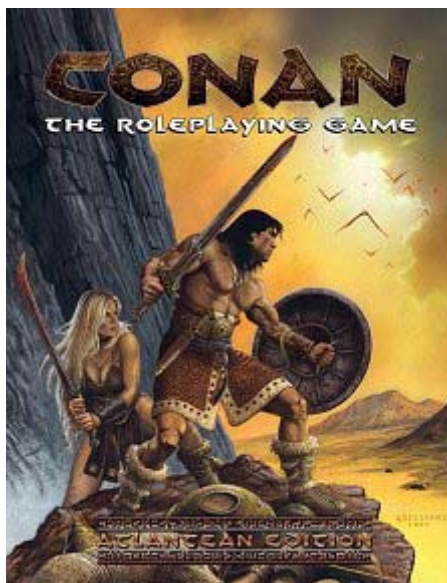
November 2003

OGL Cybernet appeared, the first of our ‘genre’ rulebooks. Cybernet had the distinction of having a soundtrack made for it, and it was quickly followed by OGL Horror, Ancients and Wild West.

January 2004

A chance phone call in late 2003 had an interesting effect. Alex was chatting to someone on the phone, and then turned round to me and said ‘Umm, do we want the Conan licence?’

The Mongoose: Ten Years Young



Err, yes, we do.

January 2004 saw the launch of the D20 version of Conan, soon to be followed by a wealth of supplements that would wow fans of the famous barbarian. Conan players would always prefer the 'nation' books above all others though!

July 2004

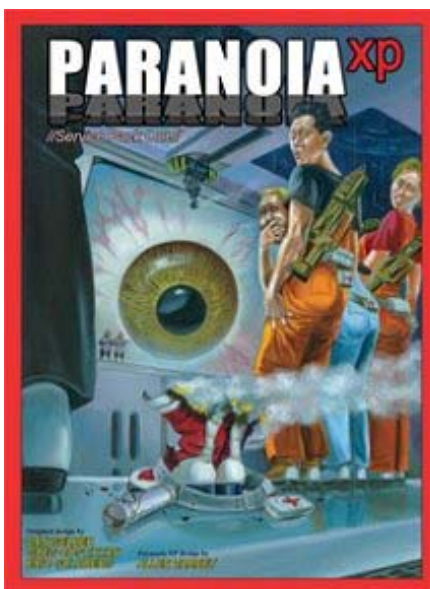
We launched our first miniatures game in this month - Mighty Armies, a quick to play 15mm fantasy game. By this time, we were looking firmly at doing miniatures, being a great love of both myself and Alex. Some of the former members of Agents of Gaming had joined our staff at this point, lending their miniatures casting experience to Mongoose (one of them, Rob, is still with us!).

A Babylon 5 miniatures game, based on space combat, had already been planned but though the box set (with counters!) had been launched in this month, miniatures would not appear until later in the year. Mighty Armies proved popular enough, and we released several forces.

Incidentally, Mighty Armies is still going strong as we passed ownership to Rebel Miniatures – check them out!

August 2004

Paranoia returns, much to the chagrin of the Mongoose staff at Gen Con, who had to contend with a stand that had eager gamers crowding round it until stocks finally ran dry – in the first morning! Somehow, I managed to not be there that year...



September 2004

The first Babylon 5 miniatures are released, a wave of Omegas, Sharlins and others. Within two months we would do fleet box sets that proved immensely popular. The line would expand to cover nearly 200 different ships, spread across 13 fleets.

December 2004

We launch the Victory-class advanced destroyer for EarthForce fleets, our first 3D modelled miniature.

January 2005

Gangs of Mega-City One is released, our first 'proper' miniatures boxed game, and our first try at plastic miniatures. The game play was solid, the miniatures nearly passable (we never charged much for them), and there was a distinct lack of judges. However, the core of the rules would become the Battleground Evolution system later on, to be used in a great many things.

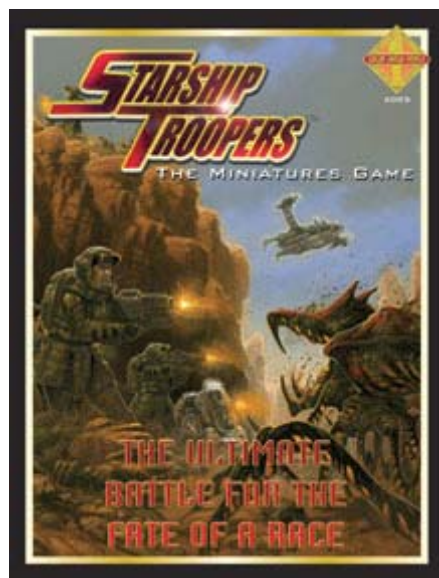


September 2005

Our first card game is launched, the Paranoia Mandatory Bonus Fun Card Game. It does okay, but is not really in a market we knew as well as we should have done.

April 2005

We launch the Starship Troopers miniatures game. A nice big box set, lots of plastics, and a fierce launch at Salute. This was roundly considered to be a Good Game, though the cost of the licence was punishing, to say the least (low six figures – ouch!). Sadly, a dispute (actually, court action) between Sony and the



Heinlein Estate caused the line to cease all development for over two years, and we could not negotiate an extension after that, leaving us precious little opportunity to do anything beyond the initial releases. However, if you are after a game of bugs versus Mobile Infantry, it is still a tough game to beat.

July 2006

Another classic RPG line is collared by the Mongoose – RuneQuest, brought into the 21st Century, with a good line of supplements to back it up.

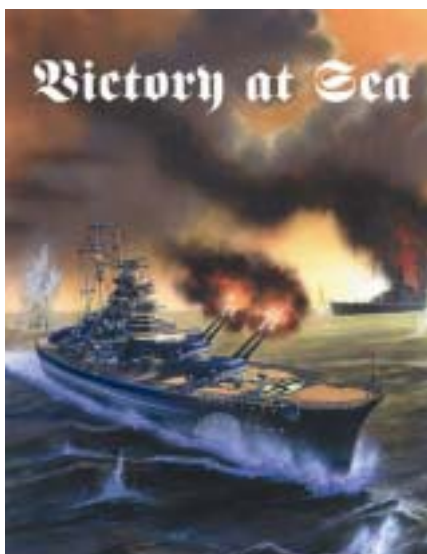
October 2006

Our first Flaming Cobra title is launched, under an imprint designed to help smaller studios and publishers reach a wider audience. Secret Societies was a D20-based book designed to help games masters create cults and the like. The Flaming Cobra model has since been copied around the RPG industry (some using the exact same contracts!).

November 2006

Here, we tried our hand at pre-painted miniatures. Battlefield Evolution was a development of the rules set that had started with Gangs of Mega-City One, and run through Starship Troopers. This version was tighter and we could fit it on a single sheet included with every box sold!

The game was solid, and the line ran to 16 pre-painted box sets, from infantry to main battle tanks. However, the line quickly ran into problems, chief among them being that we discovered that pre-painted models could be a) cheap, b) well-painted or c) have lots of variations/poseability. In 2006 you could, at best, choose two of those. This has been somewhat underlined by the fact that since we began selling the box sets for £5 each, the game has begun enjoying something of a renaissance!



December 2006

Victory at Sea appears, our first historical miniatures game, though we were never to do any miniatures for it. This was a 'folly' project, a whim of mine to see if the A Call to Arms system could be adapted to World War II naval warfare. We figured it might sell a few copies here and there but, within six months, it was clear we had something of a hit on our hands with thousands being sold. Much to the chagrin of 'proper' naval wargamers, I might add (will never forget the comment about kindergarten gaming, chaps!). However, Victory at Sea proved to be a great game for those actually wanting to have some fun while messing with ships.

We make no apologies for this game...

January 2007

We officially launch our own digital printing facility. It cost a huge amount, and did not work.

Not really much that can be added to that!

February 2007

We come to a three way agreement between ourselves, Chaosium and Michael Moorcock to bring the Eternal Champion into the Mongoose stable. We immediately pair it up with the RuneQuest system.

July 2007

A solo gamebook called Flight From the Dark, suitably rewritten by the original author, is released. Joe Dever's Lone Wolf had come back to us all – a poignant moment for both Alex and I, whose gaming started with these books way back in the eighties.



August 2007

We officially stop production using our own printing facility, consign the equipment to the deepest recesses of our office and start printing in the US. The company does an immediate one-eighty degree turn, overnight.

October 2007

After him living in the US for some time, Alex and I finally decide to part ways, with him pursuing a new life 'over there,' and me soldiering on with the Mongoose. He still phones me up to taunt me.

April 2008

Traveller arrives, on the tide of much debate, anguish and teeth-gnashing from gamers over what we would do with their game! As it turned out, the game was a bit of a corker, and remains one of our best sellers to this date.

The Mongoose: Ten Years Young



September 2009

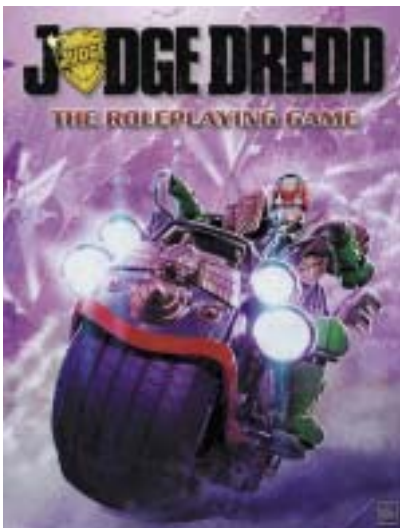
Mongoose officially joins the Rebellion Group, to much rejoicing. The future is bright as we look forward to a host of new projects, allied to Europe's largest independent computer games developer.

June 2009

Hammers Slammers makes an entrance to the Traveller system, allowing us to demonstrate the versatility of the rules set.

August 2009

As does a brand new Judge Dredd book, lavishly laid out by our now full-time graphic design artist, Will. Dredd would soon be



followed by the Strontium Dog RPG, again based on the Traveller system.

We also release our first French language book (Elric of Melnibone), marking the inauguration of our Translation Department. Still going strong today, with the range covering the Eternal Champion, RuneQuest and Traveller!

January 2010

After nearly a year in development, Lawrence Whitaker and Pete Nash see Mongoose release their own personal baby (that sounds a bit weird, actually...), RuneQuest II. To mark the occasion, we publish every core rulebook in leather, and the game is generally agreed to be the best iteration of RuneQuest yet.



March 2010

The Lone Wolf Multiplayer Gamebook is released, using the same rules as the solo gamebooks. Just shows what you can do when you are not blinded by the D20 rules system!

April 2010

Mongoose leaves the Rebellion Group to become independent once more. Though neither party was happy continuing together, the split was amicable and Mongoose continues to work on 2000AD gaming properties.

We immediately decide to reinvent ourselves with a host of new lines, though these would take at least a year to come to fruition.

June 2010

As soon as we were able, we brought out a miniatures range to stake our intentions for the future. To begin with, the Judge Dredd range had some older figures in the mix and was available by mail order only, but we announced that the rules would be a free download and we quickly added new miniatures that blew the socks off fans of 2000AD!

September 2010

Pete Nash's Vikings is released. This is the second book in the RuneQuest II line that intentionally duplicates a classic book, and gains credit for being better than the original.

March 2011

After much preparation, Mongoose finally makes its way back into the miniatures market proper, with A Call to Arms: Noble Armada. Veterans of the Babylon 5 game agree this is the best version of the game yet. Well, we ain't done yet, lads!

May 2011

Happy birthday to us, happy birthday to us...

The Mongoose story continues, hopefully for another ten years and more. We have some great treats lined up for you over the coming months, and we hope you will join us to see what lies over the next hill on this great voyage.

We must take this time to thank you all, each and every gamer who has supported Mongoose throughout the years, through the good times and bad. We really, literally, absolutely could not have done any of this without you.

Thank you.

A vibrant, stylized illustration of a space battle. In the center, a large blue and white spaceship is engaged in combat with a green and black vessel. The background is a deep purple and blue space filled with stars, nebulae, and a large, glowing red planet. The title 'NOBLE ARMADA' is written in a bold, black, serif font with a white outline, set against a glowing, oval-shaped nebula. Below it, the subtitle 'A CALL TO ARMS' is written in a white, sans-serif font with a black outline.

NOBLE ARMADA

A CALL TO ARMS

CORE RULEBOOK

Matthew Sprange

Salute 2011

By Katrina Hepburn

The largest Wargaming and Miniatures convention in the UK, Salute 2011 was definitely an eye opener. While it was based in London (a place I rather loath), it was actually really easy to find. This was not Mongoose Publishing's first trip to this convention, having made the trip several times in the past, but it was the first time I had attended. On setting up, you literally drive your vehicles right to where the trade stand is allocated in order to off-load everything (which made things really easy and quick for us to get organised) but the down side is that the venue is so huge and contains so many traders that when it comes to packing up for the day (because it is only a single day convention) things get very hectic and slightly disorganised (the end of the day is a little like a bad traffic jam. It had taken us over an hour to get the van back to the stand to pack it all up). But the convention itself is amazing, huge and guaranteed to have a miniatures game for everyone: whether you are a fantasy fan, sci-fi fan, pirate fan or whatever flavour of fan you are!

Once we had set up the stand, and after we had a little breakfast, I decided to take a wander around the place (like I usually do) and take a few photos. This, in itself, was no small feat. As I turned around the corner of

the Mongoose stand I witnessed dozens upon dozens of traders, all setting up in possibly the largest warehouse I have ever seen in my life. The walk around would take me all day! And it did! For the first 4 hours of the convention my eyes were everywhere. Never before have I seen so much effort, art (most of the painted miniatures were out-of-this-world fantastic) and so many lead/plastic/resin sculptures in one place at one time. This is the candy store of miniature gaming!

There were many stands and games which caught my eye and here are some of my personal highlights.

Tomb of the Cybermen

I have a warm place in my heart reserved for the humble Dalek. I try to get a decent amount of hugs in whenever I see one. I am adamant that 'EXTERMINATE!' is simply a Dalek phrase which can be translated as 'Peace be with you noble human, let me give you a loving laser hug that will help you ascend to a more comfortable and higher plane of existence!'

They are often completely misunderstood. They just want to love and be loved! In Tomb of the Cybermen, we see the handsome Dalek

race wanting to do nothing but give loving laser hugs to the evil Cybermen. Of course, once again, their messages are completely misconstrued and the Cybermen only seem to want to "DELETE!" the cuddly Daleks. At Salute 2011 I witnessed a wonderfully set up tabletop which consisted of a battleground complex along with some wonderfully crafted 1/35th scale miniatures of both Daleks and Cybermen. While I never got my hand in at taking the side of the Daleks in helping them to bring happy, bubbly ascension to the cold shells of the Cybermen, This is one game which I will be keeping my eyes peeled for at any future miniature conventions we attend.

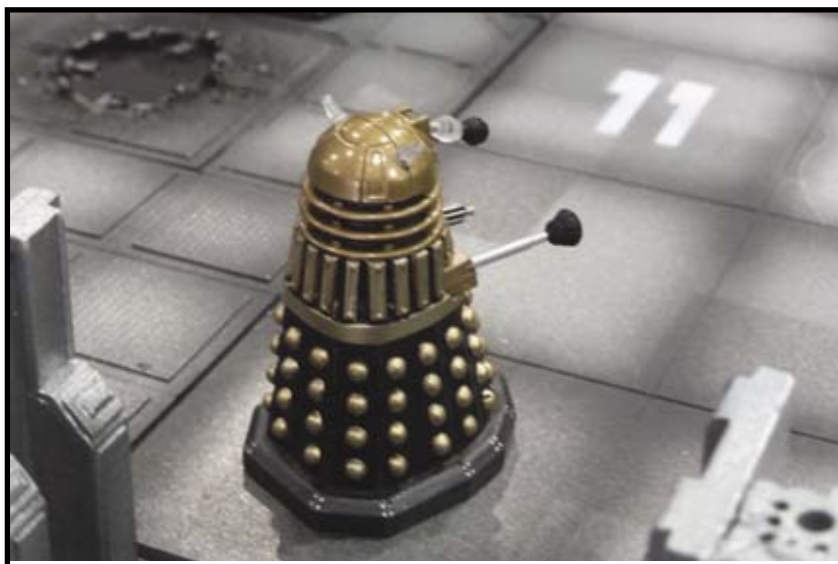
Freebooter's Fate

There were many things making this game stand out among so many others. First of all was the detail of the miniatures (of course this always plays a part in deciding on a new miniatures army).

Secondly it is a skimish level game rather than army based with each character being quite unique (which makes the gameplay far more immersive in my opinion). It also had an equal amount of female characters as well as male characters (definitely a plus for any girl gamers out there who would like to take up a form of tabletop miniature gaming but want a less testosterone filled warband).

Finally this game did not use dice, instead using a card system to determine what damage is dealt and where.

You take control of a small team of either Pirates, the Imperial Armada, the Brotherhood, Goblin Pirates or Mercenaries in a wonderfully detailed fantasy world. Two or more players each have a small compliment of around 8-12 miniatures of their choice faction. The players pit their wits against each other using a combat resolution system featuring basic psychological elements and



Peace and Goodwill to all men! Apparently.



Dalek diplomacy in action.

focusing more on skill rather than luck. Play is conducted in rounds but alternates between miniatures rather than entire crews.

After a demonstration of the game, I really wanted to find out more and perhaps invest in my own crew. However, the moths in my purse forced me to put off purchasing yet another army (however small an army it may be) until a later date. So it is good they have a website! (www.freebootersminiatures.de)

WarGods

The reason this game caught my eye was the wonderful style of the miniatures. Based on the legends of numerous civilizations, WarGods looks like a miniature game for fans of Egyptian, Greek and/or Norse mythology. Which is something I have a passing interest in as well. Unfortunately I could not find any demonstrations of this game. All I can really say about this is that it looks interesting and that the miniatures are beautiful.

If I were to say one thing that this convention lacked, in my own opinion, it would be the

fact that we, The Mongoose team, did not have demonstrations of Noble Armada running. Which is a shame because this has quickly become one of my favourite miniature games and on the day of Salute 2011 we had Robert Glass visiting from America and helping out on the trade stand (he runs Mongoose's facility in America). If you have not checked out Noble Armada yet then I highly recommend that you do. You know where to look!

Salute 2011 is a tabletop gamers paradise. From the moment you enter to the moment you leave you will be in awe and not just because of the sheer size of it. Beautifully painted miniatures, huge armies at war, amazing landscapes, gamers dressing in LARP gear for the occasion, re-enactors and so much diversity that you will not be able to see it all in a single day. It is a brilliant convention and one which I am looking forward to revisiting!



Soviets advancing.

Salute 2011



Some dodgy looking geezer behind the Mongoose stand...



Seriously Steampunk.



On your marks. Get set. Paint!



ADVENTURE

is only a page away...



PATHFINDER
ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE

**MONGOOSE
PUBLISHING**

The Lost Hoffman Schematics: Part 1

By Carl Walmsley

Brother Hoffman is far and away the most talented inventor to have passed through the ranks of The Order. As a Prior Artifex, he was without equal. His devices have aided countless hieromonks to overcome supernatural foes that would otherwise have bested them.

News, therefore, of a lost device – of a machine Hoffman was working on when his mind failed him – is of the utmost importance. Agents are dispatched at once and charged with locating the plans to Hoffman's last great invention...

Background

Since that dreadful day at the laboratory in Guerande – when the laws of nature were shattered and the Glorious Scholar lost his mind – Brother Hoffman has been hidden away in the monastery of the Sacra di San Michelle in northern Italy. Though he spends much of his time ranting and raving, he does experience moments of relative clarity. At such times, Hoffman has jotted down notes and sketches – clues to the existence of an unknown wondrous device. Specifically, his scribbles suggest the presence of a lost blueprint and prototype he was working on shortly before his sanity was taken from him.

The plans are for a '*de-arcanizer*' – a device that can strip a location of its magical potential. This can banish spirits, neutralize spells and render supernatural creatures powerless. Even a half-completed *de-arcanizer* would be incredibly useful to the Order.

Hoffman's notes (see Player Handout One) mention the town of Fountainbelle in southern France. It was near here – on a small lake island known as L'île des Esprits Troublés – that Hoffman tested an early prototype of his device. The island is a site where dozens of cultists were slaughtered by members of the Order more than two centuries ago. It is now cursed by hauntings and evil spirits. Hoffman's attempt to pacify the area was only partially successful – stripping some of the spirits of their power – but it was enough to encourage him to press on with his experiments.

Timeline

The events in this adventure are set in December 1189. The timeline below explains the order and timing of events leading up to the start of the scenario.

February 1189 – Having insisted he spend some time away from the confines of Mont St Michel, Brother Hoffman arrives at L'île des Esprits Troublés. He tries out his prototype *de-arcanizer*. It meets with limited success.

February 1189 – Later that month Hoffman arrives in Toulon, contacts Forchard and has him commission the construction of laboratory equipment.

March 1189 – Hoffman takes up residence in Fountainbelle and works on constructing a new prototype *de-arcanizer*.

April 1189 – Hoffman returns to Mont St Michel, frustrated by his failure to perfect the *de-arcanizer*.

May 1189 – Hoffman suffers the accident which robs him of his sanity.

August 1189 – Forchard realises that nobody is coming to collect Hoffman's equipment. He breaks into the laboratory and begins familiarising himself with the equipment inside.

November 1189 – Forchard decides to deal with the bandits inhabiting the forest north of Fountainbelle. He is captured and his equipment taken. The *de-arcanizer* is sold to Milo Ramasca de Roma.

December 1189 – The Adventurers arrive in Toulon to begin their investigation.

These dates can be altered so as to fit the timeline of an existing campaign, though the time between each incident needs to remain roughly the same

With the help of a local Order contact called Forchard, Hoffman purchased a shack in the nearby town of Fountainbelle. This he converted into a laboratory and began making adjustments to his plans and to the partially-functioning prototype. When he was unexpectedly called to return to Mont St Michel, he sealed up his laboratory and charged Forsard with watching over the site.

A few weeks after his return to Mont St Michel, Hoffman suffered his terrible accident. When word of this reached Forsard, he assumed that someone would come and reclaim the items in Hoffman's laboratory or that he would

receive orders to do so himself. When three months had passed and there was still no word, Forsard realised that nobody else in the Order knew what Hoffman had been doing in Fountainbelle.

Still bitter about his rejection from the Order as an Initiate, Forsard decided he could turn the situation to his advantage – and prove he should never have been cast aside as an Initiate. Taking the incomplete prototype with him, Forsard offered to rid Fountainbelle of the bandits who have infected the nearby woods for many years – bandits that Forsard knew were led by a 'cunning man', learned in the old ways of pagan magic.

Unfortunately for Forsard, he failed in his efforts and was captured by the brigands. He now serves as a camp slave, held in thrall by one of the cunning man's charms. The prototype and schematics Forsard had with him were taken: the cunning man kept the device and sold the plans to a purveyor of illicit occult goods called Milo Ramasca de Roma.

Now Ramasca intends to auction the plans to the highest bidder, and it is only a matter of time before they are lost to the Order forever.

Sacra di San Michelle

The adventure begins with the Adventurers having arrived – most likely by boat – in the Italian port of Genoa. It is only a short journey north to Turin and then west from there to the Sacra di San Michelle where Hoffman is now confined. One of the Hieromonks assigned to watch over the Glorious Scholar has made his way to Genoa where he will rendezvous with the Adventurers in St Joseph's Monastery inside the city walls.

The hieromonk, Adolphus, has with him the confused scribbles and sketches that Hoffman has managed produce during his brief moments of (relative) lucidity. Adolphus has a great deal of respect for the Glorious Scholar and considers his task of watching over him to be an honour. Accordingly, he handles the parchments with reverence and speaks of Hoffman with a mixture of awe and affection.

Within the confines of St Joseph's Monastery you are ushered into a windowless chamber dimly lit by dwindling candles.

Brother Adolphus introduces himself and bids you sit at a table, furnished with victuals and wine. Carefully retrieving a sheet of parchment from a satchel, he sets it on the table.

'I am sure you are all aware,' he says quietly, 'that Brother Hoffman – the greatest inventor the Order has ever known – lost his mind some months ago when one of his experiments went awry. Since then, we have watched over him and – occasionally – a little of his former wit is returned.'

Adolphus slides forward the page. 'Over the past few months, whenever he is lucid enough, he has

been sketching out words and drawings. We are unsure exactly what they mean but his manner – the urgency he has displayed – suggest that they are important.'

'Amongst his words,' states Adolphus, pointing at the parchment, 'are two names. The first, Fountainbelle, is a small town a day's ride north of Toulon, a port city in the south of France. The second, Forchard, is a man's name. We have a man named Forchard within the Order,' says the monk frowning his brow, 'who is based in Toulon. More than a coincidence, for sure. A messenger bird was sent to Forchard a fortnight ago but there has been no reply.'

'This is all a bit of a mystery at the moment – one that needs unravelling. We know that Hoffman travelled to a region of southern France shortly before his accident – perhaps to Toulon or Fountainbelle. It may be that he found something there that was important.'

'Travel to Toulon, and then on to Fountainbelle. Firstly, try to locate Forchard. Then, find out if Hoffman was in the area before he lost his mind and, if so, what it was that caught his attention.'

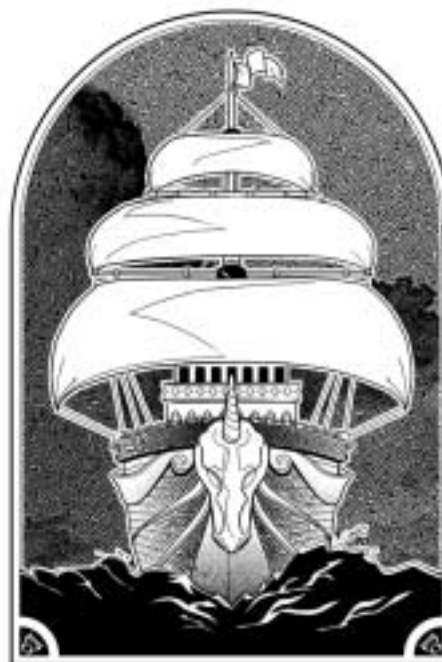
Adolphus stares hard at the muddled scribbles and drawings, then puffs out his cheeks. 'Any questions?'

Translations

The words on Hoffman's parchment (Player Handout One) are written in a mixture of French (F), German (G) and Latin (L). Their meanings are as follows:

- La poussiere tombe (F) – grave dust
- Essence elementale (F) – elemental essence
- Muselen les chiens de l'enfer (F) – muzzle the hounds of hell
- Ossa Martyris (L) – martyr's bones
- Subicite (L) – subdue
- Sanctus aqua (L) holy water
- Dei magicae (L) – the magic of God
- De l'obscurite la lumiere (F) – from the darkness comes light
- Dampfen (G) – diminish or dampen

The formulae are (currently) indecipherable.



If the Adventurers question Adolphus, they can acquire some further information:

- Forchard is not a hieromonk – he was drummed out as an Initiate. He has since served as a spy for the Order, watching the comings and goings in Toulon.
- He rents a small house – paid for by the Order – on the Rue de Voilure.
- Toulon is a port city, dating back to Roman times. It is fortified, having suffered attacks from roving bands of pirates for many years.

The Adventurers will have little trouble finding passage aboard a ship travelling west along the Mediterranean coast from Genoa. Lots of vessels taking this route drop anchor in Toulon and resupply: those that do not can launch a small boat to transport Adventurers ashore, whilst they remain outside the harbour.

Toulon

A week or so before the Adventurers arrive in Toulon, the city will have experienced a pirate raid. The brigands – some of whom came ashore, whilst others managed to board and steal a docked ship – were Saracens. As a result, many of the local men have pledged

The Lost Hoffman Schematics: Part 1

their support to the new crusade. Furthermore, a number of foreigners have suffered beatings and had their property damaged. Toulon, as a Mediterranean port, sees its fair share of travellers, of varied hue and religion. Tolerance and understanding are rare things at the moment however, and the Adventurers will find many of the residents are on edge.

Xenophobia

If any of the Adventurers are middle-eastern in origin, they will be treated with suspicion by the residents of Toulon – most of whom are too ignorant to differentiate between Moors, Jews, Barbary Turks and so forth.

This may take the form of insults, increased prices or even outright violence. If these incidents are handled badly it could greatly increase the difficulty of the Adventurers' task, and could even see them ending up in the local gaol.

Locating Forchard

The Rue de Voilure – or road of sails – is located overlooking the docks and has a commanding view of the harbour.

When the Adventurers arrive at Forchard's house, they will find a small group of men preparing to smash their way in through the front door. The leader of the men is the landlord of the property, Gustaf Maron. He is angry for a number of reasons. Firstly, Forchard is behind with the rent. Maron has visited several times in the past fortnight but has always found Forchard to be absent – or, as he suspects, hiding within. Secondly, Forchard has changed the lock, meaning Maron cannot get into his own property.

The Adventurers should realise having Maron and his three men traipsing about inside the house could be a bad thing. They might well destroy any clues as to Forchard's location: it is also possible they will discover sensitive items or intelligence belonging to The Order.

Maron's blood is at boiling point – one of his properties was set alight during the recent pirate raid – and persuading him to stay his

hand will not be easy. The best approach is to pay the rent he is owed. This amounts to 40 silver pieces. If he gets this, he will leave peacefully – though with a promise to return for this week's rent (another 10 SP) in a few days' time.

Any attempt at intimidation receives a –30% Modifier and is likely to start a fight.

Forchard's House

Once inside, the Adventurers can search Forchard's property. It is clear from the dust and mouldy food in the pantry that nobody has been there for at least a few weeks.

Forchard has been careful to conceal any evidence that might link him to The Order. However, a triangular symbol in the cellar marks the existence of a false wall, behind which is a concealed room. The wall is held in place by a number of stacked crates; if these are removed, the wall can be pulled open like a door.

Within the room, Forchard has stored several weapons and a few vials of holy water. There are also four notes pinned to the wall.

The first is a deed of purchase for a piece of land on the outskirts of Fountainbelle. According to the deed, there is a small shack on the land. It was purchased in February 1189. Strung over the nail holding the parchment in place is a key. This opens the front door to the shack.

The second note has a name and address on it – Benoit the blacksmith, Rue de Marchands.

The third note reads simply 'L'île des Espirits Troublés – inform O?' This is a reference to the cursed site (The Isle of the Restless Spirits) that Hoffman's visited to test his *de-arcanizer* prototype. Forchard wondered whether to remind the Order of the haunted isle's existence.

The final note is a wanted poster. It depicts a one-eyed villain by the name of Artur Duchot, who apparently resides in the forest near Fountainbelle. A reward of 250 silver pieces is offered by the Lord-Mayor of settlement for Duchot's head. Forchard has scrawled

the words 'cunning man' on the poster. Any character that passes an Occult Test will know a cunning man is a pagan healer and spell-caster.

A small yard at the rear of the property houses a cage of dead carrier pigeons, each had been trained to return to Mont St Michel or another of The Order's sites. Loitering on a nearby rooftop is the bird dispatched to Forchard weeks ago. It still bears the note telling him to report in urgently.

Benoit the blacksmith

The Rue de Marchands (road of tradesmen) is a busy place. Smiths, carpenters, wheelwrights and so forth find plenty of business servicing the needs of those arriving at and leaving from the port.

Benoit has a good spot for his forge, just where the road opens out onto the harbour proper. Any of the other tradesmen will have heard of Benoit and can vouch for both his good character and exceptional skill.

If the Adventurers question the smith in a way that indicates they are conducting an investigation he will quickly clam-up. He has no love for the authorities and considers both the church and nobles to be more crooked than the average cutpurse. If the Adventurers instead seem to be making enquiries about his work with a view to hiring him, he is happy to discuss the work he did for Forchard – though it will take him a few moments to recall the details:

'Ah yes' says the smith, rubbing grime into his stubbly chin. 'Strange job that one. And expensive. I insisted on the money up front – what with it requiring so much metal.'

Benoit will make the Adventurers wait as he retrieves the plan Benoit gave to him back in February.

'This is it.' Benoit holds up a piece of parchment displaying a number of pipes, valves, cogs and other esoteric items. 'Blowed if I know what this stuff is. But the instructions were clear enough. Mind you, I had to borrow some specialized tools from Francois the jeweller. Some of it was real fiddly.'

'Forchard came to check things pretty regularly – to see I was doing it right. A couple of times, he brought an older fellow along – a monk. Once I'd finished the last few bits he loaded them on a wagon and headed north. He had supplies with him too. I guessed he was going on a journey of some kind.'

Any character that passes a Lore (Occult) or Lore (Alchemy) Test will recognise that the plans given to Benoit are for the construction of a laboratory. They are carefully designed (by Hoffman) so as to conceal their purpose from whomever follows them.

Benoit started this work in February 1189, and finished in early March. He was handsomely paid for his time and postponed all other work until this commission was completed.

If Benoit is asked to describe the monk who sometimes accompanied Forchard, the description he gives matches Hoffman's appearance.

L'île des Esprits Troublés

Twenty miles northwest of Toulon is a lake, in the centre of which is a small, heavily-wooded island. Any character who can pass a Difficult (–20%) Lore (Regional) or similar Test will know that the island was the site used by a witch-cult some two centuries ago. That is, until half a dozen hieromonks descended upon the isle with righteous fury. In one night, they slaughtered more than 50 cultists, including the leaders of the dangerous coven.

It has long been suspected that ghosts and even wraiths haunt the isle, but given its remote locale, the destruction of these restless spirits has never been a priority for the Order. The site did, however, provide Hoffman with an excellent place to try out his new device.

If the Adventurers prioritise a visit to L'île des Esprits Troublés they will have become side-tracked from their main mission. An exploration of the isle will reveal the presence of various ghostly inhabitants. These are unable to leave the island and pose no real

threat either to the Adventurers or to the few people living in the area. Of course, tales of restless spirits are to be suppressed, but this is such a remote locale that no one is likely to be too interested in a few tall tales.

If the Adventurers are determined to scour the island for clues, they will eventually encounter an unquiet spirit quite unlike the rest. This is the shade of Eleanor of Toulon. She was an innocent victim of the Order's wholesale slaughter – a woman kidnapped and drugged by the witch cult, who was in line to serve as a human sacrifice.

If Eleanor – who cannot speak, other than with her pain-filled eyes – can persuade one or more of the Adventurers to follow her, she will reveal the bones of her corpse. Her arms and legs are still bound with chains. A small, wooden cross – warped and rotting after all these years – still rests about her neck. Given a proper Christian burial, Eleanor's soul will finally be at rest.

This encounter should provide recalcitrant Adventurers with a sense of closure that will hopefully get them back on track with the main plot of the adventure.

Fountainbelle

A provincial town of some 250 souls, Fountainbelle is just large (and close) enough to Toulon for its Lord-Mayor to hold pretensions of grandeur. There are a few small stalls and a regular market, where customers can purchase food and simple supplies, as well as a few more exotic goods that have come ashore in Toulon.

Sites of Interest

The Rambeau Manor House

Situated at the end of town's main street is the home of Fountainbelle's Lord-Mayor. A minor noble, Mathieu Rambeau oversees the running of the town on behalf of the Comte de Toulon. He has ambitions that stretch far beyond this provincial settlement, however – a fact that is reflected in his rather grand manor house and ostentatious clothing.



There are a number of reasons that the Adventurers might seek out Rambeau. Firstly, he is responsible for the 250 SP reward offered for the apprehension of the bandit, Duchot. He is also prepared to pay a further 25 SP for every member of his band – and 100 SP for Duchot's lieutenant, Christophe 'the Fell Handed'.

Secondly, as Lord-Mayor, Rambeau knows a great deal about the goings-on in Fountainbelle. Specifically, he holds the following pertinent facts:

- An out-of-towner, Monsieur Forchard, purchased a small shack with a plot of land in February: it was Rambeau who sold it to him.
- The shack was used by another man, who only visited town to buy supplies of food. A description of this man will reveal him to be Hoffman.
- Forchard spoke with Francisco, the Mayor's house steward, about claiming the reward for apprehending Duchot. He has not been seen since last month (November).
- The brigands are well-supplied and apparently sell their ill-gotten gains to a 'fence' who then moves items on to another region.

The Lost Hoffman Schematics: Part 1

If the Adventurers attempt to meet with Rambeau they will struggle to gain an audience unless they appear to be wealthy and/or important. The Lord-Mayor will make a point of getting to know anyone of noble birth who passes through town, as he seeks to establish a network of useful contacts.

Rambeau is greatly vexed by the brigands in the northern wood, who have attacked a number of travellers. If the Adventurers show an interest in claiming the reward, this will gain them access to the manor house, but Rambeau's steward, Francisco, will deal with them. Some fast talking or skilled persuasion will be required to muster a meeting with the lord himself.

Hoffman's shack

Located on the very edge of town is the shack Forchard purchased for Hoffman. Though a rickety-looking place, it has strong shutters and a sturdy, locked door. A Mechanisms Test at -30% is required to pick the lock. Alternatively it can be opened with the key hidden in Forchard's secret room.

Inside, Hoffman's bench – which houses a number of alchemical and occult tools – is covered by a blanket, now gathering dust. A search reveals that the equipment has seen heavy use, but not for some time.

Questioning the locals

A number of those living in Fountainbelle will remember Monsieur Forchard. Back in November, he was asking questions about the bandits in the woods, and specifically their leader, Duchot. A little persistence will reveal that he was last seen heading north into the woods, armed with a crossbow and sword.

None of the townsfolk know the name Hoffman, but some of the locals do remember the quiet, intense man who spent time in the shack at the edge of town during the spring of 1189.

The Woods

The Adventurers' investigation should eventually lead them to the brigands in the woods – most likely to try and locate Forchard. The residents of Fountainbelle can point them in the rough direction, but they will need to conduct a search using Tracking and possibly Survival skills to locate their camp.

Hideout

The brigands' hide-out is some eight miles north of Fountainbelle. Situated upon a natural hill, it provides a commanding view of the surrounding wood. A series of camouflaged huts, accessible via well-hidden rope-ladders, have been constructed amidst the branches of the sturdiest trees. These are numbered 1 to 4 on Map One. Duchot uses hut 1, Christophe hut 2, and the remaining huts are shared by the other outlaws.

Under the astute leadership of Artur Duchot, the brigands have remained safe for more than five years. Far more so than the minimal hedge magic he commands, this is a result of his cautious nature and the fact he always plans ahead.

Defences

The camp perimeter is protected by a number of trip-wires that, when triggered, rattle wooden chimes hidden in the trees. These alert nearby brigands to the presence of intruders. Spotting the trip-wires requires a Perception Test.

In addition, at least three bandits act as sentries, watching the approach to the camp for signs of trespassers. An Opposed Stealth/Perception Test is required to sneak past the nearest sentry and into the camp.

By day the brigands tend to mill about inside the camp, playing games, eating and drinking. Over the years, they have acquired a number of camp women, who receive protection and victuals in exchange for keeping them entertained. There are four times as many brigands in the camp as there are Adventurers.



Artur Duchot, the 'Cunning Man'

		D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	13	1-3	Right Leg	-/6
CON	15	4-6	Left Leg	-/6
SIZ	14	7-9	Abdomen	2/7
INT	15	10-12	Chest	2/8
POW	13	13-15	Right Arm	-/5
DEX	13	16-18	Left Arm	-/5
CHA	17	19-20	Head	-/6
<i>Combat Actions</i>	3	<i>Armour:</i> Stiffened Leather jacket (2 AP on Chest and Abdomen), Bear skin cloak (2 AP on Chest and Abdomen, but only when attacked from the rear; does not reduce Strike Rank)		
<i>Damage Modifier</i>	+1D2	<i>Traits:</i> None		
<i>Magic Points</i>	13	<i>Skills:</i> Athletics 55%, First Aid 65%, Healing 53%, Influence 55%, Insight 57%, Lore (regional) 85%, Lore (alchemy) 45%, Lore (Occult) 80%*, Perception 70%, Persuasion 68%, Resilience 65%, Stealth 70%, Survival 70%, Tracking 65%		
<i>Movement</i>	8m	<i>Equipment:</i> War sword, dagger, 35 silver pieces, emerald ring (see below), 4 doses of healing salve (see below)		
<i>Strike Rank</i>	+14 (+13 in armour)	<i>Combat Styles:</i> Sword and Dagger 75%		

WEAPONS

<i>Type</i>	<i>Size</i>	<i>Reach</i>	<i>Damage</i>	<i>AP/HP</i>
War sword	M	M	1D8+1D2	6/10
Dagger	S	S	1D4+1+1D2	6/8

*Duchot can use his knowledge of the occult to produce minor charms and cantrips. These provide a +10% bonus to a single skill test (see *Deus Vult Core Rulebook*, page 123 for more information).

Duchot's Emerald Ring – a relic from a time when pagan magic and beliefs were widespread, this ring provides the wearer with +30% bonus to Perception and Insight Tests made whilst within a woodland environment. Only an individual who reveres the spirits of the forest can benefit from wearing this ring.

Healing Salve – Duchot uses his knowledge of alchemy, forest plants and mysticism to produce healing salves. Applied to a wound, a dose of salve increases the recipient's rate of natural healing by one step (see *RuneQuest 2 Core Rulebook*, page 60). It also allows a Major Wound to begin healing as though treated with a successful Healing Test.

If faced with an unwinnable fight, Duchot will seek to retreat into the woods. He knows this territory very well, and has prepared a number of other locations where he can hide himself away.

The Lost Hoffman Schematics: Part 1

Christophe 'the Fell Handed'

		D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	18	1-3	Right Leg	1/7
CON	16	4-6	Left Leg	1/7
SIZ	17	7-9	Abdomen	3/8
INT	10	10-12	Chest	3/9
POW	11	13-15	Right Arm	-/6
DEX	13	16-18	Left Arm	-/6
CHA	9	19-20	Head	4/7

<i>Combat Actions</i>	2	<i>Armour:</i> Dented Iron helm (4 AP), Ring Mail vest (3 AP on Chest and Abdomen), Leather greaves (1 AP on each leg)		
<i>Damage Modifier</i>	+1D4	<i>Traits:</i> None		
<i>Magic Points</i>	11	<i>Skills:</i> Athletics 75%, Brawn 76%, Influence 45%, Lore (regional) 55%, Perception 60%, Resilience 85%, Stealth 50%, Survival 56%		
<i>Movement</i>	8m	<i>Equipment:</i> Woodsman's Axe, hammer, Shield, dagger, 22 SP		
<i>Strike Rank</i>	+12 (+9 in armour)	<i>Combat Styles:</i> Two Handed Axe 95%, Hammer and Shield 75%, Unarmed 88%		

WEAPONS

Type	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Woodsman's Axe	H	L	2D6+1D4	4/9
Hammer	M	S	1D6+1+1D4	5/6
Hoplite Shield	H	S	1D4+1D4	6/18
Unarmed	S	T	1D3+1D4	As for arm

A towering brute of a man, Christophe rarely leaves Duchot's side and is ferociously loyal. He would have died long ago, had it not been for Duchot's healing 'magic'.

Brigands

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

<i>Combat Actions</i>	2	<i>Armour:</i> Leather jacket (1 AP on Chest and Abdomen)		
<i>Damage Modifier</i>	+0	<i>Traits:</i> None		
<i>Magic Points</i>	10	<i>Skills:</i> Athletics 45%, Lore (regional) 55%, Perception 50%, Resilience 35%, Stealth 50%, Track 45%		
<i>Movement</i>	8m	<i>Equipment:</i> Either a war sword, shortspear or short bow, dagger, 1d6 SP		
<i>Strike Rank</i>	+10 (+9 in armour)	<i>Combat Styles:</i> War sword 45% or Shortspear 45% or Short bow 45%, Dagger 45%		

WEAPONS

Type	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP	Range
War sword	M	M	1d8	6/10	—
Dagger	S	S	1D4+1	6/8	—
Shortspear	M	L	1d8+1	4/5	—
Short bow	L	—	1D6	4/4	80m

Thrall

Since his failed attempt to assassinate Duchot, Forchard has been forced to serve as a camp slave. The painful shackles affixed to his limbs, force him to move about on his hands and knees. The brigands have taken to calling him 'dog' and make him to fetch and carry things about the camp. At night, he is tethered to a tree, and given a single blanket to prevent him freezing to death. His time as a thrall has certainly taught Forchard the value of humility: he now realises how foolish he was to come here on his own.

If he meets a member of The Order, Forchard's first priority will be to tell them about the *de-arcnizer*. He knows the plans and the prototype have been sold to a Roman merchant called Milo Ramasca de Roma. If the Adventurers release him, he will require some help walking – his arms and legs have been reduced to 1 hit point each and he has three levels of fatigue.

Contingency Plans

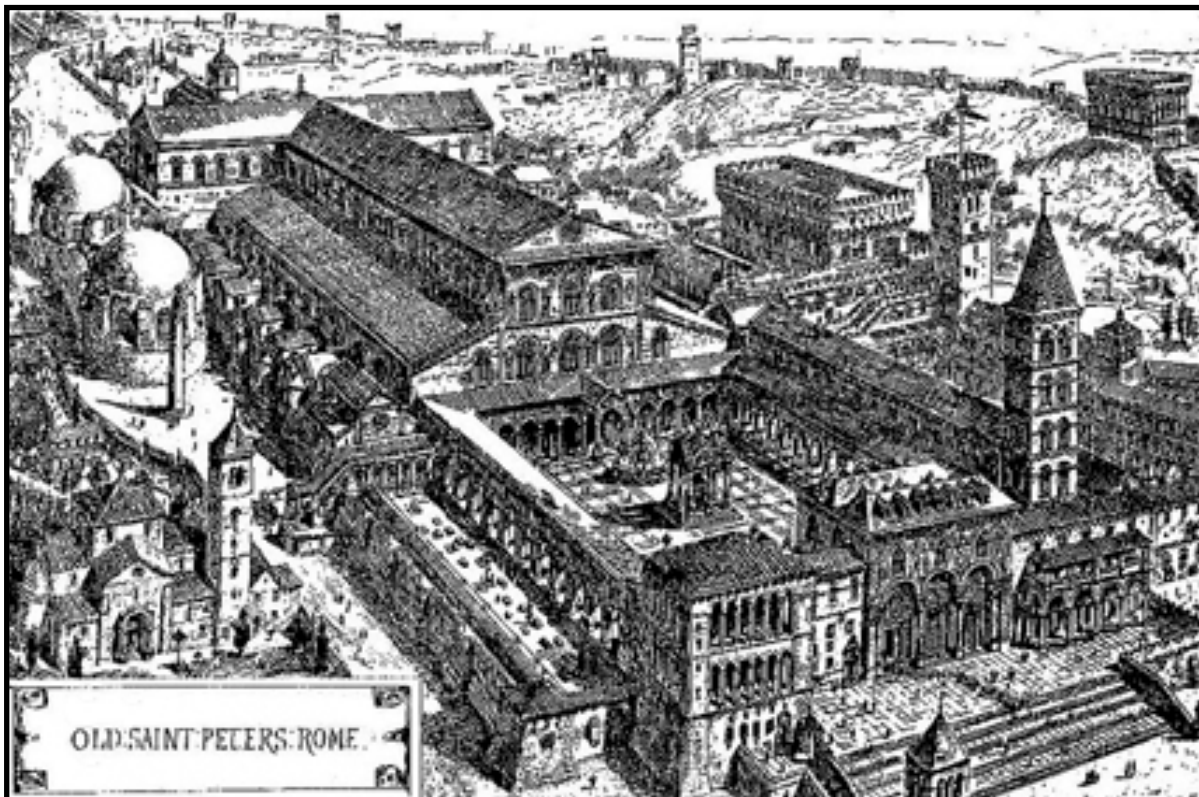
If something goes badly wrong with the adventure and the Adventurers do not have a chance to speak with Forchard – and, specifically, to learn about the *de-arcnizer* – they can still acquire this information by interrogating one of the bandits. Every member of the band is aware that Duchot took a valuable 'magical' item from Forchard and it was sold on to Milo Ramasca de Roma.

If this does not serve as a way to present the characters with the necessary information, then they can always discover correspondence from Ramasca inside Duchot's tree-hut.

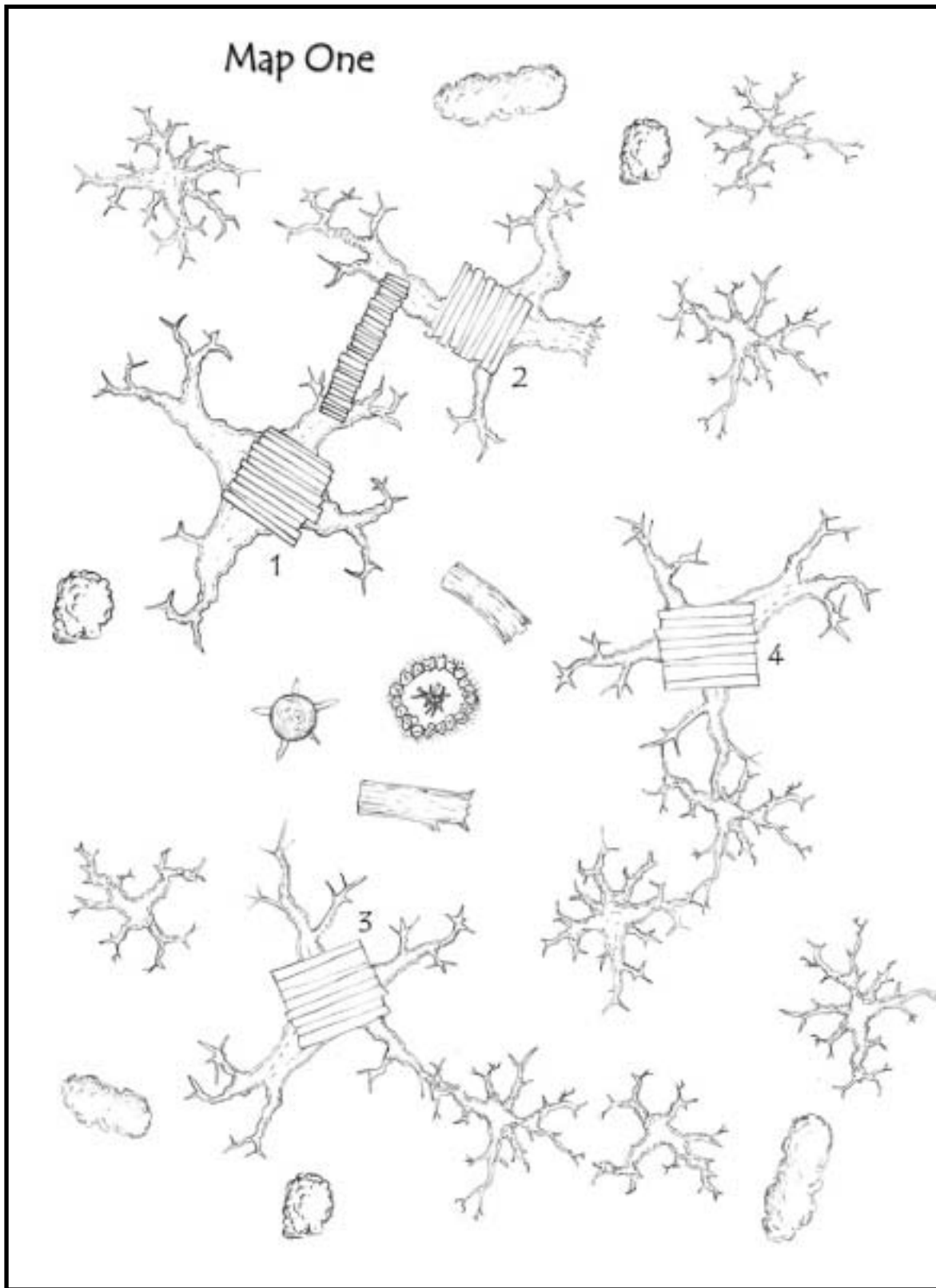
Concluding Part One

By the end of this first part of the adventure, the Adventurers should have learned Hoffman's final, half-finished wondrous item is now in the hands of Milo Ramasca de Roma. It is likely they will also know what the device is designed to do.

To complete their mission, they must now set sail for Rome in order to prevent the *de-arcnizer* falling into the hands of the Pope and his newly formed Inquisition...



The Lost Hoffman Schematics: Part 1



The Bandit Camp

La poussière tombe

Ossa martyris

essence elementale

Sanctus aqua

$(3R) - K$

Subicite
 $(KN - xN = R)$

DAMPFEN

$(\frac{x^n}{1}) = R$

$\frac{N \times R}{2}$

H_n-2?

Fantambelle
Forsard

Dei magicae

de l'obscurite (la lumiere)

Muselen les
chiens de l'enfer

$\frac{Bx - K}{1}$

Players' Handout 1: Hoffman's Scribbles

Go Find the Lady

By John R White

Happy Families

Genzo, Danjo, Kenjii, Chutaro and Sansho are five Mega-City One citizens who take special pride in their Hondo ancestry and culture. They are all close friends of many years standing who call themselves collectively as the 'Gonin' ('The Five'). They regularly meet for games of golf at the 'Fragrant Cedar' golf club owned by Sansho, where they usually end up at the nineteenth-hole playing cards and drinking. All have families they are proud of, though as they feel they work hard, they have reasoned that they have earned the right to some occasional extra-marital relaxation. In consequence, whilst they use Tuesdays as a regular evening for socializing together at the Fragrant Cedar, they have set up Thursday evenings as an extra club night, though this is a cover for them to pursue other interests in the City. After all, their wives are all content and happy maintaining a proper home and 'what they don't know won't harm them!'

Midori, Hanna, Junko, Rettsu and Crystal, the wives of the 'Gonin,' are all the very image of *Ichininmae* (respectable) spouses. Whilst their husbands are out on Tuesday and Thursday nights, they have started to take their children and meet up at the home of Funada Rettsu, who especially loves the company of children. Recently however, Crystal, the wife who originally was not brought up in a Hondo culture, has openly brought up the question of their husband's infidelities. The wives (with the exception of Crystal) cannot find it in themselves to criticize their husbands and instead blame the scarlet women who they suspect are leading their husbands astray. After comparing notes, Crystal hires a distant relative to engage a private eye to check up on the movements of the Gonin and their extra-marital interests.

The wives, once they are sure of their targets identities and locations, plan a horrible vengeance. Rettsu suggests that it would be auspicious to use all the elements in punishing their foes. In consequence they decide that each of the hated temptresses will be killed in a unique fashion utilizing fire, earth, metal, water and wood.

Timetable of Events

In preparation the ladies organise a charity second hand sale several weeks before their first murder attempt. They surreptitiously buy a lot of the items for themselves and take them home as a pool of disposable disguises. In addition Midori manages to scavenge enough electrical components to improvise a small EMP transmitter and a couple of stun units.

The stun units are disguised as asthma inhalers. They do 2d6 stun damage as per the charge on a Stun stick (*Traveller Basic Rulebook* page 98) and have 6 charges.

When about their missions of vengeance the wives leave their children at Hana's under the care of Chu, a nurse droid of Junko's. On arriving back, Midori is able to erase Chu's memory banks and replace them with earlier memories of minding the children with the wives all present.

Week 1

Tuesday night.

The wives target Shanna Ramirez, a slabwalker. They simply wait till she appears alone in a quite alley and closing on her, beat her to death with bamboo staves.

As they pause for breath they hear someone, or something, knock over a tin can. Forgetting their plans on disposing of the body in a rad-pit, they panic and flee.

The vagrant who startled the wives is an illegal immigrant who arranges for organ leggers to buy and dispose of the body.

Week 2

Tuesday night.

As Tama, a geisha girl, is leaving a drug dealer's she is attacked and stunned by the wives. They get her into their vehicle and take her to a car dealership belonging to Fuanada Genzo, the husband of one of wives. Midori is able to deactivate the site's droids and surveillance system and delete an hour of their recording times. Tama is bundled into an old car and

loaded into the crusher, which is then turned on to murder her.

Friday morning.

A judge team is sent to the House of Clouds geisha house to investigate the disappearance of Tama Terutama.

Week 3

Monday.

The judge team are assigned to a major operation that is raiding locations associated with an organ legger outfit.

*Tuesday: AM: Identification of Shanna Ramirez's heart amongst seized organs. Judge team sent to investigate her apparent murder.

Tuesday: The wives murder Akiko Naomi by drowning her in her flat.

Week 4

Tuesday.

The wives murder Jane West by immolating her in her flat.

Week 5

Tuesday.

The wives murder Kami by burying her alive.

*The events concerning the operation against the organ leggers can occur during later weeks and other days of the week if this is preferred by the Referee.

Prog One: A Popular Companion

Week 2: Thursday.

++Item++

++Missing Person++

++Judge team to proceed to the House of Clouds geisha establishment to investigate report of missing worker Toyama Terutama++

Bringing up Terutama's records from M.A.C. gives little information, though the judge's may realise from her identity photo that most citizens would consider her very attractive.

Toyama Terutama Age 21
Employed: Geisha to House of Clouds
Criminal Record: None

Into the 'Floating World'

The House of Clouds is located in the sector's business area. It is a four story building with cladding made to resemble ancient Japanese architecture. A large doorman will give a low bow and summons a graceful girl in Hondo-style dress who leads them to the office of Soho Atsutani, the owner of the establishment. Soho will rise from behind her desk to greet them, she will ask after the Sector Chief's health and seems unruffled by any aggressive behaviour from the Judges. She will confirm one of her girls, Tama, left the building on Tuesday at 18:30 and has not be seen or heard of since. Normally she visited the nearby shopping mall, and told the doorman she was off shopping. Tama was a popular girl with clients, though Soho admits she was generally the most headstrong and rebellious of her girls. None of the staff, even Kami, Tama's closest friend, have been able to shed any light on her disappearance.

If the Judge's ask to see a list of recent clients the names Ando Yoshimoto and Judge Inspector Tojo immediately draw a judge's attention. If the judges examine Tama's client listing for regular patronage the following are identified:

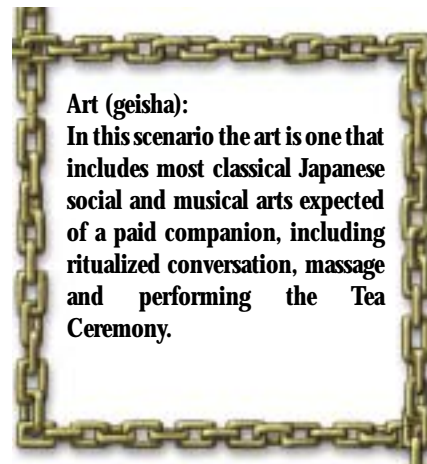
Ando Yoshimoto: Various week days
Inoguchi Bunta: Every other Monday afternoon.
Iharo Sancho: Mainly Thursday nights.
Sugawara Mushasi: At least one night a week, some Saturday nights.
Judge Inspector Tojo: About once a week on different days.

Soho Atsutani

Geisha house proprietor Age 52
Str 6 (+0), Dex 9 (+1), Con 7 (+0), Int 8 (+0),
Edu 10 (+1), SS 10 (+1)
Admin 1, Art (geisha) 4, Broker 1, Carouse
1, Deception 2, Diplomat 3, Leadership 1,
Social Sciences (psychology) 2, Stealth 1,
Streetwise 3
Desperation: -4

A graceful, calm lady, who owns and runs the House of Clouds geisha house. She has numerous contacts amongst the Mega-city's business leaders, the underworld and the Justice Department. She has had issues with Tama's behaviour and has suspicions she was using drugs, though she will not mention this to the Judges. In fact Tama was probably very close to being dismissed from the House of Clouds.

If the judges show an interest in Ando Yoshimoto she will politely suggest that the judges are welcome to interview him at the House of Clouds. Ando will agree and this will add a +2 bonus to use of the Diplomacy skill of a judge at the meeting.



Art (geisha):

In this scenario the art is one that includes most classical Japanese social and musical arts expected of a paid companion, including ritualized conversation, massage and performing the Tea Ceremony.

Preliminary Investigations

PSU can show that Tama apparently flagged a cab around the corner of the block at 18:34 the vehicle is marked as T-54 of Cadmium Cabs. It appears to have been in operation throughout the rest of the night. The judges will learn all the girls of the house are meant to use Rikki's Rickys, another cab company, which has an account with the house. Other than Kami, none of the geisha girls or staff in the establishment can provide any extra useful information. The Judges will also be able to secure a Forensic team to assist the team who arrive in 10 minutes. The Forensic team will be active for 1+1D3 hours but fail to find any extra information or criminal evidence. Even the tea used in the Cha-No-Yu ceremonies is of a legal concoction!

Kami

Geisha to House of Clouds Age 20
Str 5 (-1), Dex 9 (+1), Con 6 (+0), Int 8 (+0),
Edu 9 (+1), SS 8 (+0)
Skills: Art (geisha) 3, Athletics (co-ordination)
1, Broker 0, Deception 1, Diplomacy 2, Stealth
2, Persuade 2, Social Sciences (psychology) 1,
Streetwise 1
Desperation: 0

An incredibly beautiful oriental woman distinguished by bright green eyes and an amazing grace and suppleness in her movements. Kami has been trained from infancy to a level of professionalism comparable to a judge her age. She is an orphan, legally adopted by Soho Atsutani, the establishment's proprietor. Reputedly she has never been hired out for sexual services but has acted as a skilled negotiator for Hondo business concerns or as a spy of her mistress. She is devoted to her employer, but is frustrated by her mistress's apparent inability to give her any details about her parents.

Go Find the Lady

She is also quite fond of Funada Danjo, a sincere and cultured man, who regularly employs her cultural talents on Thursday afternoons and who she considers as almost a benign uncle.

If asked about Tama, she describes Tama as a lively popular girl. A Judge needs a Psychology or Sense Perp roll of 8+ to realize that she is holding something back. A subsequent Persuade or Interrogate roll of 8+ will get her to admit Tama seemed to enjoy the company of Sugawara Mushasi and saw him outside the Geisha House on some of her days off work. If the roll is 12+ she will confide her suspicions that Tama probably took drugs when with a 'certain patron'.

Memories of a Geisha

If the Judges ask for backup from a Psi judge they will be told one will be sent over. Consequently Psi Judge Morgan arrives in 20 minutes. A Judge making an Admin+Int roll of 6+ will realize that the case is being accorded considerable priority.

Psi Judge Theresa Morgan

Age 22

Str 5 (-1), Dex 8 (+0), End 7 (+0), Int 8 (+0), Inf 9 (+1), Psi 9 (+1)

Skills: Athletics (co-ordination) 2, Drive (Lawmaster) 1, Geography (Mega City-One) 1, Gun Combat (Lawgiver1) 1, Law 1, Medic 0, Melee (unarmed combat) 1, Persuade 1, Stealth 1, Street Perception 1, Survival 1

Talents: Awareness 1, Clairvoyance 3, Telepathy 1

Special Abilities: Dead Zone, Remote Viewing

A short slim judge with olive black eyes and a mass of long sable coloured hair. She is a Judge of few words who enjoys looking mysterious and adopting a sardonic smile.

Morgan will ask if a personal item of Tama can be lent to her. Kami will find an elaborate kimono that was a favoured dress of Tama. Morgan will hold the kimono and put it to her cheek; she closes her eyes in concentration but soon frowns.

'I'm not getting anything' she murmurs. "May be something she always wore or used?" Kami decides on an elegant hand mirror. Morgan takes this and again concentrates to no effect. 'Perhaps if I try...' she whispers. Suddenly she jerks rigid; her eyes revolve so only the whites are showing. Suddenly she screams as and the glass of the mirror simultaneously explodes into shards. She drops the mirror and falls to the floor arms and legs outstretched to the side of her as if she is straining against something. She screams loudly and her irises re-appear but a look of pure terror is stamped on all of the Psi-Judge's features. She shouts odd sentences of Japanese as she strains all of her body as if pushing in all directions but slowly finds her herself curling up into a foetal position. She gives one last wailing shriek and then goes quiet. Morgan's breathing is barely perceptible and she has her legs tucked up to her face and wrapped by her arms.

She is completely rigid and all the Judges efforts will fail to rouse her. Kami looks pale and shaken and will collapse to the floor unless a Judge assists her to a chair or cushion. A med squad will arrive in 2D6 minutes and they will take Morgan away. Kami is made of surprisingly stern stuff, but is bewildered and fearful. If the Judges ask her what Morgan shouted, Kami stammers out a translation.

'She was screaming and calling for help... It was Tama .her voice. She wanted something to stop. She shouted 'Why?' She screamed for her mother; then...' Kami breaks into tears but asserts that nothing else was said.

Nothing else will be gathered by psychic means from Tama's room and possessions. Conceivably a Player Character Psi-Judge, rather than Morgan, is the one who tries to find a presence of Tama using an appropriate Psi-power and the Special Abilities Dead Zone and Remote Viewing A successful use of Psi abilities will have the same manifestations as occurred with Morgan. The experience provokes an Intensity of 12 when testing for Psionic Trauma.

If Psi-Judge Morgan was used she remains in a coma for 13 days (or whenever the Referee decides is a relevant time for the plot). If another Psi-judge uses telepathy successfully on Morgan whilst she is in a coma, the judge



experiences the confusion, panic and pain of being trapped in the dark as the floor and walls compact screaming, grinding metal and other matter into their slowly crushed body. As the pain becomes unbearable they awake but most roll to resist a level of Psychic Trauma needing a 12+. When Morgan recovers she will have developed claustrophobia. If she is questioned about her experience a Persuade 8+ roll is needed. If successful she will fearfully recall 'The walls, everything, so hard! Moving, no space! Why?' this recollection gives her another trauma test at an intensity of 12.

Cold Trail

If the judges contact Cadmium Cabs the robo-cabby, Ali-32, remembers taking a young woman to the corner of Greta Garbo Block on the city bottom. Arriving at the destination at 19: 05 he was told to wait half an hour and paid cash for the current journey and another hour.

'Kind of weird..Hondies, aren't tippers' it reflects.

After 75 minutes she had not shown so he resumed his shift. If asked for any more information the droid tries to comply.

'Not a nice part of town at night, I gather, but I'm just paid to drive' he observes.

The cab company's and the droid's security tapes will confirm this report. The judges will find the location in question is a spy camera black spot where street cams are regularly stolen or vandalized. If they carefully examine the recordings from the cab roll Investigate 8+. A success shows two headlights a distance

behind the cab in the shadows. They wink out, only to reappear after 20 minutes quickly turning away and be replaced by the brief glimpse of tail lights. Indications are that it was probably a ground car.

Nice Neighbourhood... not!

Kami has only visited the area once, in the company of Sugawara who took her to a drug dealer to impress her. Sugawara was busy recently, and finding herself desperate for a hit of zizz she decided to go and buy some herself. The wives were ready to follow her from the Geisha House as she normally does some evening shopping in a mall. They were unsure how they would corner her but she played into their hands and was ambushed on her way back from the drug dealer.

Judges visiting the area will not find any citizens who remember seeing or hearing anything. If they contact the Sector House for a list of suspected or former zizz dealers they will get a list of 21 names.

If they conduct a tour of these locations most of the dealers will have fled by the time of the judges enter the building. However one of the names on the list is Jimmie Burke who is happily comatose after smoking a lot of weed. The flat is in a foul condition and Investigate 4+ will uncover a packet of zizz stashed in a used pizza carton under the tri-d set.

Jimmie has a long criminal record of drug related offences and is brain damaged after a road chase accident. Even when not in a drug induced stupor he talks with a mumbling confused drawl. He is a gangling individual with a mop of curly hair and a long face.

Jimmie only manages to keep dealing as some hard criminals have fond memories of Jimmie when he was the life and soul of a party. He is under their protection which stops lesser criminals ripping Jimmie off. He will only vaguely remember seeing Tama if shown her picture, though he is not sure if it was this year! A Psi judge however might be able to access a recent memory of Jimmie selling Tama a packet of zizz.

Jimmie Burke

Age 47 resident 014C, Greta Garbo Block
Str 8 (+0), Dex 5 (-1), End 9 (+1), Int 5 (-1),
Edu 9 (+1), SS 4 (-1)
Skills: Deception 1, Drive (Wheeled) 1, Melee
(unarmed combat) 1, Streetwise 3, Survival 1
Desperation: -1

Leaving Present

As the judges are leaving, roll Perp Sense or Recon 10+. If they succeed they will notice a large white object perched on the fifth balcony level above their heads. The fridge will be dropped on the head of one of them, though he can evade on a Dex roll of 4+ if the judge spotted the fridge himself or 8+ if they gets a warning from another judge. The fridge does 4d6 damage ignoring armour. There is a patter of feet as the juve gang responsible vanish. The juves were wearing gloves so no fingerprints are on the fridge.

The Usual... Tea-drinkers?

(The Referee should feel free to add any other clients to the list below)

Ando Yoshimoto

Age 32 C.E.O Uzu Co
Resident 56AB, Yoko Ono Block
Str 8 (+0), Dex 9 (+1), End 7 (+0), Int 9 (+1),
Edu 9 (+1), SS 9 (+1)
Skills: Broker 1, Carouse 0, Computer 0,
Deception 3, Flier (grav) 1, Gambling 1, Golf
0, Gun Combat (Slug Pistol) 1, Law 0, Leader
1, Streetwise 2
Desperation: -4

A stocky built man in well made corporate suits who favours dark tinted glasses. He wears lots of rings on his fingers and a gang tattoo on his shoulder. Uzo Co is a successful company that imports Hondo electrical goods. Yoshimoto is the nephew of the oyabun who leads the Lucky Rings Yakuza family based in Yoko Ono Block. He also attends the Fragrant Cedar golf house. He is charming and cultured, though part of his life involves playing cards with contract killers and beating up tied and bound transgressors of the Yakuza's codes of behaviour. He wants Tama rescued and may help, covertly, in his own way if treated with respect. He has a touchy pride and makes a dangerous enemy. Judges interfering with the

running of his yakuza will find themselves harassed by lawsuits. The residents of Yoko Ono will not be prepared to help the Judges bring any of the Lucky Rings to justice. If Yoshimoto feels persecuted or offended he will typically prefer to attack the judges using a juve gang and will ensure there is no evidence leading back to his own family or their shell companies. If violence or litigation does not seem feasible, Yoshimoto will try to get a lieutenant to arrange the compromising and subsequent blackmail of a troublesome judge. Justice Department are aware of his rank in the Luck Rings but have no direct evidence of any crimes he has personally committed.

Itharo Sansho (One of the Gonin)

If contacted he will try ensure that the matter does not come to the attention of his wife. He prefers to meet a Judge at his club house or, if at home, tries to send his wife on an errand. He can give little help, other than to mention that Jade was a close friend of another geisha, Kami.

The Fragrant Cedar is set on the edge of the dust zone. It is a large converted warehouse. Inside a deluxe game is available for booking. This features a synthi grass turf course which covers a flexible floor surface which is programmed to set the topography to different configurations as each hole is played. A holo projector adds the sky and the club house and a large artificial cedar tree are in one corner. A section of the complex is walled off with an added aesthetic screening of synthetic popular trees. Here stalls are arranged for VR players and screens can relay the progress of a VR game. Robot caddies are available and Sansho sometimes gives lessons to paying customers. Most of the golfers are business men of Hondo extraction. If at the Club House, and he has warning, he will try asking any Yakuza present to leave. In the office a Judge may notice on a roll of Streetwise 8+ that amongst Sansho's holo-pics are Yakuza members, including Ando Yoshimoto. A Judge may also notice a bag of golf clubs in his office with a bent club. (This is merely the result of Sansho beating it against a caddy droid in a display of temper, though a Judge might wonder if it is a murder weapon.)

Go Find the Lady

Inoguchi Bunta

Age 45 Computer Programmer for the Asuka-Int Electro Corp

Resident 054P, Yoko Ono Block

Str 6 (+0), Dex 8 (+0), End 6 (+0), Int 11 (+1), Edu 8 (+0), SS 8 (+0)

Skills: Computer 3, Drive 0

Desperation: +2

Bunta is a balding and overweight bachelor. He lacks any confidence whatsoever to socialise with anyone, other than a paid female companion. Bunta will be obviously extremely worried and nervous on being visited by a Judge. It will take a Persuade 8+ roll to calm him. His apartment has a collection of dolls in oriental clothes. One of which he will hold and fondle when nervous.

PSU footage will show him habitually cruising around the local red light districts. These excursions have been going on for several months, though Bunta always failed to summon the courage necessary to approach a street walker.

Sugawara Musashi

Age 28

Resident 301H Warren Buffet Conapts Sector 13

Str 7 (+0), Dex 9 (+1), End 7 (+0), Int 8 (+0), Edu 8 (+0), SS 9 (+1)

Skills: Carouse 2, Computer 0, Deception 1, Gambling 0, Pilot (grav) 1, Streetwise 0

Desperation: 0

Musashi is a spoilt, idle and arrogant son of a millionaire industrialist. He has a zizz habit and persuaded Jade to indulge in this vice when he booked her company. He expresses surprise at Jade's vanishing but points out that she is a grown up beautiful girl who does not need a barren hag to run her life for her anymore. He assumes she has met someone very rich and absconded with him. 'Lucky bastard' he says jealously raising a glass of whiskey in an ironic toast.

If his apartment is searched a secret cache of zizz drugs can be discovered on an Investigate roll of 10+. They are hidden inside a hologram of a sculpture of a courtesan. His father's lawyers, however, will prove a constant problem for any Judge trying to arrest or

convict Sugawara. If he is convicted of a crime note down the Law roll of the arresting Judge and assume a competent appeal is made by a Legal team with a Law skill of 4. If the appeal fails Sugawara's father will become a Rival of the arresting Judge.

Judge Inspector Tojo

Age 36 Hondo Judge attached to Hondo Embassy, Sector 42

Str 9 (+1), Dex 12 (+2), End 9 (+1), Int 8 (+0), Inf 9 (+1), Education 10 (+1)

Skills: Admin 0, Athletics (co-ordination) 1, Comms 0, Computers 0, Deception 1, Diplomacy 1, Drive (Hondo Judge Cycle) 2, Geography (Hondo) 1, Geography (Mega City One) 0, Gun Combat (laser shuriken) 2, History (Hondo) 1,

History (Mega City One) 0, Law 3, Leader 1, Melee (blade) 3,

Melee (unarmed combat) 1, Recon 1, Street Perception 2, Survival 1, Tactics 1

Special Abilities: Combat Acuity, Crowd Combat

Note: Suit's bio-circuitry enhances user's reaction time. One dice less is rolled in Initiative tests but a +6 is added. Helmet acts like Mega-City Judge helmet and also adds a +2DM to Recon. He has received mental conditioning which allows him to use his Education as a minus DM to attempts to use Psi powers or similar devices against his mind.

To secure an interview with Tojo roll Diplomacy+SS 10+, each point the roll fails by will cause a day's delay. The interview will be conducted at the Hondo embassy. Judge Inspector Tojo will be polite but will give little away other than stating his visits were private and he will confirm the records kept by the geisha house. If the Judges try to get more details from him roll Diplomacy+SS 10+. If they succeed he will apologize that he cannot be of more help. If any attempts fail he will give a similar answer and invite them to accompany him. He enters a dojo in the embassy and takes a wooden bokken (treat as club but Tojo can choose to use his blade skill). He then asks the judge who had the greatest failure in a Diplomacy roll if they feel like some exercise. If this is accepted he will indicate another bokken and clearly intends a contest bout. He will proceed to try beating the stomm out of his opponent till they surrender or they are incapacitated or disarmed. If the Mega-City Judge loses the bout he reduces his Influence by one. If they decline a challenge they gain Tojo as a rival. If Tojo is killed they will suffer at the very least a demerit and the loss of 1 Inf besides gaining a Rival in the Justice Department and also gaining an Enemy amongst the Hondo Judges.



Prog Two: The Tell Tale Heart

Stakeout on the Liver and Kidney Merchants

During the start of a briefing on early Monday, the Judges are taken off their current assignment to assist in a large operation to try and simultaneously raid all of the premises associated with an organ legger gang and to arrest all of its operatives.

The gang is believed to be purchasing organs from illegal immigrants. The organs are removed at various locations throughout the local sectors and are believed to be stored at this sector's Munch Munce warehouse. The organs are sold on the black market, though it is believed that the outfit performs a few operations to give rich clients new organs.

The player character judges form a Lawmaster mounted team stationed as a tactical reserve near a warehouse about to be raided. They are positioned in an observation bay overlooking a Munch Munce auxiliary warehouse. A control team and a force of judges are nearer to the warehouse which they have encircled in disguised vehicles. At 08:14 a grey haulage wagon arrives at the warehouse and, after the driver opens the warehouse doors, he drives inside. At 08:30 a huge Munch Munce juggger enters the warehouse. The juggger leaves the warehouse at 08:51. Control tells the judges team to follow the juggger at a reasonable distance whilst they ensure the vehicle's movements are monitored by PSU and relayed to the judges' Lawmaster screens. When the whole operation is ordered to move against the various targets the team is to intercept the juggger and detain the occupants. The Judge's are easily able to slip into the megway with a sufficient cover of traffic masking them from sight of their prey. They are only on the megway for five minutes before an urgent comms message orders them to close in and stop the juggger.

The main Munch Munce processing plant is used to store organ parts for a successful organ legging outfit operating throughout the entire Western Sector of the Mega-City. The success

of the outfit in avoiding the attention of the Justice Department has been because workers at the plant are unaware of the criminal activities. The racketeers only purchase organs from illegal immigrants rather than use body sharking or murder. This has built up a lot of trust amongst buyers and suppliers and helped keep a low profile. The immigrants are collected by agents and taken to various warehouses using windowless compartments in vans and trucks. Here they are medically sedated and examined prior to being loaded onto a converted juggger vehicle which arrives to collect them. Their organs are removed whilst the vehicle is in transit and loading and unloading bona-fide deliveries at various points throughout the city. The donors are later returned to the warehouse they were collected from. From there they will be brought back to consciousness and paid prior to being put into trucks to return them to a remote and street camera free area of their home sector. Operations to replace organs for rich clients can be undertaken using a similar process of vehicle and location transfers.

On the Move

The huge juggger occupies the slowest two lanes of a busy megway and is travelling at a constant speed of 100KPH. It is driven by Lewis Stirling whilst Bormann shares the cab and literally rides shotgun. Doctor Leech is in his operating theatre where a med droid assists him. Two GP droids are used as orderlies who shuttle the donors to and from the theatre. Bronski will be in the legitimate cargo compartment ideally killing time reading a vid-mag slate.

The judges are able to reach the juggger in a number of rounds equal to 20- the effect number roll from their Drive (Lawmaster) Skill. If the judges use their Lawmaster sirens they will add a +4 modifier. The perps in the juggger will be alerted to the Sector wide Judge raids in 2D6 rounds after the judge team was given the order to move against the juggger. As soon as they are aware of the judge operation they will be wary and alert but need another 1D6 rounds to contact Doctor Leech and receive instructions. The behaviour of the Judges on the megway may well precipitate their responses.



The organ leggers will be desperate men given the tough sentences they are facing. Bronski will try to ambush boarding judges using the maze of routes between storage crates or the hidden door. The doctor will try to escape to the cab of the vehicle and order out Bormann, unless Bormann has already left the cab to join a fire-fight else where in the vehicle. Leech will take 6+1D6 rounds to reach the cab from his work in the theatre. He will then take two rounds to settle in the co-driver seat and insert a special key card. That will unlock the couplings and disguise skirts that attach the hover car to the juggger chassis, this process taking a further round of time. Doctor Leech will then attempt to escape to a disused warehouse logged under a false account and is not part of the Munch Munce network. Without the hover car unit the juggger will effectively lose its steering and auto pilot, given that it is on a busy megway, mayhem should ensue!

Doctor Leech

Age 53

Str 5 (-1), Dex 8 (+0), End 6 (+0), Int 11 (+1), Edu 10 (+1), SS 9 (+1)

Skills: Admin 1, Computer 1, Deception 1, Flier 0, Medic 5, Remote Ops 1, Science (biology) 2

Weapon: Scalpel (1D6+1), laser cutter (2D6+3)

Special: If Leech wounds a living opponent with a scalpel he inflicts his Medic skill as bonus damage.

Go Find the Lady

If in the operating theatre the Doctor can use a remote controlled laser tool to direct a laser beam at a judge. Treat damage as 2D6+3.

Desperation -2

Lewis Stirling

Driver Age 35

Str 7 (+0), Dex 8 (+0), End 9 (+1), Int 6 (+0), Edu 5 (-1), SS 6 (+0)

Skills: Athletics (endurance) 1, Drive (wheeled) 2, Mechanic 0, Melee (bludgeon) 0, Recon 0, Streetwise 1

Weapon: Large Spanner (2D6)

Desperation -2

Gregory Bormann

'Heavy' Age 42

Str 10 (+1), Dex 6 (+0), End 9 (+1), Int 6 (+0), Edu 5 (-1), SS 6 (+0)

Skills: Athletics (strength) 1, Drive (wheeled) 0, Gun Combat (shotgun) 1, Melee (bludgeon) 1, Melee (unarmed combat) 1, Recon 0, Streetwise 1

Weapon: Stump Gun (4d6) (hidden in compartment under seat)

Desperation -3

Alexi Bronski

'Heavy' Age 46

Str 12 (+2), Dex 6 (+0), End 10 (+1), Int 5 (-1), Edu 4 (-1), SS 6 (+0)

Skills: Athletics (Strength) 2, Melee (unarmed combat) 1, Melee (chainsaw) 1, Streetwise 0, Survival 0

Armour: Thermal suit 4pts (Melee only)

Weapon: Chainsaw (2D6). The weapon has a heft of 2.

Special abilities: If Bronski wounds an opponent with a chainsaw the opponent must make an Endurance roll on 3D6. If roll is under the amount of damage suffered from the attack, part of a limb is severed and the victim suffers an extra 2D6 damage.

Desperation -4

2x General Purpose Droids

As *Judge Dredd Rulebook* page 239.

Programming: Athletics (Strength) 2, Mechanic 0, Trade (food packing) 1

Med-Droid

As *Judge Dredd Rulebook* page 239.

The Jugger

Jugger, JCD 939 (*Judge Dredd Rulebook*, page 133)

Hovercar Foord Falcon Giah (*Judge Dredd Rulebook*, page 131)

The vehicle has a standard loading ramp and has a cargo deck holding several large cargo containers gripped in place by locking mechanisms. Other cargo can be secured with slotted racking or ropes. Access routes sizeable enough for forklift droids have been left around the cargo area. A partition of false storage containers seemingly stacked close together blocks off part of the cargo area. A fake storage container is butted up to one side of the partition and two large secret sliding doors connect it with the cargo hold and the hidden compartments. In the hidden hold a corridor runs up to a wall with a rung ladder set in it leading up to the cab section.

On the left is a storage room of medical supplies and an operating theatre. On the right a dormitory is laid out for sleeping donors. Currently twelve of them are strapped into their beds and slumbering. The cockpit of the jugger is set high up on the top forepart of the jugger and is actually part of a hover car. The controls for the later vehicle are disguised as a back up co-driver system for the jugger. The remaining part of the hover car that would normally take up more seats is disguised as a bunk space. The beds actually fold up to leave a clear space for the connecting hatch into the jugger's hidden transplant area, reached by a ladder.

A Heart without a Tart

The afternoon after the operation against the organ legger outfit a post operation investigation status report is added to the crime briefings. The players' judges are told to report to the senior judge in charge of the operation. Judge Martinez, heading the investigation, will inform them one of the seized organs was a heart belonging to Shanna Ramirez a registered citizen and a known street walker. Significantly all other organs found belong to unregistered citizens. Preliminary investigation and interrogation has determined that the body was sold to the body legging operation a while ago by an illegal immigrant for a meagre

sum. He had claimed the body belonged to an in-law. The body was badly disfigured and had been beaten to death, evidencing by dozens of marks from some type of club or bar. Despite damage to some bone structures and internal organs, the heart and some other parts proved to be in good condition. The judges have no name or details about the immigrant save that he was probably from Columbia. Martinez tasks the judges with investigating what looks like a murder.

Autopsy report

Heart identified as belonging to female, negro.

Confirmed as Shanna Ramirez.

Shanna Ramirez aka 'Zoot' Age 22

Co-Resident 075D, Greta Garbo Block
Known slabwalker. Minor convictions 2029 and 2030

Word on the Street

If a judge has a contact or informant connected with the local red light district the nark can attempt a streetwise roll. A roll of 8+ discovers that Hillman has been looking for Zoot for over a week.

Junita Castanos 'Nita'

Slabwalker Age 24

Co-resident 075D, Greta Garbo Block
Str 8 (+0), Dex 8 (+0), End 7 (+0), Int 7 (+0), Edu 5 (-1), SS 5 (-1)

Skills: Carouse 1, Deception 0, Melee (bludgeon) 0, Melee (unarmed combat) 0, Persuade 1, Street Wise 1, Survival 0

Weapon: Electro Prod (1D6), Knuckle duster (1D6+1)

Desperation: -1

Criminal record shows five cautions and three convictions for offences relating to slabwalking.

Nita has black bobbed hair and an intimidating manner. Walking the slabs she wears a black synthi-leather trench-coat and peaked cap. The coat has concealed pockets amongst their contents are a knuckle duster and an electro-prod.



She is wary of Judges, as she knows many despise slabwalkers whilst a few corrupt ones have used their power to extort money or services from red light workers. She has not heard from Shanna, and privately doubts she is still alive as some personal items are still in the flat they shared and she has not squared her usual tab at the liquor store.

She will act instinctively and ruthlessly if threatened or surprised unless she is aware the other person is a Judge. If a judge can make an Inf+Interrogate or Persuade roll of 10+ she will mention that Hillman might have heard of something. If specifically asked about oriental ethnic customers she knows Shanna had at least one client of that type. She reflects that most of them seem to go for tall blondes or very large matronly types and few seem to prefer black women like Shanna.

Leonard Hillman aka 'Killman'

'Manager' to Nita and Shanna. Aged 32
Resident 014G Greta Garbo Block
Skills: Str 9 (+1), Dex 8 (+0), End 11 (+1), Int 7 (+0), Edu 5 (-1), SS 6 (+0)
Athletics (endurance) 1, Broker 0, Drive (wheeled) 1, Melee (blade) 2, Melee (unarmed combat) 1, Persuade 0, Street Wise 2
Weapons: Machete (2d6+3)
Desperation: -3
Previous Convictions:
Assault served 2016-2018 in Y.P. facility
Assault with deadly weapon 2020-2022
Known pimp and suspected of numerous violent assaults.

Leo is an imposing individual of mixed Sino-Caucasian origins who 'manages' Nita and, till recently, Zoot. He has odd mismatched eyes, one green, one brown, and his face sports a poorly healed knife scar. He favours an olive green fedora that shields his face, a suit and two tone shoes. Away from the view of the Judges he carries a machete, his favoured tool of intimidation, and smokes black papered cigarettes.

He owns a bright-red wheeled convertible.

Fuanada Genzo's personal comm. number is filed in Hillman's comm as 'Mr G'. 'Killman' is aware of Genzo's full name via 'Zoot'. He is not prepared to give any of the phone contacts numbers from his clients if he can avoid it. He assumes Shanna has found another pimp somewhere and has been trying to find her.

Investigating Fuanada Genzo

If contacted at home Genzo will be anxious to hide the investigation from his family.

He will confirm that he was a client of Zoot but he has not seen her for some weeks.

The Tetsuwashi garage is located on the edge of the dust zone. It has a 4 metre high link fence which surrounds a forecourt with some vehicles for sale and a scrap yard with a simple robotic magnetic crane and a car crusher with a robotic arm for loading and unloading. Three rows of decommissioned vehicles are available for spare parts and a pile of scrap metal cubes are stacked to await collection.

The central building is a large garage with an office. The office includes a set of stored mattresses (Genzo sleeps here sometimes, on some occasions in the company of a slabwalker). Several holos of the Gonin adorn the office besides a sleazy calendar. A half full crate of inferior whiskey is under the desk and several packs of cards are in his drawer. An Investigate roll of 4+ will find a stash of pornographic vid-slugs and magazines. None are illegal, and show that (regarding pornography at least) Genzo is broadminded, as mutants and a few xeno-species are included in his collection.

If his computer and ledgers are examined, this takes 1D3+1 hours. An Admin or Computer roll of 6+ will show no irregularities, though a Streetwise roll of 8+ will recognise many Yakuza as regular clients. Genzo in fact has never knowingly done anything illegal regarding his business, and the Yakuza use other garage owners for customizing and recycling stolen vehicles.

There are three droids on site. Two general purpose droids, 'Spanner' and 'Jack', and 'Wrench', a security droid armed with a net gun and a shock prod arm. They can all be deactivated by the use of the word 'Yoko'.

If the droids memory circuits are examined, a Space Science (Robots) roll of 6+ on each droid will show that on one Tuesday evening between 20:40 and 21:40 their memories have been erased. If checked, the security video slugs are found to have been programmed to remove coverage from a similar period on the same night. The droids will recognise a picture of Shanna Ramirez as one of 'Mr Genzo's special friends' who they have seen occasionally visit the garage with their owner at night time.

The compressed remains of Tama are inside one of the thirty two crushed metal cubes. A Psi Judge using Dead Zone and telepathy on the cube where the remains of Tama are centred will suffer a similar re-lived experience to the one described earlier when using Tama's mirror, though the Psi-Judge automatically takes a level of trauma. If the cube with Tama's remains is cut open the traces of her body can be genetically identified by a forensic team.

Prog Three: Bath Night

Week 3 Tuesday

The wives now target Akiko Naomi for death by water. They debate heatedly about how it is to be done, some favour drugging Naomi and throwing her in a park pond. They eventually decide this is too risky and decide to execute her in her own flat. Nether-the-less their growing confidence is making their planning more careless.

Go Find the Lady

That Wednesday morning Junko manages to take her husband's key card for his secretary's flat. The women arrive in disguise at Jeff Tracey Towers at 20:06 and Midori temporarily disables the corridor camera with her EMP device. The wives then enter Naomi's apartment using the key card and a lazknife which is used to cut through the bolt and chain. Finding poor Naomi sat in a chair with a VR headset they easily manage to subdue her and they secure her hands and feet and gag her with insulation tape. They manhandle Naomi to the bath which they then fill with cold water. Whilst Midori keeps guard near the door into the floor's corridor the other four hold down Naomi and her struggles cease. Hastened by Midori's urgings they quit the scene though Rettsu takes a tumble as she slips on the wet bathroom floor. Two of them, hurriedly spray the living room with aerosol disinfectant as they leave. Midori has the sense to make them remove their footwear as they leave. They go bare foot till they reach the outside of the building.

++Item++

Caretaker droid at Jeff Tracey Towers reports discovery of a drowned body in suspicious circumstances. Body reported as that of Akiko Naomi. Resident 033C Jeff Tracey Towers. The nearest Street Judges to investigate.

Akiko Naomi. Age 18

Employed as Secretary.

Cautioned for jay-walking 2122.

Fined 500cr for similar offence 2131.

At the Crime Scene

The caretaker droid is waiting outside the apartment. At 11:24 tenants below complained about a leak coming through their ceiling. The droid entered with his pass key and discovered the body. It has turned off the tap but has not otherwise tampered with the crime scene. The scent and traces of the aerosols will be immediately noticed by judges as they enter the living room, as will the damp carpet. Naomi is fully clothed, her wrists, ankles and mouth wrapped in insulation tape. Her clothing and hair suggest her mimicking of a cyber-game heroine Aurella from the vid-game 'Princess of Mirror World', whose statues and posters adorn the apartment. An

Investigate+Int roll of 4+ will detect a slight, smeared human-like hand print of water on the wall. A forensic team will be able to add little save an accurate estimation as to time of death. An Investigate roll of 4+ finds evidence of a trail of water droplets and what might be a couple of wet toe prints showing the direction taken by the murderers and indicating there is more than one perp.

Checking her computer will need a code word to access her personal files. This will need a Computer roll of 10+ taking 1D6x 10 minutes or a Judge can simply try three attempts. The code word is 'Princess', a player can deduce this for themselves or by rolling Int+Psychology 6+ may deduce it is connected with Naomi's role-model.

Her files include a lot of deleted letters from Daz (Darren Lindmann) alternatively calling her a whore or pleading with her to ditch her new partner and become his lover again. Lindmann is registered as an unemployed 19 year old resident of 023B Wolfie Smith Conapts.

He received a caution for running in a walking zone 13 years ago and another for jay-walking two years back.

Questioning neighbours will reveal the following:

- Naomi was sometimes visited by a smart man in a suit and dark glasses.
- A young man has been banging on her door and shouting to her during several visits over the past few months. Some witnesses think that it is an ex-boyfriend of Naomi's.

Checking the camera in the corridor with block security shows that it shorted out at 20:10.

A forensic team will require 1D3+1 hours to examine the rooms thoroughly. In the bedroom they will find genetic evidence identified as belonging to Nosaka Kenji. The team will also access all Naomi's computer files. They deduce the corridor camera was shorted out by a signal that overloaded its circuitry.

Questioning Lindmann

There is no response to the Judges initial attempts to contact Darren Lindmann for the next d6+2 hours. If they call on his apartment he fails to answer the door-comm or indeed a judicial hand banging on the door. If a Judge enters or breaks down the door, they suddenly find themselves facing a man with a large helmet enclosing his head who is pointing a hand gun in their direction. Darren is completely immersed in a VR 'shoot-em-up' and cannot hear or see the real world. During the first combat round a Judge must roll Electronics+Ed 4+ to recognize the individual as someone using a VR helmet and gun. No roll for recognition will be necessary after the first combat round.

Darren will be overwhelmed with grief on hearing of Naomi's death. He claims he would never harm her (which should register as true on a birdie test) and laments losing her to her 'slime ball' boss. Reviewing the game time of the VR that was running will show that Lindmann has apparently been playing the game constantly for a full four hours. Successful examination of the game records needs a Computer+Int roll of 6+ to confirm this.

Darren Lindmann

Ex-boyfriend of Akiko Age 19

Str 7 (+0), Dex 8 (+0), End 7 (+0), Int 8 (+0), Edu 8 (+0), SS 7 (+0)

Skills: Art 0, Computers 1, Drive 0

Desperation: 0

If Lindmann is left at liberty he will blame Nosaka Kenji for Naomi's death. He will take 1d3 days to purchase an illegal hand gun. Once armed, unless the Judge's have arrested another culprit by this time, Lindmann will attempt to gun down Nosaka as he leaves his work place.

Questioning Nosaka Kenji

Kenji will try and arrange matters so his family are kept out of the interview. He will prefer a meeting at his office than at his home. He will confirm he was having an affair and last visited the flat on the previous Thursday. He

will be genuinely upset and angry wishing the Judges success in capturing the 'animal' who has committed the murder.

He puts forward his own suspicions that her ex-boyfriend has made threats to himself and Naomi. He can show some filed hate mail and threats on his business computer. He never believed the youth would carry out his threats and chose to not report this. He describes Lindmann as a work shy vid-game junkie with a crowd of 'weird and deluded friends'. If at the office a Judge will notice a display set of Samurai swords (licensed) and various holo pics of his family and also ones showing awards ceremonies at his work and the dojo he uses. They also include ones of him golfing and a few with his closest friends.

The Oka Household

(Optional Clue for Referee use)

After a thorough drenching and an escape into a chill night, Oka Rettsu develops a cold for the next 1D6 days after the murder of Akiko Naomi. A Judge who manages to view Oka Rettsu over this period will notice this on a Med+Int roll of 4+.

Prog Four: Burning Passions

Week 4 -Tuesday

The vengeful wives assemble and travel to Greta Garbo block. On reaching the level where Jane West lives, Rettsu disguises herself as Chutaro by wearing a coat and hat from his wardrobe. Keeping her head low she presses the com button of Jane's door and using a dubbed recording of Chutaro's voice (fabricated by Midori) asks to come in. Jane, who looks through her door's peep hole is fooled. She starts to argue but Chutaro, apparently, just keeps repeating his need to talk, threatening that if he leaves he is not coming back. Jane angrily opens the door only to be threatened with an array of laz knives.

The wives enter the room, and as Jane is temporarily subdued with a stun unit, Midori switches of the fire alarm in the flat. The wives then allow Rettsu to look for and retrieve clothes belonging to her husband which she bags up. Finding two sets of fur

trimmed handcuffs they decide to drag Jane into her bedroom where they manage to cuff a wrist and an ankle to part of the bed. As Jane stirs the wives hiss their abuse at her and then all of them proceed to squirt her with fuel from a barbeque lighter bottle they have each bought. While one of them turns on a tri-D set to a loud rock music channel. Rettsu puts a lighter to the fuel sodden bed clothes and the wives make a quick exit as their victim starts to writhe and scream. The wives lock the door behind them and return to their homes. Eventually smoke triggers other alarms on the block floor. By the time a fire fighting team arrived and extinguished the blaze, most of the bedroom has been destroyed and the other rooms of the flat are damaged.

Investigating Apartment 219C

++Item++

++Fatality from fire in 219C Greta Garbo++

++Nearest unit to investigate reported homicide of occupant++

A caretaker will meet the Judges, though it will be impossible for him to positively identify the blackened mummy in the sodden ash shell of the bedroom. He will confirm that the smoke alarm did not, apparently, work. An Electric roll of 4+ confirms it was switched off. An Investigate roll of 8+ determines that one of the walls shows traces of an incendiary liquid being squirted in the bedroom.

An investigate 4+ determines that disinfectant spray has been used in the rooms.

A forensic team will arrive after 20 minutes and will spend 2+1D3 hours and after identifying Jane West begin investigating the apartment. They will find an unregistered zipp gun and traces of Uncle Ump's Umpty . They will also confirm that the alarm was switched off and that an inflammable liquid was sprayed in the bed room.

West's comm is melted, but tracing her calls through her network will show numbers registered to Oka Chutaro and Herbert Gilbert.

A roll of Investigate 8+ reveals a hidden door that connects with apartment 220C. The caretaker is unaware of this (it was a secret

modification added during some redecorating Gilbert had done two years ago).

Investigating Apartment 220C

Gilbert's flat has a secret door to Jane West's apartment that can be found on an Investigate 8+ roll, if it is 10+ they will notice that the rooms appear to be too small. Another hidden door exists behind a large print, though the partition can be easily enough smashed through in a few blows by a fit person. The door is key-coded, though a roll of Electronics 10+ will bypass the program, and leads to a hidden laboratory. A motion detector, hidden in a ceiling corner of the hidden lab is switched off if the door code is entered correctly. Any person entering or forcing debris into the laboratory triggers the alarm which gives a signal to Gilbert's comm and alerts him with an audio signal. He will then try to make it to a safe house he knows of in a neighbouring sector and will try and contact Jane on a spare comm he has bought on the black market.

The laboratory is set up for the manufacture of various drugs that use chemical ingredients. Around two kilos of Uncle Ump's Umpty are present as well as a box of rounds for a spit pistol.

Gilbert has been away on business but will return in 1D6 hours. If there is an obvious judicial presence outside the block he will stay away. Otherwise he will head towards his apartment.

Herbert 'the Sherbert' Gilbert

Umpty Bagger age 27

Apt-220C Greta Garbo Block

Str 4 (-1), Dex 6 (+0), End 9 (+1), Int 11 (+1), Edu 7 (+0), SS 6 (+0)

Skills: Deception 1, Gun Combat (Slug pistol) 0, Physical Science (chemistry) 1, Stealth 1, Street Wise 2, Survival 0

Weapon: Spit pistol (3d6-3)

Desperation: -2

2018-2020 Sentenced to compulsory re-hab and subsequent detention in a Y.P.facility for Umpty candy dealing.

2124-2129 Sentenced to imprisonment for Umpty dealing

Go Find the Lady

Herbert is a gangling, emaciated and unhygienic, individual. He has long straggling ginger hair tied into a pony tail and a goatee and darting narrow eyes. He wears a long coat with numerous hidden pockets. He naturally tends to suspicion which is often heightened by the paranoia caused by his drug use.

Questioning neighbours

If other residents on the floor are questioned the Judges will need to make a roll on Inf+ Interrogate 8+ to learn anything worthwhile. Success gains the information that Miss West was often visited by various men though she seemed to be a girlfriend of her neighbour Gilbert. They can confirm that one was of oriental extraction and will confirm that they had an 'odd walk' if a judge asks about either of these distinctions. Ron Trundle, the neighbour across the hall, is more inclined to talk. If a Persuade+Inf roll of 4+ is made he recalls that he heard some shouting and screaming at around 21:30 but was used to similar noises as West often had blazing rows with her boyfriend. He also remembers being irritated by loud music that was turned on and coming from the room at around the same time. He will confess that he did not bother to complain as he did not want the attention of Jane's neighbouring boyfriend to fall on him. A further interrogate or Persuade roll gets him to whisper that Gilbert was visited by all types of crazy youths and mean looking men.

Investigating Oka Chutaro

Chutaro will try to ensure that his wife is unaware of, and kept out of, an investigation.

His home address includes a hologram of the 'Gonin'. He will admit to the affair but points out this is not illegal. If charged with a crime Chutaro will protest his innocence and demand a lawyer. If the Judges get him to confess Chutaro will admit that he obtained the chemicals for Janet West, but will plead that she was blackmailing him by threatening to inform his wife of their affair. (This is true, along with the fact that she was refusing her favours to him unless he complied with her extortion. Miss West also managed to squeeze regular 'gifts' of money from her besotted ex-boss).

Investigating Tesbury's

Chutaro's work colleges are tight lipped but a roll of Persuade or Interrogate 8+ will elicit the information that Chutaro was rumoured to have an affair with Jane West whilst she was with the company. A Judge will be given access to personnel records if requested. Chutaro's are flawless apart from a period where he was felt to not be impartial in his treatment of Jane West. Jane West's records are a catalogue of shoddy performance, by the time of her final disciplinary hearing she was also under suspicion for theft. As this unsolved theft was not reported to the Justice Department a Judge may want to sentence the company itself. This will be appealed against by corporate lawyers.

If a full audit is made of the pharmaceutical supplies this will take 6+1D6 hours man hours. A roll of Int+Admin or Broker 8+ will confirm that some chemicals have periodically gone missing but their removal has been covered up in the accounts. If an Accounts Judge is called in to help he will be able to automatically find the discrepancies in 1D3 hours.

Prog Five: Down to Earth

Week 5: Tuesday

The geisha Tama was in the habit of passed on gossip to Nagoya about her friend Kami. When Nagoya passed a piece of this on to Danjo, Hana overheard their conversation and learnt an important fact about Kami. That evening she manages to purloin her husband's mobile vidphone before he leaves on his usual visit to the Fragrant Cedar. The wives all arrange for their children to be in the care of relatives for this particular evening and Midori visits Hana. Whilst Hana's house droid digs a small trench in the back garden, Midori modifies the purloined phone to transmit a fabricated audio and visual image of Danjo. Kami's personal phone is then rung and receives a purported message from Danjo. The faux-Danjo claims he has just received news from a private detective he has hired and has news of Kami's parents. He urges her to hurry and meet her privately at a Jon Bon Jovi car park. This missing piece of her life is the one thing that is capable of spurring Kami to

reckless disobedience. She will contrive to slip away for the meeting donning a rain cape and dark glasses.

Meanwhile after Midori has wiped the memory of the house-droid, Hana leaves her apartment with Midori in a wheelchair disguised as Hana's geriatric mother. They are picked up in the block car park by Crystal. En route they stop and Crystal puts on a hat and coat of Hana's husband. At the park Midori shorts out a surveillance camera before they park short of the barrier.

Arriving at the car-park Kami fails to see through Crystal's impersonation and is beckoned to the car. On entering the front passenger door Kami is grabbed by Crystal and grappled by Midori and Hana, who were hiding in the back of the car. Kami manages to stab Midori with a hairpin but is overcome by jolts from a stun unit and falls unconscious. Kami is then dressed in the old ladies coat and hat.

Crystal will pick up Rettsu and Junko at their homes. The ladies will arrive pack at the block car park and wheel their captive past security to Hana Fuanada's apartment. Inside the apartment they will tape up Kami's hands, feet and mouth and all the wives will don their jumble clothing, boots and gloves and then use the wheelchair to take Kami into the garden. Laid down, facing upwards in the trench with all her items Kami will be helpless and terror stricken as she watches the first hand and shovelfuls of earth that start to bury her alive.

With Kami buried and some flowers planted into a new colourful bed of blossoms to surprise Danjo with, the wives will burn their clothing and hide the ashes in a compost box. Each will then in turn shower thoroughly and resume their evening party.

Aftermath

Hopefully the Judges will have solved the case and arrested the wives well before the last of their intended victims suffocates. If Kami is rescued she could certainly prove a useful Contact for one of the Judge team.

If the murders are not identified the five wives revert back to their normal domestic routine. Though who is to say whether they have developed a taste for killing? Perhaps their husbands take new lovers and initiate a fresh cycle of slayings.

Citizens, Perps and Places

Two Mistresses

Jane Louise West ‘Blondie’

Mistress to Oka Chutaro Age 24
Resident Greta Garbo Block apt 219C
St 6 (+0), Dex 9 (+1), End 7 (+0), Int 8 (+0),
Edu 6 (+0), SS 6 (+0)
Skills: Admin 0, Carouse 1, Deception 1,
Persuade 1, Streetwise 1
Weapon: Zip Gun (2d6-1)
Desperation: 0

Dismissed as admin worker from Tesbury due to poor work performance.

Jane is an attractive but tired looking blonde. She has a dependency for recreational drugs. Currently she lets Chutaro contribute towards her maintenance and acts as his mistress once a week. She also milks him for various drugs and chemicals for her own use and those of her partner in crime (and sometimes bed) Robert Gilbert.

Akiko Naomi

Secretary of Nosaka Kenji Age 18
Resident Jeff Tracy Towers apt 033C
Str 5 (-1), Dex 8 (+1), End 9 (+1), Int 7 (+1),
End 7 (+1), SS 7 (+1)
Skills: Admin 1, Computer 0
Desperation: +2

A thin and pretty girl, who bleaches her hair into stripes of copper and white and also wears blue contact lenses. She has modelled herself so as to resemble Aurella, her favourite CGI heroine. She carries on this affectation by favouring ankle boots, short skirts and long tailed coats. She even discreetly carries a bright red plasteen replica of her heroine’s laz pistol in her handbag.

Flattered by her boss’s attentions she ditched her boyfriend, Darren Lindmann, to start an

affair with Kenji. When alone, she immerses herself in cyber worlds and adventures.

The Gonin

This title was proposed by Genzo. ‘The Five’ he feels gives them an adventurous, ronin-like image and five is a particularly auspicious number.

Fuanada Genzo

Car Dealer and Garage Owner.
Citizen Age 32
Resident 037J Bob Mitchum Block
Business Tetsuwashi Garage 13Z-04-DZ
Cautioned for loitering in a red-light area 2128
Str 8 (+0), Dex 7 (+0), End 8 (+0), Int 9 (+1),
Edu 7 (+0), SS 7 (+0)
Skills: Broker 1, Carouse 1, Drive (wheeled) 2,
Gambling 1, Mechanic 0, Persuade 1, Streetwise 2
Desperation: 0

Genzo, once lithe and handsome, now has a beer belly but has retained his charming smile. He favours brightly coloured shirts and his ‘lucky’ white trilby. He is garrulous and talks rapidly and persuasively but is soon moved to anger if people assume he is dishonest because of his profession. He includes the local Yakuza amongst his clientele and uses their ‘protection’ services like most small business men in his area. Unknown to his close friends he visits Yakuza controlled card schools to gamble on odd evenings. He has also regularly used the services of slab walkers utilising his cars or his garage office for these assignments. He boasts of this to ‘The Five’ but keeps secret the fact that he generally hires black women as his companions. Unlike most of the Mega-City’s citizens, some of his associates still hold racial prejudices against certain groups of Mega-City One’s non-mutant population. Consequently he does not use his Yakuza connections to arrange all his assignments. He is married to Funada Midori and he has a five year old daughter, Yoko.

Convictions: Speeding convictions 2120 and 2125

Fuanada Danjo

Architect Citizen Age 36
Resident 043AX Bob Mitchum Block
Employed:
Str 7 (+0), Dex 6 (+0), End 7 (+0), Int 10 (+1),
Edu 9 (+1), SS 8 (+0)
Skills: Computer 1, Drive 0, Gardening 1,
Golf 0, Trade (civil engineering) 2
Desperation: 0

A kind man, he is thick set with care-worn hands and a soft voice. He wears glasses and blinks when embarrassed or stressed. He has a genuine interest in Japanese culture. He loves his wife sincerely and also devotes a lot of time to his garden. The couple have his aged mother live with them, though she is developing dementia and sleeps a great deal. As Danjo’s wife lacks any artistic refinement he regularly hires the services of the geisha girl Tama at the House of Clouds on Thursday afternoons and some evenings. He merely watches her perform the tea ceremony, listens to her musical talents or holds a refined conversation. He never indulges in what he would consider impropriety, indeed he is psychologically incapable of being unfaithful to his wife and regards Kami with the fondness he would have for his own child had he been blessed with one.

Nosaka Kenji

Senior Accountant Citizen Age 27
023J Warren Buffet Conapts
Employed
Str 8 (+0), Dex 8 (+0), Con 7 (+0), Int 9 (+1),
Edu 8 (+0), SS 8 (+0)
Skills: Admin 1, Athletics (co-ordination) 1,
Broker 2, Computer 1, Drive 0, Gambling 0,
Golf 0, Melee (blade) 1, Social Science (economics) 1
Desperation: -2

A quiet and earnest man, he has a handsome face and a keen and a ready smile, but is marked by cold calculating eyes. He is ambitious and successful, attributing his achievements to the application of the ‘Book of Five Rings’ in his business dealings. (If the book is a bible on cold selfish ruthlessness then this accreditation is quite accurate). Kenji practices kendo

Go Find the Lady



regularly during Monday and Wednesday evenings. He has been having an affair for the past three months with Akiko Naomi, his new secretary, who he visits at her flat during odd nights. He is married to Junko and they have a two year old son, Katsu. The family own a nanny-droid, 'Chu'.

Oka Chutaro

Pharmaceutical Manager Citizen Age 31
238R Yoko Ono Block
Employed

St 6 (+0), Dex 6 (+0), End 3 (-1), Int 8 (+0),
Edu 9 (+1), SS 8 (+0)
Skills: Computer 1, Drive 0, Gambling 0,
Golf 0, Physical Science (chemistry) 2
Desperation: 0

Chutaro is a gaunt and solemn individual. He is the manager of the pharmaceutical section of Tesbury's large supermarket chain where he works at the companies head office. Poor health in childhood left him a paraplegic, though this was later cured through expensive cybernetics. His legs betray a faint humming sound when he moves them and his ambience has an odd gliding motion. He is obsessive about cleanliness and always carries surgical wipes and showers after any activity. He has a wife of 10 years, Rettsu, and an eight year old boy, Tokiwa. Four years ago Jane West, a female employee with a drug habit, seduced him and became his mistress. She was sacked a year later for her bad work record and suspected theft but Chutaro has kept the relationship going, and still manages to purloin drugs and chemicals she requests from him.

Ihara Sansho

Golf Club Manager Citizen Age 31
041AJ Yoko Ono Block
Business Address: 'Fragrant Cedars Golf House' 13-Z-69-DZ
Str 8 (+0), Dex 9 (+1), End 7 (+0), Int 7 (+0),
Edu 7 (+0), SS 8 (+0)
Skills: Athletics (co-ordination) 1/0*, Carouse 1,
Drive 0, Golf 4*/2, Gun Combat (slug rifle) 0,
Steward 0, Streetwise 1
Desperation: -1

* Usual level of competence due to affects of his drinking habit and loss of confidence.

Potentially had the talent to become a pro-golfer before his drinking habits became a serious problem, Sansho runs a golf club and hosts the card school evenings of 'The Five'. Unfortunately Sansho has run up gambling debts with the local Yakuza, consequently he finds that he frequently has to provide gratis use of his golf course and bar for the Yakuza and their guests. Generally this includes acting as a nominal host and an unpaid barman on a Friday night whilst the local Yakuza use his club house. In his hey-day he was famous and wealthy as an international golf pro. He became accustomed to mixing with elite of Hondo society in Mega City One and Hondo City. After his decline he found he was no longer on prestigious guest lists but he has still retained the habit of visiting a geisha house. His appreciation of most of the subtle and artist talents of these hostesses is shallow. He generally prefers to hire the girl Tama on a Thursday as he finds her a good listener when he sometimes forgets his carnal needs and starts to wallow in self pity about his fall from greatness. He is not above hiring streetgirls on free evenings when he has cash.

If he feels he is facing a long prison sentence he will try to do a deal with the Yakuza to help him escape Mega City One and justice, even if this means temporarily abandoning his family until he manages to secure a safe home elsewhere. If desperate he will obtain a black market handgun. He is married to Chrystal who dutifully puts up with his frequent absences from the home whilst he is gambling or sleeping off his excesses at his club house. They have a five year old daughter, Yasu.

Five Wives and their homes

The wives are normally reserved and polite, keeping to the background and deferring to their husbands. They genuinely believe they have committed no crime. Their Housewife skill is similar to a Steward skill and useful for when they attempt to clean away any traces of evidence. They use detergent aerosols and disposable surgical gloves and wear shower caps in order to reduce the chances of leaving clues at the crime scene. In there delusional state they are also able to use it as a secret negative modifier to resist interrogation or psychological deductions from a judge. They normally do not have a Desperation modifier, though this becomes -10 if they are in a position to inflict their vengeance on one of their five targets. All the homes are incredibly neat and clean and feature both a bath and a shower.

Fuanada Midori

Age 29
Str 7 (+0), Dex 9 (+1), End 7 (+0), Int 13 (+2),
Edu 10 (+1), SS 7 (+0)
Skills: Comms 0, Computer 1, Drive 0,
Housewife 3, Physical Science (electronics) 2,
Space Science (robotics) 0.
Equipment: Stun unit, detergent aerosol,
EMP device, small electronic tool kit.

Midori went to Mega-U and gave up a promising career at Com-Tek to wed Genzo Fuanada after a whirlwind romance (much to the disapproval of her parents). Amongst the wives she is a forceful personality when no men are present to witness

House: There is nothing on display to suggest her academic and business background. Holograph shots and certificates are hidden away in a drawer. Investigate 4+ to locate.

Fuanada Hana Age 37

Str 6 (+0), Dex 6 (+0), End 7 (+0), Int 7 (+0),
Edu 6 (+0), SS 7 (+0)
Skills: Gardening 0, Housewife 4
Equipment: Detergent aerosol, kitchen laz-knife.

Hana is childless, and devotes all her love to her husband and their garden. She is the most reserved of the group of housewives.

House: A beautiful garden the size of a large room. It has a clear plasteen dome that can be darkened to prevent outsiders seeing through it. The canopy can also be opened by remote control. Melons, beans and bright flowers are grown. A small veranda, trellises and a water feature utilize natural bamboo. A small ornate hut holds tools and seeds and includes bamboo rods of different widths.

The Referee may decide that some of the bamboo staves include the murder weapons used against Shanna Ramirez. They have been cleaned but may still retain a physic residue from the attack.

Nosaka Junko

Age 25

Str 6 (+0), Dex 9 (+1), End 7 (+0), Int 7 (+0), Edu 7 (+0), SS 7 (+0)

Skills: Computer 0, Drive 0, Housewife 3

Equipment: Detergent aerosol, kitchen laz-knife.

A rather plain woman, her husband rated her as a good catch as she is the niece of his company's Chairperson and co-owner. They have been married for three years and have Katsu, a one year old son.

House: Kenji has a set of kendo armour in a box. Practice bokken (wooden training swords) and a licensed pair of Samurai swords are on display in his study along with martial prints of samurai. The study is often locked to keep the blades out of harm's way.

Oka Rettsu

Age 29 Wife of Chutaro

Str 5 (-1), Dex 7 (+0), End 7 (+0), Int 5 (-1), Edu 6 (+0), SS 7 (+0)

Skills: Housewife 3, Knowledge (Feng Shui) 0

Equipment: Detergent spray, kitchen laz-knife.

Rettsu is Chutaro's childhood sweetheart. She is undistinguished looking, though she has a tender nature that drew her to her future

husband when he was learning to cope with a disability. She has an interest in Chinese Astrology which she learnt from her half Sino grandmother.

House: Everything is laid out according to the principals of Feng Shui. Some books on the subject can be found in the bookcase.

Ihira Crystal

Age 29

Str 6 (+0), Dex 8 (+0), End 7 (+0), Int 7 (+0), Edu 7 (+0), SS 8 (+0)

Skills: Carouse 0, Drive 0, Gun Combat (Slug rifle) 0, Housewife 3, Persuade 1

Equipment: Stun unit, detergent spray, kitchen laz knife.

This petite wife stills shows signs of the exceptional beauty she had when she married seven years ago. Her parents are wealthy and completely 'Americanised'. They have ceased to bail out her husband some years ago and still make futile appeals for Crystal to divorce her husband.

House: A locked cabinet has a licensed shot gun and a sporting rifle with a laser sight.

Yoko Ono Block

A modern block built with the aid of philanthropists from the Meg-City's ethnic Hondo population and completed in 2119. About 22% of the inhabitants are of Hondo extraction. A significant sized artistic community is based here; most of whom resent the presence of Y.O.B.'s Cit-Def unit and the block's Shinto temple. The Fatties amongst the citizens are encouraged to take up Sumo wrestling.

The 'Lucky Rings' are the Yakuza family who oversee business in YOB. They are extremely careful to restrict their activities to the ethnic Hondo part of the Sector's population following the recent bloody turf war fought by other Yakuza in the Lowlife quarter of the Mega-city.

The 'Plascreet Tigers' are a well organised juve gang of Hondo blood involved in the narcotics black market. They are noted for their use of martial combat arts and fights with gangs from the nearest Sino quarter.

The 'YOBS' are a large and badly organised collection of adolescent thugs, none of whom have any Hondo ancestry.

Typical Yakuza tough

Str 8 (+0), Dex 7 (+0), End 9 (+1), Int 6 (+0), Edu 5 (-1), SS 7 (+0)

Skills: Athletics (endurance) 1, Deception 1, Carouse 0, Drive 0, Gambling 0, Gun Combat (Slug Pistol) 1, Melee (unarmed combat) 1, Streetwise 2

Weapon: Spit pistol (3d6-3) or club (2d6) Desperation -2

Typical Plascreet Tiger

Str 7 (+0), Dex 9 (+1), End 8 (+0), Int 6 (+0), Edu 5 (-1), SS 6 (+0)

Skills: Athletics (co-ordination) 1, Melee (bludgeon) 1, Melee (unarmed combat) 1, Stealth 1, Streetwise 1

Weapon: Club (2d6) Desperation -4

Typical Y.O.B.

Str 6 (+0), Dex 7 (+0), End 7 (+0), Int 5 (-1), Edu 4 (-1), SS 4 (-1)

Skills: Deception 1, Melee (blade) 0, Stealth 0, Streetwise 0, Survival 0

Weapon: Dagger (1d6+2) Desperation 0

Greta Garbo Block

A small run down and dilapidated block noted as a favoured residence for slabwalkers. This seems to be with the contrivance of the landlords and block councillors who also ensure no surveillance cameras are kept in the block. Reports of crime are low and the block does not seem to suffer any particular problems from juve gangs. This is probably due to the presence of a lot of 'managers' (pimps) and mobsters from the Sector's biggest crime family.

Go Find the Lady

Running the Adventure Using the Public Surveillance Unit

The Referee can decide if PSU are able to locate clues to a known suspect's current, or recent, whereabouts. If a dice roll is needed an 8+ should suffice but each level of the suspect's Streetwise gives a -1 modifier. If a suspect is deliberately avoiding detection the roll needed is 10+ and the suspect can also add Stealth or Deception as a further negative modifier.

The House of Clouds

The exact relationships between Madame and the Justice Department of Mega City One and the Hondo embassy are left for a Referee to decide upon for themselves. Quite possibly player characters may have suspicions

about the establishment that can lead them into a tangled maze of Hondo ambassadors, Yakuza and different Divisions of the Justice Department.

The Geisha Bank

The Referee might decide to use this Sector 13 establishment instead of the House of Clouds. (*Judge Dredd Rulebook, page 268*).

Adding Detail

Ideally the case occupies several week's of investigation. Some of this time period will be assumed to be occupied in performing other duties. Several of the locations visited have the potential for the judges to encounter criminal gangs that are engaged in a crime. The Referee can also choose to run the adventure alongside another ongoing case or a whole series of cases and incidents. The more complex a team's case

load, the harder it will be to identify and chase up important leads. The use of a few citizens with Japanese names in other scenarios the Referee is running concurrently will muddy the waters of the investigation.

Care must be taken by the Referee to only fleeting refer to the wives and not make them sound interesting or extraordinary if the scenario is to have good mileage. The Referee should feel free to improvise and add or change the material in this scenario. If more danger is required several criminal gangs have ties to some of the Non-Player Characters or inhabit some of the locations in this adventure. If the case is concluded quickly, then unused characters and situations can hopefully be used in other investigations and incidents.





RUINE QUEST II

MONGOOSE PUBLISHING

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The Mad Monk of the Moss

By Peter Cakebread and Ken Walton

1646: A Spanish man o'war has been wrecked on the bleak and windswept coast of Lancashire. As the only Royalists in this remote area, you must secure the wreck and its valuable cannons and powder stores before the Parliamentary forces get there. But are you prepared for the wild salt marshes of Cockersands Moss and the weird creatures locals say haunt its fog-covered expanses?

This is an adventure for a group of Royalist adventurers.

BRIEFING

The Adventurers are staying in a coaching inn, the *Pickled Pizzel*, near Lancaster, and socialising with the Earl of Derby (see *Clockwork & Chivalry Core Worldbook* p.65) when a messenger arrives to say a Spanish ship has been wrecked off the coast at Cockersands.

Read or paraphrase the following:

It's early morning, the 7th of March, 1646. You are staying in an airy, although shabby, coaching house, on the Lancaster to Preston road. You rode there the night before, to receive orders, requisition papers, and messages from the Earl of Derby. The Earl insisted you stay over with him. Now, you are having some breakfast with the great man. It's hearty but plain fare – peasant food, really. The service is terribly slow. After your meal you must go your separate ways once more.

The Earl is moaning about the war and the treachery that caused it, favourite themes of his. "What price loyalty in these mean times? The neglect of tradition and the old ways is the bane of this nation. Let us sup before we return once more to the unholy fray that blights the land. Landlord, pray bring forth some wine, and snap about it, knave!"

The Earl of Derby is travelling around the roads of Lancashire, recruiting for and supplying various fortresses in the region. His formidable wife is installed in Lathom House, as ever fighting an interminable siege, which the Earl might get around to trying to lift at

some point, if only he weren't so busy.

Your reveries are interrupted by a mud-bespattered man, a messenger by the looks of him. He bundles into the inn, heading directly for the Earl, who rises to greet him. The Earl moves away from the table and has a private, whispered conversation with the fellow.

Anyone listening in will hear the messenger describe the shipwreck and its location.

The messenger informs the Earl of the shipwreck. The Earl will ask the Adventurers to investigate. The Earl has no soldiers (just two bodyguards) with him, and it will take a while to get word back to the garrison at Lancaster Castle, so he asks the party to go and claim the wreck before Parliamentary forces can get there. He suggests the Adventurers go to Glasson and recruit some villagers with carts to get the cannons, any gunpowder, guns and other supplies that might have been washed ashore.

"I apologise my friends. My messenger has just informed me that a large ship has been sighted, freshly wrecked upon the coast of Cockersands. From the description she's a Spanish vessel, and a Man o'War at that. I must impose on you to investigate the wreck. There might be survivors... and of course such a ship is probably carrying cannon, powder, and who knows, maybe even treasure from the west. If so, it must be secured to prevent the rebels gaining any such prizes. Any recovered treasure will need to be moved to the garrison at Lancaster. Go to Glasson and recruit some local help, the farmers there are sure to have some carts or somesuch, and I would be most indebted to you."

The Earl knows little of the area, aside from the fact that it is a marshy backwater. He does know the way however (as will any Adventurers making a Regional Lore test). See the map. If asked, the Earl will promise to send another small party after the Adventurers, to assist with the recovery of the goods. *"But first I must away on business to the garrison. Godspeed!"*

Jem Higgs the landlord will not offer any help (he is not enamoured of his Royalist customers.

While appreciating their coin, he does not appreciate their high and mighty manners. His lad Wilf will ready the Adventurers horses, but he does not seem to be working particularly quickly. *"Beating him won't help, he's a plodder. But I promised my wife I'd take care of 'im. Ah'll get to it meself sirs, won't be long."* Jem is no quicker - the Adventurers will have to help if the horses are ever to get saddled and away. The Earl will have no such problems, his guards arose early to prepare his mounts.

GETTING TO GLASSON

Adventurers will probably travel by road to Glasson (the alternative would take a long time). If the party travel down the road/track, rather than across country, then when they reach the junction (off which the track to Glasson runs) then Adventurers making a Perception test will be aware that a sizeable group (8-12) have recently used the track, likewise heading toward Glasson.

The weather is cold, but not bitter. The sun is out, although it is threatening to cloud over. The ground is fairly dry underfoot, as the morning dew starts to dry out a little.

Encounters on the way

Before reaching the junction, the Adventurers notice a small group, shuffling along the trail, heading north towards Lancaster. They seem to be two family groupings. They are walking on opposite sides of the trail, effectively blocking you. Perception rolls will determine from a distance (otherwise, wait until the party draws near):

There are a group of people blocking the trail. As the scrawny wretches come toward you, you see they are actually split into two groups. The groups are jostling each other – spitting and shoving as they wind their way up the track. Some of them are pushing handcarts. Others carry babes. Most of the men (of whom there are few, and those that there are seem quite elderly) are swigging from jugs.

The families are those of Rosemary Nutt and Violet Brakes – they have been evicted from

their property (just down the road toward Garstang). The group are not a threat, but will stick to two themes – baiting the party if they seem (which they do) rich:

“Ah, gentlemen is it? Well, weren't no gentlemen that 'as put us on the street, babes an' all. Pox to all o' yer I say.”

And fighting with each other:

“We us lost ahire 'ouses thanks to your meddlin'Rosemary Nutt. An' now yer callin' a pox on yer betters. Lock 'er up sirs. As the witch she is. That'll teach the awkward bisum.”

There are three women, one man, five children and two babes in Rosemary's group; four women, two elderly men, eight children and a couple of babes in Violet's.

If asked about Glasson they haven't a clue (*“foreign parts is it?”; “No, you crooked mare, its by the sea. Ye know about nuthin.”*)

If the Adventurers think to ask, there are a few people scratching a living in the fields (Neddy Grubbin, Jo Preston and Bill Penner, to name but a few. They will attempt to avoid engaging with the party (they want no truck with military types of any persuasion), but if pressed will point directions (although as it is just *“down t'track”* there is not much to be gained!); will shrug if asked anything about the shipwreck; and will deny seeing anyone pass down the track earlier (in fact, any farm workers will have observed the Parliamentarian soldiers – successful intimidation or persuasion will be rewarded with, *“Aye, there were another group. Din't pay 'em much mind though”*).

Glasson

The party are going to have a hard time recruiting any help. Glasson is just a tiny farming village by the river (the current dock will not be built until 1779). Most of the locals in Glasson are Royalist (as far as it goes) but they would rather keep out of any hazardous expeditions, and are scared of the strange denizens which are said to lurk in the marshes. There is one pub, half a dozen houses, and a tiny, deserted, chapel (the locals have hounded out the 'hot' vicar - they prefer their religion

more traditional). The houses are also quiet, aside from a few women.

The Puddled Yolk

Adventurers will probably go to local inn, *The Puddled Yolk*, and try to recruit villagers. If they do, they find mainly old men (*“Ah, the young 'uns are all away fighting fer the King”*). In fact most of them are out farming the land or have gone to steal salvage from the wreck). There is no manor – the local authority had been previously exercised by the church, but with the Bishop so far away and the vicar driven off, people are pretty much left to their own devices.

Aside from the innkeeper and his wife, there are a few old men around a table, drinking from jugs, tugging on their pipes and saying little. Another fellow sits a little away from the others. He is also old.

The group of old men will offer:

About the shipwreck: *“Aye. That so, is it? Well, Ah never.”*

About the Marshes: *“Oh, you don't want to go out on the Moss. (The salt marsh is known as Cockersands Moss, or just the Moss). The boggart's'll get you. Or the water faeries. Suck you down into the muck they will. And if they don't get you, the mad monk will. Ah doubt Ebenezer there 'as any sheep left.”*

About the Mad Monk: *“There's a madman out there. He lives in the ruins of the old abbey. People have 'eard him chanting late at night, and a ghostly glow can be seen out in the marshes on many an evenin'. They call 'im t'Mad Monk”; and “He steals small children who haven't been good – well, so they say.”*

Besides: *“No point going after the ship, the Parliamentarians are ahead of you. A bunch of ten soldiers left about half an hour ago. We warned them about the boggarts and the mad monk, but they wouldn't listen.”*

Only one might be helpful – the loner, old Ebenezer Cacklethwaite. He will say:

About Ebenezer: *“Ah keeps sheep out on t'marshes.”; and, if pressed, “Aye, ah could take*

yer. But it would be no fun. Ah've lost a lot of sheep 'o late an Ah'm not sure why.”

About the dangerous marshes: *“Ah 'ave a charm which keeps me safe from t'water faeries and tinad monk.” He pats his chest, as if there might be a trinket beneath his shirt. (There isn't).*

Actually, Ebenezer knows the monk and is paid to take him food and alchemical supplies. He intends to make sure the Adventurers do not get too near the ruins. The Adventurers can requisition a mule and cart if they ask around, though the price will be steep (two pounds), as the person “lending” it does not actually expect to see it again, and is actually selling it to them. Negotiation will mean that the man will lend the cart and mule for the two pounds – but return all but a couple of shillings if the party return the property intact.

Ebenezer will explain, “You don't want to take your 'osses down to t'marshes, they're treacherous. Mules'd be good, but not fine 'osses.”

THE SALT MARSHES

As you head away from Glasson, toward the coast, you enter the edge of the salt-marshes; its boggy grassland cut by wide meandering channels and there's a thick drizzle, enough to make everyone wet and miserable and visibility low.

If anyone has taken a horse, it's likely to slip in the slippery mud of one of the channels and break it's leg (Riding or Driving Roll), and the characters will get wet and muddy before they've gone very far.

As the party slog on, a cold thick fog comes down, making visibility very low. There are eerie splashing sounds in the fog.

A cold thick fog obscures the coastline ahead. Visibility rapidly reduces.

The fog creates an eerie sensation. Strange splashing sounds can be heard on a successful Perception roll.

The Mad Monk of the Moss



Ambush!

Suddenly the Adventurers are ambushed! A group of six Parliamentarian soldiers fires at them from behind tussocks of grass and then leaps up and charges in with swords drawn.

At the first sign of conflict, Ebenezer runs away into the fog and is not seen again this adventure.

Soldiers

STR 10 CON 11 SIZ 11 INT 9

POW 11 DEX 12 CHA 11

SR 11; CA 2; DM 0

Hit Points: 11

Skills: Evade 50%, Flintlock Musket 60% (1D8+1), Persistence 44%, Pike* 56% (1D8+1+1D2) Resilience 55%, Sword (Short Sword) 56% (1D6+1D2), Ride 64%

Armour: Breastplate. 6AP to Chest, -2 to SR

Hopefully the Adventurers will finish off the soldiers. If any are left alive, they will tell them that another four soldiers went ahead to secure this ship prior to a big force of soldiers arriving in a couple of hours (this is a lie – they have sent word to headquarters in Manchester, but it is likely to be a couple of days before a larger force can get here, as Parliamentary forces are thin on the ground in Lancashire. A successful Insight test will reveal the untruth).

Without Ebenezer, the Adventurers will just have to head west and hope to arrive at the right bit of coast. They will probably have more troubles with finding their way through the channels without a guide who knows them.

Away with the Faeries

The Adventurers continue on their way.

You hear increasing sinister splashing and bubblings in the marshes around you. Suddenly a hand, apparently made out of the peaty water, reaches out and grabs your ankle (roll to find out which one of the Adventurers), pulling you downward. More small, sinister looking creatures with big fishy eyes and clutching hands rise out of the water and attack the party.

There is one for each of the characters. They are actually Undines (see *RQII* p.170) but shaped to look like evil faerie creatures. They are 1 Magnitude Undines (1 cubic metre), with the following stats.

STR	6
CON	-
SIZ	1 cubic metre
INT	3
POW	3
DEX	6
CHA	-
CA 2; DM	-1D4; SR+5; HP 9

Skills: Brawn 42%, Engulf 100%, Perception 30%, Persistence 43%, Stealth 45%

This should not be a tough fight, but should be fairly scary as Adventurers are pulled under the water and feel hands plucking at their clothing and water forcing itself into their lungs as their heads are engulfed by the elementals.

An Alchemist in the party can identify the creatures as water elementals on a successful Alchemy roll.

Gruesome Deaths

As you wind your way between the channels, you suddenly come across an area of churned up grass and mud, almost as if a gigantic worm, or some devilish clockwork device had slithered across the landscape in front of you. Over to your left, in the path of whatever it was caused the disturbance, you can see some huddled bodies.

If the Adventurers check the bodies, they find four Parliamentarian soldiers, all of them dead. One of them has wounds, as if he had been bitten by enormous teeth, but the others do not have a mark on them – just a look of horror on their faces. A strange sulphurous odour hangs over the scene.

COCKERSANDS ABBEY

As you stumble on through the marshes, begin to realise that the land is rising slightly and becoming drier, as though you are climbing a low island in the middle of the swamp. Parts of crumbled walls loom out of the fog: you are obviously wandering among the ruins of a once substantial building. Some of the fallen walls and stumps seem to look like the remnants of some sort of church, with pointed archways.

On a successful Lore (Regional) roll (at -25% unless the character comes from Lancashire) the Adventurers will remember that there used to be an abbey (Cockersands Abbey) out here, before Henry VIII got rid of all the monasteries.

Suddenly, a more substantial building looms out of the mist. This is the home of the "mad monk". (See picture).



The Mad Monk

The “mad monk” is in fact an aged and eccentric alchemist by the name of Doctor Theophrastus Fazakerly. He has lived here for years, doing experiments, and creating Undines to scare off anyone who might disturb him. He is mostly harmless, though he does not care if someone gets killed by the undines.

As the Adventurers approach the building, read the following:

This part of the ruins appears to be intact, and a glow of candle-light comes from one of the windows. Suddenly, a figure seems to rise up directly before you. An old man with a tangled grey beard, dressed in a black monk's habit, his pale eyes glaring madly, points a finger at you. "Begone! Begone I say, for the forces of Hell haunt the marshes, and surely if you do not leave, Satan himself will come for your soul!"

Fazakerly makes an Oratory roll to see how convincing he is – on a critical success, the Adventurers will probably want to run away, otherwise they will be scared. On a failure he just looks silly.

Theophrastus Fazakerly

STR 10 CON 12 SIZ 11 INT 16
POW 15 DEX 12 CHA 14
SR 13; CA 3; DM 0

Faction: Self Interest (Leave Me Alone) RP: 62

Skills: Alchemy 82%, Elemental Casting (Water) 96%, Evade 26%, Oratory 78%, Persistence 61%, Resilience 41%, Unarmed 28%,

Spells: Bandit's Cloak, Chill, Dismiss Undine, Elemental Downpour, Elemental Fog, Extinguish, Frostbite, Shape Undine, Summon Undine, Water Breath

Currently has no Philosopher's Stone (has used it up), but could make a 6 point stone by morning if necessary.

If the Adventurers decide to attack the alchemist, he will immediately back down and apologise. *"I'm not used to strangers, I don't like them snooping round."* He may even admit that he sent the Undines to scare them off. (He has no magick at the moment, so has no way of getting rid of the Adventurers.)

He will ask the Adventurers if they have seen the *"fearsome beast which slithers. It will come for me, I'm sure of it. It will be my undoing, that fearsome beastie."* The Adventurers may assume this is another effort to scare them off, but an Insight roll will allow them to recognise that he is genuinely scared. He knows nothing about it, but has seen its trail. He has never seen anything like it in all his years of living in the Moss.

If asked about the wreck, he knows nothing of it, although there was a big storm last night, and he thought he heard cries and screams on the wind. If pushed he will admit there were more cries throughout the night, and he will point in the direction of the wreck.

THE WRECK

The Adventurers are actually only about 10 minutes walk from the shore and the wrecked ship, though it is impossible to tell because of the fog. When they get to the wreck, they find the ship broken in two on the edge of the marsh, with the sea lapping at the hulk. There are dead Spanish sailors everywhere, and the same sulphurous odour the Adventurers smelt at the site of the soldiers' death.

There are about 20 cannons, and lots of kegs of gunpowder scattered across the Moss, some already sinking into the black ooze.

Stoorworm

As the Adventurers are picking through the man o'war, have everyone make a Perception roll. A huge Stoorworm (see below) slithers round one side of the wreck. It is about 20m away. If everyone fails the roll, the Stoorworm will be on them with a terrifying hiss.

It was sleeping beneath the Moss, but was disturbed by the wreck gouging into its resting place. It killed the crew with its poisonous breath and ate a number of them, and has been sleeping off its meal, curled up in one half of the wreck.

Read the following:

Around the side of the wreck comes a fearsome head, like the head of some huge crested snake, followed by yards and yards of scaled body, covered in marsh-slime. A rank, sulphurous odour hits your nostrils. Its eyes are a virulent scum-green and it opens its mouth to reveal rows of ragged fangs. Its head comes up, like a serpent about to strike and, with a hiss, it exhales a cloud of noxious green fumes in your direction.

Check Stoorworm Breath poison (C&C p.110) and the Poison rules in RQII p.55.

The Mad Monk of the Moss

Stoorworm

(From *Clockwork & Chivalry Core Worldbook*, p.109)

A Stoorworm is a large, limbless reptile, remotely related to Dragons. Like Dragons, no Stoorworms have been seen in England in generations, but magical disruptions of the natural order may have woken one or more from their deep slumbers beneath the bogs and fens which are their natural habitat. Unlike Dragons, Stoorworms have no fiery breath, but can exhale a cloud of poison, and are very hard to kill as their flesh regenerates very quickly from wounds.

When last seen in Britain, Stoorworms lived in remote, marshy places, in the wilder parts of the land such as the boggy moorlands of Lancashire where they burrowed in the peaty soil and preyed on sheep and the occasional unwary traveller. It is also possible that some may be sleeping beneath the marshy fenlands of East Anglia and may be woken by engineers' efforts to build drainage canals in the area.

Stoorworms look like gigantic snakes, twenty metres long, with crested heads like Dragons; they are black or dark brown and usually covered with dark peaty soil. They smell of sulphurous pond water and their eyes are a virulent scum-green.

A Stoorworm can emit a cloud of poisonous gas once per round. The cloud remains for one round before losing its effectiveness.

A Stoorworm regenerates two hit points per Combat Round in every damaged location. Regeneration will cease if the Stoorworm dies.

Characteristics

	Dice	Average
STR	12D6	36
CON	3D6+12	23
DEX	2D6	7
SIZ	12D6	36
INT	9	9
POW	1D6+12	16
CHA	5	5

<i>Combat Actions:</i>	2
<i>Damage Modifier</i>	+4D6
<i>Movement</i>	6m
<i>Strike Rank</i>	+8

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-6	Tail	8/12
7-14	Body	8/14
15-20	Head	8/12

Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage
Bite	55%	1D10+4D6
Breath	100%	Poison

Typical Armour: Tough Hide (AP 8, no Skill Penalty)

Traits: Poison (breath, see below for details on Stoorworm Breath), Regeneration

Skills: Athletics 30%, Persistence 40%, Resilience 25%, Stealth 35%

Stoorworm Breath

Application: Inhaled

Onset Time: Immediate

Duration: 1 Combat Round

Resistance Time: One Resistance roll

Potency: 72

Resistance: Resilience

Conditions: 1 hit point damage to all locations, -1 penalty to victim's CON

Antidote/Cure: Healing. CON penalty removed when all locations healed.

Dealing with the Stoorworm

It is quite likely the Adventurers might want to run away, if they realise how dangerous this creature is, and how quickly it regenerates. It will pursue them. The only place to hide is the ruined abbey. Fazakerly will be reluctant to let them in, and there may be a scene where they bang on the door while the worm gets closer, before he relents. Once in there, Fazakerly will insist no-one goes out again until he has made a new Philosopher's Stone. During the night the Stoorworm slithers round the outside the building, seeking a way in, before retiring back to the wreck.

Alternatively, the Adventurers may just slug it out with the monster, in which case they may have trouble!

ENDING

Once the Stoorworm is dealt with, the Adventurers may be able to get four of the cannons on the back of the cart (assuming they have one), and a few barrels of undamaged gunpowder, plus 10D10 shillings worth of Spanish gold.

If they ended up on reasonably good terms with Fazakerly (and particularly if he discovers that Alchemists are now legal and respected in this part of the country) he will return to Glasson with them, where he will be an incredibly annoying presence to the villagers for years to come. In a couple of days' time, Royalist and Parliamentarian troops will turn up to claim the wreck, and a battle may ensue – but that's another story!





You did remember to cast Multimissile on that cannonball, didn't you, sir?

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Old Acquaintances

By Jacob DC Ross

Introduction

“Old Acquaintances” is a scenario set in the Original Traveller Universe, but usable in other settings. It is a sequel of sorts to the scenario “OtherWorld Blues” published in Signs & Portents 91. If your play group has not participated in that scenario, it is highly recommended that you do so before playing “Old Acquaintances.”

Prologue

This scenario takes place approximately six months after the events of “OtherWorld Blues.” By this time SMART-Co has managed to keep the story of their treacherous hacker, Silas Ainley, under wraps and have gone sector-wide with the OtherWorld game. OtherWorld is proving very popular, and various military organizations are interested in using its overlay technology with their soldiers as a new form of combat simulation system.

The players have been contacted by a version of the Zteffani Gammario robot on another planet. Feel free to use whatever very metropolitan planet best suits your campaign. The only real requirement is that the planetary society be open to cybernetics. The scenario opens with the players in the lobby of the local SMART-Co headquarters, which is an exact replica of the headquarters from “OtherWorld Blues.”

Act One

Zteffani welcomes the players to SMART-Co. Although she is not the same individual robot who hired them in their previous adventure, the Zteffanis are continuously updated via X-boats and she is thus familiar with the players. Zteffani will escort the players to her office before filling them in on the nature of the job.

SMART-Co has been asked by the sector army to provide freelance participants in a field test of the OtherWorld chip’s military application. The job pays 2,000 credits apiece. If the players ask why the army does not simply run the test with its own soldiers playing

both sides Zteffani will reply that those are the specifications provided by Major Tom Jameson, the project’s military overseer. If the players ask why they specifically were chosen for this mission then Zteffani will reply that SMART-Co keeps dossiers of their freelancers and selects suitable candidates by analyzing these using a computer program.

As a side note, if the player group is composed of individuals with no military background, or for any other reason, the players may grow suspicious of why they were chosen or considered suitable for this job. Any hacker player may attempt to hack SMART-Co’s databases after talking with Zteffani. All actions related to the hacking should have a minimum difficulty of 10, however, and the risk of getting caught is very real. If a player successfully hacks the servers, they will find they were intentionally selected for this job (rather than being selected via the normal SMART-Co protocols), but whoever selected them covered their tracks in a manner that is impossible to trace.

If the players ask Zteffani for more details about the nature of the mission, she cannot comment until the players make a signed commitment to the job. If the players do so she will then explain they are to report to SMART-Co headquarters early tomorrow morning. From there they will be taken to the local army base to have a meeting with Major Jameson before being outfitted with dummy weapons for a live demonstration in the city. The military has obtained the necessary legal permissions to have soldiers and ‘rebels’ run through the city on a mission to test how effective the OtherWorld battle chips are at providing the necessary information to pick terrorists out of a crowd. After this, Zteffani will dismiss the players and they are free to do as they like before turning in.

Act Two

The players are taken by flier to the local military base. They are led with little preamble or introductions to Major Jameson’s office. Jameson is a severe man with a proud bearing

and many battle scars on his face. It is obvious that he holds the players in little regard. Even mentioning past military service will not impress him. Nevertheless, he has approved of this exercise.

He will explain in a gruff voice that the players are to disperse in the local city in crowded areas in order to hide from the soldiers assigned to find them. They will be equipped with weapons that have been converted into dummies in a manner similar to laser tag. They will be facing superior numbers, and so have no chance to win in a straight firefight, but must rely on guile. In order to prevent the players from throwing the exercise in order to make SMART-Co’s products seem effective, the army will triple their fee if they successfully “kill” all the soldier participants. Jameson will take no questions and then order the players to the armory.

The armory supervisor is Staff Sergeant Sharn Tollis. Tollis is a slightly-built man with a nervous disposition, which is quite unusual for an army man. Tollis does not make much eye contact with the players, but quickly explains the use of their dummy weapons to the players before signing off on the guns and allowing the players to leave.

The players are then taken by flier to the heart of the nearest city’s downtown district. The flier leaves and the players receive a start signal from Zteffani, indicating they are to disperse. From here on in they must remain vigilant.

Act Three

The player groups disperse through the city with a 30 minute head start. The players have been directed to seek highly-populated areas and two options will become immediately obvious to the players. First is a shopping district set up as an open “craft market,” and the local waterfront is hosting a festival. Once the players decide which area to approach, they should set out, making certain to keep their dummy weapons concealed. Once the players are in place, they should have about five minutes to establish hiding spots.

Wait, what?!?

You may be asking yourself why any military would allow open-field tests like this around innocent civilians. This is a fair question. The Referee can establish that the planet on which this adventure is set has been enduring multiple terrorist attacks. While most citizens still enjoy many freedoms, the government has sought to crack down on the terrorists and is taking more extreme measures. While the local citizens are not happy with the situation, they have yet to voice their complaints in any organised manner.

Of course the main villain, who is about to arrange for mayhem to occur, is more than capable of ensuring this field test appears to have all the necessary permissions and permits with (falsified) orders backing him up, even if this is something the government of the planet would never normally permit.

As the soldiers make their way to the players' location, the players may throw Stealth or Tactics in order to set up an ambush. Regardless of how their rolls turn out, things are about to go pear-shaped. The Referee should read the italicised text aloud:

A squad of five soldiers makes their way through the crowd. One, a lance corporal taking point, seems to focus on a member of the group. As you start to raise your weapon the corporal shouts 'Sir, they've all got guns!'

The other four soldiers raise their weapons as well. However, rather than aiming at any of you, the soldiers begin firing wildly into the crowd. Most of the civilians are sitting at tables and have dived for cover following the corporal's warning, but a few have been too slow and are visibly hit by live rounds! Something horrible is happening, and it will be up to you to prevent civilian casualties!

The soldiers are for some reason assaulting civilians. The players are likely to guess the reason why. The soldiers' OtherWorld

chips have been sabotaged. It seems that the technology is easily manipulated, and now that is leading to catastrophe. Additionally, the soldiers were not issued dummy weapons, as the players had been led to believe. After the fighting they will have to work to uncover the saboteur. Now, however, there are innocents to protect.

The soldiers are represented by four Average Guards 1 from the *Traveller Core Rulebook*, page 84 and one Average Guard 2. The players may try their dummy weapons to see if they, too are carrying live weapons. They are not, and firing from their positions will draw the soldier's fire to their position. Players may attempt to dodge from table to table, each of which will have been upturned to provide cover from bullets, or they may advance using a table as a shield. Stealthy characters can attempt to sneak up on the soldiers. Any characters who were able to sneak their personal weapons into the training mission will be able to attack the soldiers and attempt to subdue them. Various chairs and other objects will provide every character with club equivalents.

Besides assaulting the soldiers, who the players are likely to realise are acting innocently, hacker characters with appropriate wireless computer gear will be able to disrupt the soldiers' OtherWorld chips by rolling Computers against a Difficulty of 10.

Following the combat, news media and law enforcement will arrive. Likely, the players, the soldiers and several civilians will require medical attention. Any wounded will be quickly transported to local hospitals, although an army representative will arrive on the scene as well, demanding the soldiers be turned over to him immediately.

Any player characters who require hospitalisation will receive it, and the Referee should make certain to keep the group together during this time. After all is said and done, the players will be taken under heavy guard to the office of Major Jameson.

Jameson will be irate, ordering any of his aides from his office and blaming the players

for the incident. Once the players decide to stand up for themselves, Jameson will smirk and play a video file of the shooting incident, shot from an angle in which it appears that the players provoked the soldiers into firing. If any player hacked into SMART-Co computers at any time during this scenario or they disabled the soldiers' OtherWorld chips by means of hacking then Jameson will throw down a file pad on his desk with evidence against the players and formally charge the players with whatever crimes fit the local law level.

At this point the players may decide to run, attack Jameson or plead their case. Pleading their case does no good, as Jameson is firm in his resolve. If the players run, Jameson will fire on them with his sidearm, and the guards outside his office will accost them, and they will have the entire base against them. The players may try to silently subdue Jameson, but Jameson will be able to alert the guards.

The major regards you all with a look of contempt. Finally, he speaks, 'There's nothing fun about being on the receiving end of payback, eh, scum?'

'Much as I'd like to see you squirm in court, having you go down for the attack on those civilians goes against my plans. I need the citizens of this world to rise against the oppressive military, and if you end up taking the blame, then the people's outrage will be only directed towards SMART-Co. Sure, we need to see some of that, after all,



Old Acquaintances

Ainley

So what is going on here? Silas Ainley, antagonist of “OtherWorld Blues,” has implemented a “safety net” built into the OtherWorld chips. The chips are capable of connecting to the local OtherWorld network and streaming an individual’s personality into the brain of any other person utilising an OtherWorld chip within the same planetary network. This is similar to the Personality Recording Chip found on page 70 of the supplement *Cybernetics*. Ainley has spent his time hopping from one body to another and is now inhabiting Major Jameson.

Ainley’s motives are anarchistic in nature. He despises corporations and military structures and intends to sow chaos throughout the Third Imperium. He also desires revenge on the players who first disrupted his plans, as their actions could have killed the OtherWorld project.

Mechanically, Ainley’s trick is represented by targeting any individual in visual range who has an OtherWorld chip, or uploading into the planetary OtherWorld server and targeting any random chip bearer. Ainley and the target each throw Intelligence, and if Ainley succeeds then he has displaced the individual’s mind and now controls the body. He has no automatic access to memories (although this is possible if he has had time to prepare a new host, as was the case with Jameson), and no access to Psionic powers possessed by the host. Psions add their Psi DM to their Intelligence Roll to resist Ainley. If he were to spend two or more years within a Psion, then he could conceivably learn psionic abilities, but would require another two years of study before he could transfer those abilities to a new host body.

Additionally, Ainley need not target living creatures. Any computer or robot connected to an internet equivalent that is capable of running a Level Five Personality Program, as per the supplement *Robot*, is also a fair target for Ainley.

Scene Chewing Villain

Ainley not only wants to kill the players but wants them to die as ignobly as possible and to be aware of why they are dying. It is why he has ensured they are given the initial job and why he wants them alive before they are caught and brought before him.

He uses his technical ability to ensure he is the one who leads the initial investigation into the massacre. After all, unless he has control, he will not be able to gloat, will he? He is not overly concerned with dying or with failing, as he believes he will always have another opportunity...

they and you all, were responsible for my present condition, but just having you involved in the incident in the first place will put enough heat on SMART-Co to hamper their operations.’

‘If you are still confused, I’ll explain. You’ll recall that you killed a SMART-Co employee named Silas Ainley. Well, Ainley was a lot smarter than anyone gave him credit for, and was able to integrate certain hidden features into OtherWorld chips, including a personality download. Well, enough of that, it is time that you were all killed in a botched escape attempt.’

With that Jameson/Ainley draws a pistol and trains it on the closest party member...

The players will have to fight Major Jameson/Ainley. Smart players will call for a medic if they harm him, in order to give a good appearance to others. No matter what the players’ intentions are, they will be held liable for assaulting Jameson, and the medics will discover he is in a fugue state, alive but completely unresponsive to all stimuli.

The players will be taken before the military police, and asked to explain themselves. Any skilled hackers among the group may be able to offer evidence of Ainley’s treachery, including the deliberate selection of the player group for the test mission. Additionally, this planet’s Zteffani Gammara will be able to corroborate their story about Ainley. Of course, if the players were running any surreptitious recording devices during their encounter with Ainley, then the point of guilt will be moot.

Silas Ainley	Strength	Dexterity	Endurance	Intelligence	Education	Social Standing
Age 32	9	9	6	15	12	9
Computers 3, Engineer (electronics) 2, Gun Combat (pistols) 2, Physical sciences (electronics) 2						

Epilogue?

Following the players exonerating themselves, they will receive payment from the military and Zteffani will be authorised by SMART-Co to offer a sum of hush money in exchange for the players keeping their mouths shut about the rogue programmer on the loose. The players may deduce that Ainley is still floating about somewhere, and very devious Referees may attempt to sow distrust among the group, hinting that any of the players may be hosting Ainley.

The purpose of these two scenarios is to provide Referees with a threatening, reusable villain. Every time Ainley is thwarted, he can simply regenerate into a new host body or computer. He can disappear from a campaign for months or years at a time before resurfacing to menace the players again. Possible uses for Ainley include inhabiting politicians, military personnel as above, Zteffani Gammara or anyone else important to the players. As a final danger from this scenario, the players can get a true feeling for the scope of Ainley's power by having an orbiting navy ship begin firing on the players as they leave this planet. The ship will of course be under Ainley's control, and it will be up to the players to disable him via remote hacking, board the ship and hope for the best or simply escape for the time being.



Lost Wolf: Shipwrecked!

By Darren Pearce

Introduction

Welcome to the Lost Wolf Campaign for the Lone Wolf Multiplayer Gamebook. This is a series of linked adventures appearing in Signs and Portents in the coming months, beginning with a quest for survival on not-so distant but foreign shores. The adventure has been designed for beginning characters, preferably with at least a couple of Kai initiates involved, but it is simple enough to run without any Kai being present.

It is important to get the atmosphere right, since this is part Lost, part Treasure Island and part Survival Horror. The Lakuri Islands are central to the Skull of Agarash and are pretty much uncharted in terms of Lone Wolf canon, so it is possible for Games Masters to build on this adventure even more, which is something that we encourage.

Healing and Death

Since the location for the adventure is a hostile environment, it is recommended that the alternate rules from Terror of the Darklords be applied here.

- A potion of Lampsur can be applied to a character to save them from death, as long as the potion is applied within a round of them reaching Zero Endurance.
- A successful use of the Healing discipline by a character can also save a character from dying, as long as it is used

within the round that they reached Zero Endurance.

Remember Healing takes time and the healer will be vulnerable during that period they enter a trance-like state, so it is important for a healer to have protection, especially during a pitched battle.

Background

The Feast of Fehmarn is well underway and the Player Characters are the only ones the current Kai Master can call upon for an important task. The Sommlending Naval Authority has asked for a Kai escort upon a sea crossing to the Kirlundin Isles. With all of his Masters and other Kai assigned duties for the upcoming event, he has no choice but to send the Player Characters upon this mission.

The Player Characters are escorting dangerous criminals to the Kirlundin Isles, to the Penal Colony there. During the crossing, the Bright Star (a

Sommlending Galleon) is attacked by pirate ships and a fierce storm breaks over all the combatants, massive waves lash the sea and thunder booms in the heavens. With heavy damage the Bright Star is able to limp away from the battle and during the night the ship is commandeered by the criminals. Since many of the crew died during the fighting the Kai are caught unawares and must capitulate with their captors, who threaten to kill the remaining crew if they do not comply.

The Kai are locked in the holding cells and their equipment is taken off them as the criminals set a new course. Thinking they are sailing to the Port City of Anskaven, the criminals do not realise that they have drifted into the wake of another storm. Try as they might, they are just not as experienced sailors as the crew and the Bright Star is lost in a mysterious fog bank. Finally at journey's end the ship is gutted as it smashes against a sharp reef, now taking on water and lashed by more



stormy waves, the criminals abandon it and one of them releases the Player Characters just in time.

They have only one choice, swim for the safety of the shore and try to find out where they are. Thus they embark on a voyage of discovery on the mysterious island...

Troubled Waters

It has been several days since the criminals you were escorting took advantage of a freak storm and pitched battle against pirates to seize control of the Bright Star, a Sommlending Galleon en route to the Kirlundin Isles. They managed to escape after locking you in the holding cells. You have been given enough food and water so you do not starve and as far as you can tell the ship is heading to Anskaven.

One of the criminals, a man named Duggan, is more sympathetic than the others and has promised that you will be freed once they escape from the ship at port. He brought you your evening meal and then left in a hurry. It is dank in the hold and the man seemed nervous, as though there was something wrong. You cannot quite work out what that might be. So here you are, in a dimly lit cell and your thoughts finally turn to those of escape, and perhaps, in some cases retribution.

Scene 1: Escape?

This is a great time for the Player Characters to introduce themselves, perhaps some are the Kai who were escorting the prisoners, the rest might be passengers and crew who were caught in the battle and locked in the cells by the criminals. Unknown to the Player Characters, they are very far from Anskaven and possible rescue...

If the Player Characters attempt escape and try to get the lock of the cell open, have them make a Test at Difficulty 5 against the lock. They can use a sliver of hard wood to try and pick the lock; there are a few bits around the floor where the criminals tried a similar idea earlier on. If they have a cloak-pin or some kind of metal sliver, then the Test becomes a 3. If they succeed or fail the following happens, regardless.

There is a bone crunching smash from behind you, as the ship is pierced by sharp rocks against the waterline. Heavy seawater pours in through the wound in the wooden planks and the force is enough to knock you off your feet. It blasts the air from your lungs for a moment and as the Bright Star pitches in the sea, the water rolls back out and leaves a massive hole through which a stormy sky can be seen, lightning rages around and jagged black rocks rise like shark's teeth against the waves.

Before you can react, Duggan comes running into the hold and staggers as the ship is slammed again, more water enters the ruined vessel and he reaches the door to the cell.

'I told them not to go that far, they tried to escape a Kirlundin Naval Patrol but the ship was blown off course, now it is on a reef. I cannot have you dying on me, not like this.' He is about to throw the keys when the ship rocks again and he is knocked backwards, more rocks break into the hold and he smashes his head against the side of a beam. There is a sickening sound as the support gives way and dumps cargo right atop him, his hand twitches once and then he lies still.



You are given no time to concern yourself with his fate, as the water recedes once more. The hole in the ship offers your only chance for escape since the door to the cell is now blocked by debris. The Bright Star is sinking fast and this is your only opportunity to get out, as the freezing cold water begins to devour the strength from your bones.

If they remain in the cells, they are going to suffer for it. For every round they are immersed in the cold water that is now filling the ship up to their knees and waist, they should lose 1 point of ENDURANCE. Hopefully most players will dive out of the hole and swim for it.

The idea here is not to kill the Player Characters, but to motivate them to leave the ruined ship and escape while they can. The crew cannot be saved and the Bright Star is done for, it is only half a mile to what looks like an island shore and they could easily make that as the ship rocks and rolls in the storm-tossed seas.

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As you leave the stricken vessel behind, pushing against the fury of the storm and the lashing waves, you strike towards land with every single stroke of your arms and kick from your legs. A desperate fight for survival against an uncaring sea, it seems like time stands still as you swim for the shore, finally you crawl up the beachhead on your hands and knees, spitting salt water and coughing harshly as the chill creeps into your bodies and the final lightning flash across the horizon illuminates the end of the Bright Star.

Deduct 1 ENDURANCE from the Player Characters due to their ordeal in the stormy waters, they should be cold and without shelter.

Scene 2: Survival

You are on a stark white beach, with a vast jungle of trees to the north and sharp rocks to the south. You can see the cause of the Bright Star's demise; black reefs poke up out of the lashing water, looking as if they are attempting to eat the sky like some giant's maw. You are cold, hungry, without food and adequate shelter, you may well die.

The Player Characters should be looking at their surroundings for any means of survival, Kai will be especially skilled in this situation, as will Border Rangers or any other wilderness based character. If they have a relevant Discipline or Skill then give them a bonus of +1 or +2 to any related Tests they might make.

There are several key elements on the shoreline they can exploit but they need to fulfil all of these to avoid an ENDURANCE loss during the night. If they neglect any of them they lose a point of ENDURANCE during

the night for every need they do not satisfy. They can lose 3 points this way if they are not careful.

- Fire: they need it to keep predators away, dry out their clothes and cook most of their food. Fortunately for them, as long as they are relatively skilled (and they should be) characters, they can start a fire and keep it going since there is a lot of dry wood and so on around the shoreline. They can rub a couple of sticks against a flat piece of wood and use some dry grasses from the edge of the tree-line to catch any burning embers.
- Shelter: The storm is still going on; the island is going to be hit by heavy rain and harsh winds. There are adequate reeds, trees, and brush and so on for the characters to build a shelter. They can construct a very viable one from the material around the edge of the tree-line and this should help them stay warm during the night too.
- Food: Without this basic element, they are going to lose even more ENDURANCE and since they do not have their equipment or potions, this could be potentially fatal. Fortunately there is enough seaweed (edible) and even a small tidal pool close by with some crabs in it, they can catch these and eat them to keep hunger at bay. If not, they are given another chance to find food later on that night.

This is a great time for the characters to get to know each other more, do not rush them through the process

unless they seem to be eager to get further into the game. Remind them that if they go off exploring too far, without adequate protection, potions, weapons and equipment it could end their adventure before it has begun.

As they fulfil the criteria for each one of the survival elements, the Games Master can embellish it a little if they so desire.

Fire: The embers finally catch, with a little luck and a bit of care, the fire is nursed into a roaring blaze consuming the dry wood from the nearby trees. The warmth soon begins to trickle out from it.

Shelter: You work together to construct something to protect you from the oncoming storm, the high winds that lash the sea and the dark clouds that roll in the night sky appear ominous. As you put the finishing touches to the shelter, the first drops of rain begin to fall.

Food: You are able to catch a few tiny crabs, pick up some edible seaweed from the edge of the waterline and find a few nuts. It is not the greatest repast but it will keep you from starvation.

Give the players long enough to enjoy the scene, but the moment it feels like it is dragging on, read the following if the players have all the survival elements sorted.

Time has passed and you have food, shelter and warmth. The storm comes upon the island edge quickly and with high winds and driving rain. You are safe at the edge of the trees and watch the lightning dance in the heavens above. Finally, after many hours, it abates

and passes on leaving only quiet and uncertainty in its wake. You are safe for now and one by one manage to drift to sleep.

If the players have not been careful and they have ignored the basic elements of survival, then read the following.

Cold, tired, hungry still and near exhaustion you pass out as the storm batters the island, waves crashing against the rocks and lightning tearing the sky apart. The last day's ordeal has been too much for you.

For each element of survival that they missed, deduct 1 ENDURANCE from the character.

If the players managed to satisfy their survival needs they gain any lost ENDURANCE back during the few hours they are able to rest in the relatively safe and warm environment they have created for themselves.

Optional Scene: Hogs on the Prowl

This scene depends on how the party are coping with survival so far, the storm has raged itself out and left the island quiet for now. If they have had a good amount of rest, then feel free to hit them with the next scene to keep them on their toes. If they are battered and low on ENDURANCE, then feel free to skip this scene and move on to Scene 3.

You are woken by snuffing and grunting, quickly assessing the situation you can see there are several boars entering your camp. They squeal in surprise as they see you and begin to charge.

The players are now in a fight with several angry boars, as a rule there should be enough of them to give the party a headache but not overwhelm them. The characters have no real weapons to speak of but they can grab some broken branches and use them as impromptu spears or clubs, they might already have fashioned impromptu weapons as well. So if they made their own have the players use the rules for Improvised Weapons: -2 to their Combat Skill. If they have no weapons and want to fight hand to hand, then they are at a -4 to their Combat Skill.

Inquisitive Boars

Combat Skill: 16 Endurance: 22

Once the players have killed or driven off the last boar, the fight is over and they have another source of food. If they have taken any wounds they can cook and eat boar meat to give them 1 ENDURANCE back with the rest recovered once they get back to sleep, since there are only 4 hours left before morning.

If any characters drop to zero ENDURANCE during this fight, they can be saved using the rules presented earlier and the Games Master might want to consider another alternate rule for this particular scene (providing the right leaves from the island, allowing healer based characters a Test to see if they can find them). If they do not have anyone with the Healing skill however, they may well be in trouble. If it looks as though one of the Player Characters might be killed by the boars the animals turn and run off, not wanting to wish any (further) injury.

The boars are gone and you tend your injuries. At least you have more food now and it is a little more substantial than nuts, crabs and seaweed. You settle down once more since there are only a few hours left until dawn breaks when you will be able to scavenge the shore for flotsam and jetsam from the wreck of the Bright Star.

Time passes and no more unfortunate disturbances should befall the Player Characters as they get some sleep. As long as they have enough shelter and warmth, they will regain all lost ENDURANCE from their ordeal come morning.

The early morning sun washes across the island, first red and then a bright orange as it glimmers on the waves. The storm has fully passed now and everything seems tranquil and at peace. After a small breakfast, you and your companions catch sight of something bobbing in the waves just close to shore.

Scene 3: Shore Leave

When the players go to investigate the shore they will find a small crate that has washed up on the beach, it has a few things in that will aid them on the island.



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- A tinderbox with a few bits of tinder flint and steel inside.
- A small hand axe.
- Four Lamspur Potions.
- A few pots and pans, and eating irons (knives, forks, spoons and so forth)
- An old but serviceable spyglass.
- Wet blankets and bedrolls. (can be dried out).

They can scour the shore for other useful bits and bobs, but they will not find anything else of value that has reached shore. The ship was driven further inland by the storm and broken up into shards against the dark rocks. Make the characters Test at a Difficulty 7 if they ask to see if they can find anything useful. If they succeed:

You spend a couple of hours combing the beach for anything from the Bright Star; beyond the crate you discovered earlier. It seems that nothing useful has turned up until you spot that a piece of the ship jutting out close to land, only a few hundred meters into the ocean as the water laps against the broken wood. It is possible that there might be other items you can scavenge.

If the players do decide to try and salvage anything from the ruin of the Bright Star, they need to work out how they are going to do it. It would be insane for more than one or two of them to attempt to dive down to the wreck though, so the Games Master should stress this in the description.

You know the sea will not remain calm for long, one or two of you have the best chance at making a quick exploration of

the wreck before the water gets choppy again. The sea has already begun to caress the broken hull with a stronger touch than before.

If the players decide to dive, they will need to make a Test at Difficulty 8 on the way down. The water is still cold and they are still recovering from their ordeal from the night before. If they fail the Test they are going to lose a point of ENDURANCE from the cold water and over-exertion.

You swim down beneath the waves, taking no time at all to reach the vessel. Part of the ship has broken away and it is hanging by a thread or in this case, a nearly broken anchor chain. Too much swell in the water currents and it will be swept back out to sea. If you are going to enter the wreck, you need to do so quickly before the chance is lost.

The players that take a chance to explore the wreck will happen upon a few bodies that were caught below decks.

The dead float here, those who shared your voyage with only the day before. Now they are just husks ready to be claimed by the sea. You spot a couple of useful things upon the crewmembers; one has a short sword and the other a dagger. There is also a money pouch bobbing at the one man's belt. There seems to be nothing of value apart from this, the rest is likely to have been strewn out of the ship in much deeper water or destroyed by the reefs.

They can take the items if they wish. When they decide to take the items the following occurs:

The ship tilts as the water becomes choppier; the current smashes against the chain and finally the metal gives up the ghost. With a snap it is broken and the whole wreck starts to slide into the deeper water, driven by the outgoing current.

Players caught in the wreck need to make a Difficulty 9 Test to avoid catching themselves on the broken wood as it slides off into the sea. If they succeed at the Test they escape without injury, if they fail:

You are not quick enough to escape the wreck without cost; you are cut by a piece of jagged wood from the hole in which you swim out of. Blood mixes with the water and you are finally free to swim back to the surface.

The player(s) lose 1 point of ENDURANCE from this.

If they succeed at the test read this:

You make it out of the ship just as the remains of the vessel are torn back into the arms of the unforgiving sea; it is soon lost from sight as the clear water turns murky from the debris churned up by the angry current. You strike back for shore and break the surface back to the relative safety of the island.

For their trouble the players should now have 1 short sword, 1 dagger and a pouch of 6 Gold Crowns.

If they have not bothered to search the wreckage let the players poke around the shore some more, go back to their camp, talk, make an inventory of what they have. If they want to use the

day to do a little exploring they can encounter a few more of the island's boar population, to bolster their food supply. If they want to hunt for food then they can make a Test at Difficulty 7 for today and gain a bonus of +2 for any relevant skill or discipline such as Hunting or Tracking.

If they succeed at the Test then they will be able to find another small group of boars just up the beach, they are weaker than the first group and there are only 4 of them.

Weak Boars

Combat Skill: 14 Endurance: 19

The Player Characters are not the only ones on the island, some of the criminals from the ship have escaped and forged their way inland. Finding a small settlement on the way the few tribesmen and women were no match for the survivors and they have taken it over.

Scene 4: Where There's Smoke...

You believe it must now be a few hours past midday and the island seems to be fairly peaceful, once again the sea has calmed and the smell of the ocean is carried on a light breeze. A smattering of spray drifts on the air and the sun has returned to light up the shoreline. Then you spy a column of smoke further inland to the west, through a break in the trees. Perhaps there are other survivors from the ship or even a small village or town of natives...

The players should go and investigate, if they do not, then time is going to pass and the criminals will loot and pillage the settlement before moving

on. This can potentially lead to two very different outcomes for the Player Characters to encounter when they eventually decide to investigate the smoke.

They will have to journey through the jungle/forest to get to the settlement. If they spend more than an hour or so deciding what to do then when they get there read them the alternative scene where the criminals have escaped, killed anyone who decided to resist and stolen as much as they can. They also now have a crude map of the island marked where the villagers know there is a small fishing port on the other side. Their plan is to raid the port and steal a ship so they can sail off and put this whole mess behind them. They do not know the Player Characters have also survived, so are not afraid of any pursuit.

The trees are thick and lush here, with lots of undergrowth and brush. There are no discernable tracks but the smoke to the west gives you guidance. Small animals and birds watch you curiously as you move further inland and eventually you reach the outskirts of what appears to be a very small settlement.

If the Player Characters are sneaking, moving quietly and so on, then they will have an easier time once they reach the small settlement. If they are paying no attention to their surroundings and moving like a herd of rhinos through the trees, they are going to tip off the criminals (if they are not long gone by now). In this case, they cannot sneak up on Carver and he will be ready for a fight the moment they show themselves.

Arrival

If the criminals are still here and the characters enter the settlement, read this:

You pick your way through the tree-line and finally reach a small settlement; it is only a few huts here and there nestled in a tiny clearing. It has adequate protection against the elements but it does not seem to have much against the men who stand here now, one of them has a thin pale skinned man by the throat and he seems to be threatening the man's life. You recognise Carver as the criminal who led the escape aboard the Bright Star and killed several of the crew to do so. None of the other people in the settlement seem to have any fight in them to stop the four fugitives.

There are several options open to the Player Characters:

- They can use stealth: If they sneak up to Carver and his men they can get the drop on them before they cause any further harm. Carver's crooks will surrender the moment their leader goes down; if they want to sneak up and disable Carver then they will need to make a Test at Difficulty 12. Once they have Carver though the others drop their swords and plead for leniency.
- Negotiation: Carver is a no-nonsense negotiator and he will put his knife to the man's throat, he will want any equipment that the Player Characters are carrying and he will lock them up in one of the settlement's

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cages giving him and his men time to escape. He is a wicked man can respect anyone who can survive a wreck like that and still come after him. He will release the hostage and lock the man in with the characters.

- Wait and see: This is the worst possible option; unless the Player Characters intervene one of the villagers rushes Carver and his men. This results in a wholesale slaughter of the eight people present in the settlement. Carver then steals as much as he can and leaves without knowing he is being observed.
- Other options: Some players might watch a little and then sneak up, or just blaze in swords and spells flying. Carver is their leader and the three others are small time criminals who follow his lead until Carver dies, at which point they will either surrender or flee into the surrounding forest, never to be seen again.

Carver Dortun (Bandit Leader)
Combat Skill: 28 Endurance: 29

Carver's Men (Bandits)
Combat Skill: 16 Endurance: 24

Carver is armed with a short sword and a knife; the other 3 men are armed with daggers. They have 8 Gold Crowns between the 4 of them.

If the Player Characters lose the fight or surrender, Carver will lock any survivors in a shack and leave them there. Getting out requires a Difficulty 6 Test against the lock. Carver does

not want to be captured and he will fight to the death. Now go to Scene 5 – Aradi's Settlement

If the Player Characters are too late, having taken too long to follow the smoke, Carver and his men are long gone. They can be tracked with a Difficulty of 8 with a bonus of +2 from Tracking.

You come across a scene of devastation, the huts are burning and there is not a man, woman or child left alive from this small settlement. You search around and find nothing except death and misery... whoever did this is long gone but perhaps they have left a trail you can follow...

Carver is long gone but may be caught if the characters swiftly chase him. Having just massacred the villagers the bandits now expect no mercy from the forces of justice and will all fight to the death rather than be taken prisoner.

Scene 5: Aradi's Settlement

The settlement around you is one of small huts and hovels; it is hardly a minor spit on the landscape but its home to eight people. They are grateful that you could save them from Carver and his men, offering what little they have in return. The leader introduces himself as Aradi and welcomes you with open arms.

This only rings true if the settlement is not a smoking ruin and Carver has



not razed it to the ground, the people will react based on the player's actions and if Carver and his men are still alive or not. If any of Carver's men are alive, they can be locked up in the small cell. If Carver is alive then he will immediately try and work out how to escape.

The people here are friendly enough and include:

Aradi: the leader, a man who washed up on the shores of the island after his merchant ship sank. He was once a Shadaki Merchant and knows a lot about seafaring. He has a small map of the island, crudely drawn, that shows the Fishing Village of Nuri.

He is a thin man who was once quite handsome and swarthy, with dark hair and hazel eyes.

Jessa: The settlement's healer, she can tend to the characters and help them if they are injured. She is a friendly thin blonde woman dressed in robes.

Garl, Drech, Vagant: Three ex-pirates who were cast adrift in the Lakuri Isles, they are not very talkative and they are not too happy to see outsiders.

Portlan Dunn: A historian from Durenor, he was left on the island when his ship ran afoul of the reefs. He is an elderly man and quite sickly, he may only live another year. For all his knowledge of Maganmund he knows very little about this region.

Karla: A farmer that grew up in Nuri, she is in love with Aradi and came here to follow him when he settled in this place a few years ago. She is tall and heavily tanned with long brown hair, commanding of voice and skilled with a bow and short sword, her dark green eyes have a core of steel... she is the first one killed if the Player Characters wait too long watching Carver and his men.

There are also several children who are initially hiding amongst the trees having, run there when the bandits first appeared.

To be Continued...

The villagers can offer food and shelter to the Player Characters, offering information about the island if they are still alive. Otherwise the players are left to their own devices,

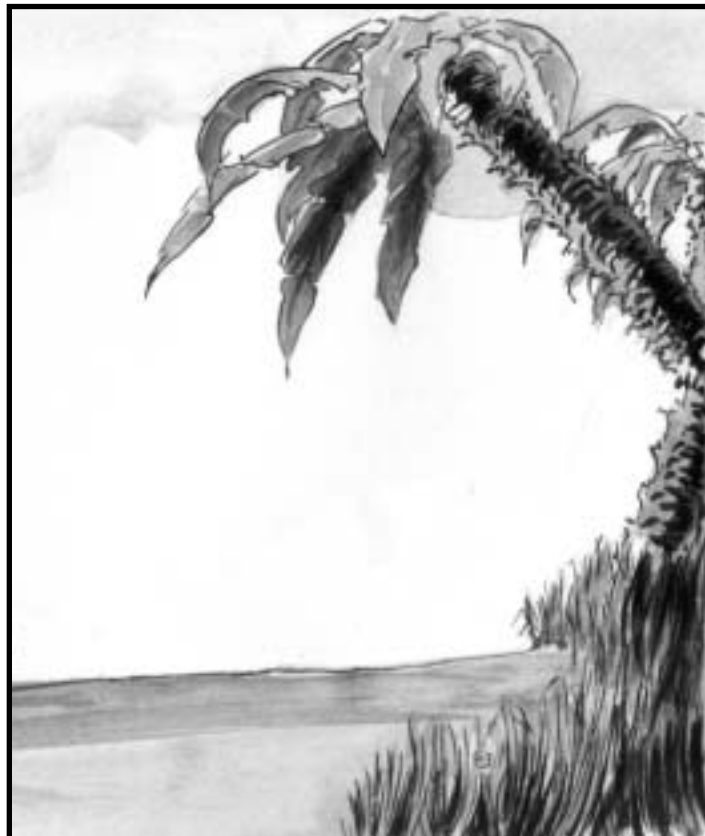
there are more boars to hunt and they have a camp back at the shore. This adventure assumes the players saved the settlement. They should be given a chance to talk to the people from the village, learning a few things like where they are in the Lakuri Islands.

They can learn of Nuri and Aradi will tell them about people who have gone missing, slave ships arrive to carry fishermen and their families away once per month. This should be enough to ignite the Player Character's desire to seek out the village when they are rested enough.

All the players should gain a Rank and they will have made a helpful ally.

Further Part 1 Hooks

- One of the settlement's children, Tira, has wandered off and managed to get lost in some nearby caves. The people do not know that there are a pack of Doomwolves laired there, but they ask the Player Characters to help them find the child.
- Portlan needs some medicine; the boars eat a particular grass called Jinkaweed. If they kill the boars and gut them, they can get the partially digested remains that Jessa can use to help Portlan with his sickness.
- Another escaped criminal has broken into the camp and stolen the people's food supply, they ask the characters to get it back and track down the thief.



Devil's Gulch

By Bruce Mason and Dyson Logos

This adventure is written to be setting neutral and provides enough information for a single session. Devil's Gulch is meant to provide seasoned or even veteran adventurers with a run for their money.

In the highlands there is a feature called Devil's Gulch. Some say it is haunted, some that it is the lair of an ancient cult others that no one who goes there comes back alive. It is far enough out of the way that no one takes the old road up there any more. Recently though goat herders have reported strange tracks and some say that they have seen smoke coming from the area. The cottars living in the high pastures have started to talk nervously of devil creatures returning and of presences creeping around at night. Now a young bravo, keen to make a name for himself by visiting Devil's Gulch has gone missing. The villagers and herders in the area will pay well for someone to investigate.

To be precise they will pay up to 500 silvers (in cash, jewellery and trade goods) to a party of adventurers who are willing to travel to Devil's Gulch and bring back proof either that it is abandoned and no threat or to bring back proof that they have roused whatever brigands might have made it their home. The family of the missing man, Kraith, will pay an additional 100 silvers for returning him alive or 50 silvers for his body.

Found Items Table

- 1* 1D6 ancient silver pieces: the mint is unknown to any save a specialist.
- 2 Tarnished copper dagger with an unusual leaf-like blade. Value 50SP.
- 3* Small (30cm high), marble statue with head missing. Value 3D10 SP.
- 4 Gold ring with several insets for gems; only one small ruby remains. Value 50SP.
- 5 Broken, china shoe-rack.
- 6 Pipe still stuffed with herbs. If the herbs are smoked in the pipe, the smoker will get +10% to any disease or poison resistance roll made while smoking it.
- 7* Set of different sized hexagonal keys. Value 20SP to a dwarf.
- 8 Small preserving jar (1/3 litre). Any food contained within keeps fresh indefinitely. Currently contains an exceptionally large human index finger. Value 200 SP.
- 9 Tin counting device. Once per day it can automatically cast the Common Magic spell Abacus with no Magic Point cost. Value 500SP.
- 10 Scroll written in code. If deciphered it will turn out to be a treatise on a minor demon including its true name. Value 400SP to a demonologist.

Approaching Devil's Gulch

It takes about a days hard travel along a long disused road (known locally as the Old Dorn Road) to reach Devil's Gulch from the nearest large settlement. Adventurers will realise that as the road climbs steeply before levelling out in an area with little cover that they are quite exposed to view. The road peters out not far from a huge, dead tree. Locals have stories about an old tree called 'The Hanging Tree' somewhere around Devil's Gulch.

The Lost Temple

The temple complex is made from white marble which has been befouled by the current residents. Adventurers will notice that much of the crafting is exquisite and has endured the ravages of time surprisingly well.

Found Items

Each room has a percentage chance of a Found Item and indicates which die to roll on the Found Items Table. The item can only be found with a successful Perception skill test taking 1D6 minutes (or 1 Combat Round if a critical success). For example, found Items 20% (1D8) means that there is a 20% chance of a Found Item and if one is found to roll 1D8 on the Found Items table. Anything with an asterix can be found more than once. If a unique Found Item would be found more than once, re-roll.

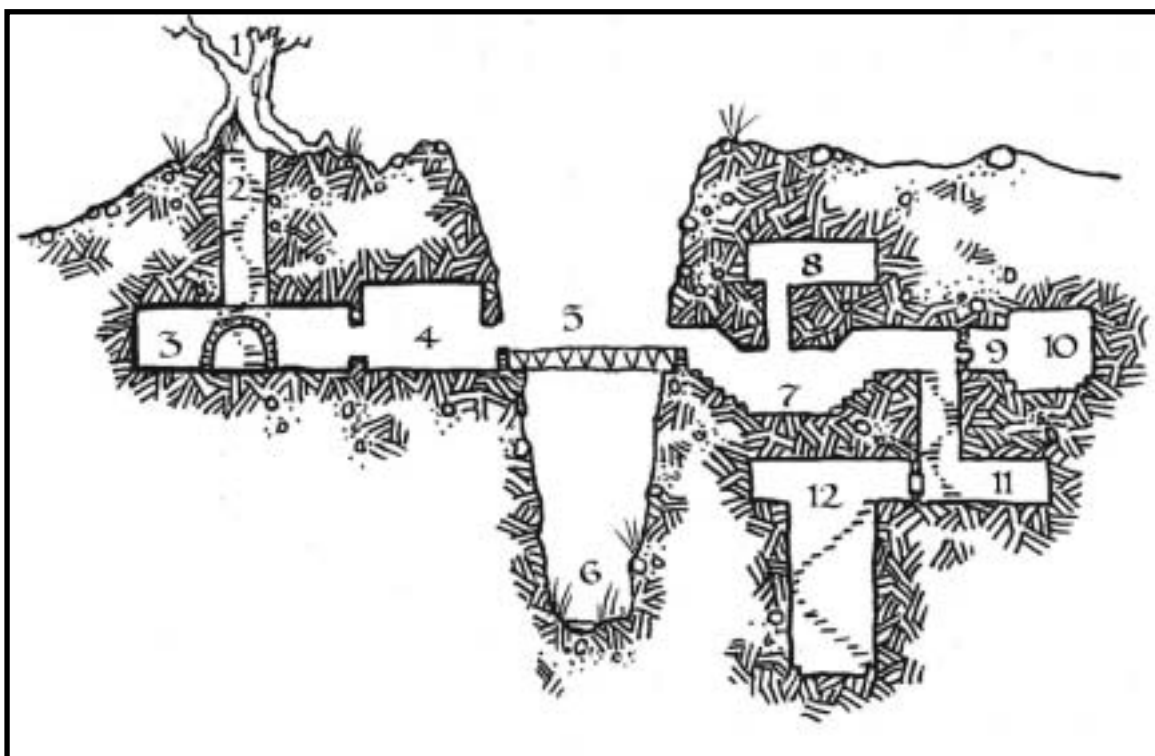
Temple Map Guide

1. A huge, ancient, petrified tree some five metres in diameter at the bottom. If the air is still, there is a chance of seeing a thin plume of smoke curling out from it. The Slug Man will be on watch here, with a 40% chance of being asleep on the job. Found items: 10% chance (1D4) of one hidden on the ground near the tree.

2. An ancient antechamber made of white marble; once grand but now greasy with smoke and the stench of badly cooked goat. There are empty alcoves on either side of the room. If the dirt from the floor is cleaned, an abstract mosaic dominates the floor. This room is used as a sleeping chamber and is empty during the day. Scorpion men numbers 1-3 will be present at night but out hunting during the day. Found Items: 15% chance (1D6).

3. The Great Hall. Magnificent columns line this once beautiful room. Chaos and beast runes have now been daubed on them in foul substances. The opening to room four is carved in the shape of beatific, human head so the archway represents his mouth. Found Items: 15% chance (1D6).

4. The South Bridge room. Vandalised reliefs show a saintly figure, clearly the same one from the carving in the room's entrance, blessing the sick and helping them to walk again. A fire pit has been created and there is plenty of



evidence that the scorpion men have been butchering their food here. Scorpion men 4-6 are present at all times. Found Items: 20% chance (1D8).

5. This rope bridge looks less reliable than it actually is. It is anchored onto fine, marble carvings that look like they were once the struts for a permanent structure. The gully floor is good 30 metres below.

6. The river that used to flow here has long since been diverted away. It is now spattered by scorpion man waste. Rummaging through it will require a Resilience test to avoid throwing up. Two human corpses will be found. One is an old skeleton but the other is the decomposing remains of Kraith. Should anyone investigate further, they will discover the back of his head has been opened and the brains scooped out. A broken shortsword lies nearby along with a distinctive dyed red leather sling.

7. This mysterious room has runnels in the floor and a shallow depression in the centre. Another vandalised relief shows the same saintly figure seen earlier with his arms held high calling out to the heavens with the sun represented by an ornate carving of a Light

rune in gold leaf. Anyone standing shoeless in the middle of the room and tracing the pattern of the Light rune in the air will activate an ancient enchantment that slowly levitates the person to the top of the shaft. Found Items 30% chance 1D8.

8. This is now the chieftain's room. He can usually be found here with his bodyguard and 1D4 other scorpion men (picked from 7-10). The scorpion men can wall-walk their way along the ceiling and up and down the shaft. There is the remains of an altar on the south wall and a small flue where a fire is burning and sacrifices are now made. The small room is the chieftain's personal lair and is kitted out in the latest scorpion man fashions, mostly hides and furs. He also has a locked chest containing his greatest treasure: an egg that might have the potential to hatch a queen.

9. An undiscovered secret chamber. Anyone who uncovers the outline of the door beneath the centuries of filth finds it opens easily but unless the opener is Rune Touched by Light or holds a carving of a Light Rune up, then opening the door springs a trap. A section of ceiling crashes down with a skill of 80% that is resisted with Evade. If the ceiling wins the contest then the victim is crushed taking

3D6 damage to three different randomly rolled locations. Over a period of 30 minutes the rocks that fell down gradually reassemble themselves into the ceiling. The trap can be disarmed by first finding it with a Hard (-40%) Perception test then disarming it with a difficult (-20%) Mechanisms test taking 1D6 minutes. Inside the room is a petrified (literally) dwarf wearing lead-lined overalls and still holding a hammer and chisel. Found Items: 50% (1D10).

10. The Garden. This room is an impossibly fecund riot of plants still somehow growing despite the lack of light. A desiccated elf will fall onto a randomly chosen Adventurer. Any plant removed from the garden instantly withers into slime. Found Items 50% (1D8+2).

11. A laboratory. Everything here is stone and lead. Shards of once delicate glassware litter the floor. The scorpion men have set foul idols of their queen around the place and heavily warded the place with runes; they do nothing practical in game terms. On the north wall is an immensely sturdy looking door, barred from this side. On closer inspection it is obvious that there are several dents in it, as if something large has attacked the other side.

Devil's Gulch



As with room 3, the doorway is constructed as part of the mouth of an engraved face but where the face in room 3 is wise and beneficent, this is twisted and full of rage. A short inspection reveals, however, that this is meant to be the same face. Four scorpion men (11–14) will be present. Found Items 30% (1D6).

12. The pit. This deep, dark room is some 15 metres tall with a treacherous spiral staircase. Anyone opening the door hears a strange gurgling while a foul luminescence floods the room. The bottom of the pit is a bubbling, malodorous mud pond that has been contaminated by the touch of primal chaos. An large, deformed boulder that's bigger than a man can be seen attached to the wall, half-in and half-out of the mud. This is the dragonsnail hoping for explorers with more curiosity than sense.

The Inhabitants

Just over 18 months ago Aqqaramelu Jabsson, a son of Queen Jab, lost favour and was forced to flee the queendom with his gang members. Leading them way through the cold mountains he stumbled across the old temple and quickly made it his own. His plan is to gradually scout out the countryside then raid the locals for weapons, armour and magic items before returning to Foul Blood Forest to reclaim the territory he lost.

When they first encountered the dragonsnail in the Pit Room they lost two men to its surprise attack. A third, “slug man”, was slimed and his scorpion body is slowly being transformed into something like a giant slug. Since then they have kept the door barred. Although scorpion men are touched by chaos, chaos is not a team player.

Should the temple be attacked, the first line of defence is meant to be Slug Man who keeps guard outside. In practice he spends more and more time lost in chaos dreams and the rest of the gang have become complacent. Should raiders be encountered, scorpion men tend to be undisciplined and put self-preservation first. They will attempt to launch sneak attacks and minimise any personal danger. The one exception is that if Aqqaramelu or

his enforcer, Girribili, is present the other scorpion men will fight hard because they fear their leaders more than any invader.

Remember that scorpion men can wall-walk and will use this to good advantage either by using the ceilings as ambush points or by using the walls of the gully as a place from which to launch ranged attacks. Should the situation require it, Aqqaramelu is smart enough to cut the rope bridge. When all else fails, he will threaten to let the beast out of the pit if he thinks this will save his life.

The dragonsnail in the pit cannot pass the door if it is properly barred but if it can infect a non-chaotic being it may be able to start to spread chaos through the region. The dragonsnail is not intelligent but it knows enough to try to frighten or kill in order to prevent the door from being closed so if it sees Adventurers in the pit it will wait until the last moment to attack. If the occasion calls for it a flash of light or insight lets one Adventurer see deep into the bubbling mud where scores, maybe hundreds of dragonsnails lie sleeping. Should the door be left open *all* of these will wake and start to climb to fresh new lands. Dealing with a full-scale snail invasion will tax the greatest of heroes. Over time they will devour the countryside and secrete the remains as chaotic slime.

Acknowledgements

Devil's Gulch was inspired by Dyson Logo's map, *Goblin Gully* (<http://rpgcharacters.wordpress.com/2009/08/21/friday-map-goblin-gully-a-deadly-one-page-dungeon/>).



Scorpion Men

		D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	19	1	Right Hind Leg	3/6
CON	11	2	Right Centre Leg	3/6
SIZ	19	3-4	Right Front Leg	3/6
INT	7	5	Left Hind Leg	3/6
POW	7	6	Left Centre Leg	3/6
DEX	14	7-8	Left Front Leg	3/6
CHA	11	9-10	Tail	3/6
		11-12	Thorax	3/7
		13-14	Chest	3/8
		15-16	Right Arm	3/6
		17-18	Left Arm	3/6
		19-20	Head	3/6

<i>Combat Actions</i>	2+1	<i>Armour:</i> 3 AP toughened hide (no penalty)
<i>Damage Modifier</i>	+1D6	<i>Traits:</i> Chaotic Feature, Poison sting, Wall Walking
<i>Magic Points</i>	7	<i>Skills:</i> Athletics 50%, Brawn 60%, Evade 40%, Perception 35%, Persistence 35%, Resilience 45%, Stealth 40%
<i>Movement</i>	12m	<i>Common Magic 50%:</i> Bestial Enhancement 2, Mobility 1
<i>Strike Rank</i>	+11	<i>Equipment:</i> Spear, Buckler, Dagger, Sling
		<i>Combat Styles:</i> Jab (Spear, Dagger, Shield, Sting) 55%, Sling 50%, Unarmed 45%

Location	HP 1	HP 2	HP 3	HP 4	HP 5	HP 6	HP 7	HP 8	HP 9	HP 10	HP 11	HP 12	HP 13	HP 14
Right Hind Leg	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Right Centre Leg	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Right Front Leg	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Left Hind Leg	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Left Centre Leg	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	—	6	6
Left Front Leg	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Tail	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Thorax	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
Chest	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
Right Arm	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Left Arm	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Head	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6

WEAPONS

Type	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP	Range
Short spear	M	L	1D8+1+1D6	4/5	—
Dagger	S	S	1D4+1+1D6	6/8	—
Buckler	M	S	1D3+1D6	6/8	—
Sting	L	L	1D6+1D6+Poison	As for Tail	—
Sling	L	—	1D8	1/2	200m

NOTES

The presence of a sting means that the scorpion man is effectively always dual wielding and thus gets a bonus Combat Action.

CHAOS FEATURES

All the scorpion men bear marks of chaos but the effects are largely cosmetic with the following exceptions.

#4 is corroding. Each weapon that strikes it is coated in the equivalent of weak acid. Stinking, green slime covers the scorpion man.

#5 is mutated and has a bird-like head including a wicked beak. It can attack with the beak using its Unarmed skill (M/T 1D6 damage).

#12 is mutated and has no left centre leg. Any damage is applied to his thorax instead. Bugs crawl out of the gaping hole.

Devil's Gulch

"Slug Man"

Half man, half slug, mostly useless

		D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	17	1-8	Slug Body	5/7
CON	11	9-11	Thorax	3/7
SIZ	17	12-14	Chest	3/8
INT	8	15-16	Right Arm	3/5
POW	7	17-18	Left Arm	3/5
DEX	9	19-20	Head	3/6
CHA	7			

Combat Actions 2

Armour: 3 AP toughened hide. 5 AP mucus and hide (no penalty)

Damage Modifier +1D4

Traits: Chaotic Feature, Wall Walking

Magic Points 7

Skills: Athletics 30%, Brawn 50%, Evade 30%, Perception 35%, Persistence 35%, Resilience 45%, Stealth 50%

Movement 4m

Common Magic 50%: Bestial Enhancement 2, Mobility 1

Strike Rank +9

Equipment: Spear, Buckler, Dagger, Sling

Combat Styles: Jab (Spear, Dagger, Shield) 50%, Sling 50%, Unarmed 40%

WEAPONS

Type	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP	Range
Short spear	M	L	1D8+1+1D6	4/5	—
Dagger	S	S	1D4+1+1D6	6/8	—
Buckler	M	S	1D3+1D6	6/8	—
Sling	L	—	1D8	1/2	200m

NOTES

His lower body has been transferred into a slug form by the dragonsnail's slime. Although still a part of the gang, he is not allowed into the temple and only suffered to live for as long he keeps a watch out for intruders.

Girribili

A brute and an enforcer

		D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	23	1	Right Hind Leg	3/8
CON	13	2	Right Centre Leg	3/8
SIZ	23	3-4	Right Front Leg	3/8
INT	6	5	Left Hind Leg	3/8
POW	6	6	Left Centre Leg	3/8
DEX	12	7-8	Left Front Leg	3/8
CHA	7	9-10	Tail	3/8
		11-12	Thorax	8/9
		13-14	Chest	8/10
		15-16	Right Arm	8/7
		17-18	Left Arm	8/7
		19-20	Head	7/8

Combat Actions 2+1

Damage Modifier +1D10

Magic Points 6

Movement 12m

Strike Rank +9 (+4 in armour)

Armour: 3AP toughened hide. 5 AP chain shirt; 4 AP scale helm

Traits: Chaotic Feature, Poison sting, Wall Walking

Skills: Athletics 35%, Brawn 70%, Evade 30%, Perception 30%, Persistence 35%, Resilience 65%, Stealth 20%

Common Magic 45%: Bestial Enhancement 2, Bludgeon 2

Equipment: War Maul, Sling

Combat Styles: Smash & Jab (Blunt Weapons, Sting) 75%, Sling 50%, Unarmed 70%

WEAPONS

<i>Type</i>	<i>Size</i>	<i>Reach</i>	<i>Damage</i>	<i>AP/HP</i>	<i>Range</i>
War Maul	H	L	2D6+1D10	3/12	—
Sting	L	L	1D6+1D10+Poison	As for Tail	—
Sling	L	—	1D8	1/2	200m



Devil's Gulch

Aqqaramelu Jabsson

The Leader of the Gang

		D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	20	1	Right Hind Leg	3/8
CON	11	2	Right Centre Leg	3/8
SIZ	21	3–4	Right Front Leg	3/8
INT	10	5	Left Hind Leg	3/8
POW	10	6	Left Centre Leg	3/8
DEX	12	7–8	Left Front Leg	3/8
CHA	12	9–10	Tail	3/8
		11–12	Thorax	8/9
		13–14	Chest	8/10
		15–16	Right Arm	8/7
		17–18	Left Arm	8/7
		19–20	Head	9/8

Combat Actions 2+1

Damage Modifier +1D8

Magic Points 10

Movement 12m

Strike Rank +11 (+5 in armour)

Armour: 3AP toughened hide. 5 AP chain shirt; 6 AP plate helm

Traits: Chaotic Feature, Poison sting, Wall Walking

Skills: Athletics 45%, Brawn 50%, Evade 40%, Influence 40%, Insight 35%, Perception 50%, Persistence 45%, Resilience 60%, Stealth 40%

Common Magic 65%: Countermagic 3, Bestial Enhancement 2, Fanaticism 2

Spirit Magic: Spirit Binding 60%, Spirit Walking 50%

Fetishes: All tattooed onto the shrunken head of his grandfather. All spirits intensity 2.

Guardian spirit: POW 15, Persistence 60%, Protect against spells up to Magnitude 5.

Scorpion spirit: POW 14. Boost potency of venom by +20%

Leaping spirit: POW 16. Gives "leaping" trait. Can leap up to 6m straight up or 12m horizontally from standing.

Equipment: Longsword, Scimitar

Combat Styles: Slice and dice (two-swords, sting) 80%, Sling 50%, Unarmed 60%

WEAPONS

Type	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP	Range
Longsword	M	L	1D8+1D8	6/12	—
Scimitar M	M	1D8+1D8	6/120	—	—
Sting	L	L	1D6+1D8+Poison	As for Tail	—

NOTES

Given a chance he fights with two swords. He is a cunning and dangerous adversary, more than capable of defeating a party of incautious novice adventurers by himself. If necessary he can use the Change Range Combat Action in conjunction with a *leap* in order to get out of trouble. Any opponent who has not seen this in action gets a -20% penalty to any skill used in response to this due to surprise.

Scorpion Man venom

Application: Injected or smeared.

Onset time: 1D3 Rounds.

Duration: 1D3 Days.

Potency: 51.

Resistance: Resilience.

Conditions: Agony and Nausea.

Resistance Time: Daily. The first Resistance roll must be made at the end of the Onset Time, then daily thereafter. Successfully resisting the poison allows the victim to avoid suffering the Conditions until the next roll must be made.

Antidote/Cure: Healing skill and magic.

Huge Two-Headed Dragonsnail

		D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	31	1-8	Shell	9/11
CON	20	9-12	Body	5/11
SIZ	32	13-16	Left Head	5/9
INT	2	17-20	Right Head	5/9
POW	15			
DEX	7			

<i>Combat Actions</i>	2*	<i>Armour:</i> 9 AP Shell; AP 5 Tough Skin (all other locations). No armour penalty.
<i>Damage Modifier</i>	+2D6	<i>Traits:</i> Chaotic Feature, Wall Walking
<i>Magic Points</i>	15	<i>Skills:</i> Athletics 20%, Brawn 80%, Perception 40%, Persistence 55%, Resilience 70%, Stealth 40%
<i>Movement</i>	5m	<i>Common Magic 50%:</i> Bestial Enhancement 2, Mobility 1
<i>Strike Rank</i>	+6	<i>Equipment:</i> Spear, Buckler, Dagger, Sling <i>Combat Styles:</i> That's Disgusting (Bite, Spit) 75%

WEAPONS

Type	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP	Range
Bite	M	L	1D6+2D6	As for Head	—
Spit	L	—	Special	As for Head	10m

NOTES

- The dragonsnail's heads each have a different chaos feature. The Left Head can spit chaos slime while the right can make a Fear attack.
- The dragonsnail has 1 Combat Action for each head and can both actions on the same Strike Rank if it wishes. However, if it decides to move both heads must agree as any movement uses both actions at once.
- Fear Attack:** This works like a Magnitude 6 version of the Divine Spell *Fear* (RuneQuest II). It costs the dragonsnail 3 Magic Points and uses 1 combat Action to make this attack. Note that anyone running away due to this effect will **not** lock the door behind them.
- Spit Attack:** The dragonsnail can spend 1 Magic Point to spit a medium-sized gobbet of *chaos slime* which must be evaded or parried with a shield of Size L or greater. If the slime hits bare flesh or natural armour then it may take effect. The dragonsnail will use any CMs to aim for an uncovered location or use the **Slime!** CM below.

COMBAT NOTES

The dragonsnail's main tactic is to use its spit attack to slime one target then attempt to use its Fear attack on all the rest so they will run out of the pit and not lock the door behind them. It tries not to get into actual combat. It can withdraw all its soft parts into a shell and retreat back into the mud should it come under sustained missile fire. Emotion effecting spells such as demoralise or befuddle have no effect on it. For obvious reasons, the dragonsnail is incapable of evading. CMs such as trip will have no effect on it but where appropriate it may substitute Athletics for Evade.

NEW COMBAT MANOEUVRE

Slime! (Ranged Attack only). The slime penetrates through any worn non-magical armour and infects the location struck.

CHAOS SLIME

Application: Smear.

Onset time: 1 hour.

Duration: Permanent .

Potency: 70.

Resistance: Resilience.

Resistance Time: The victim must make a resistance roll at the Onset Time; failure indicates that the slime has taken effect. If successfully resisted the slime dries up and crumbles off. If the slime takes effect the location transforms into a chaotic piece of snail body over a period of 1 week. After 1 week the victim must make another resistance roll. If that fails an adjacent location becomes infected. If the roll succeeds the spread of the infection is temporarily halted but a roll must still be made weekly.

Conditions: Chaos infection.

Antidote/Cure: Within the first hour the slime can only be removed by applying enough heat damage to the slimed location to cause a serious wound. While a location is transforming, using Healing Skill to amputate the location will prevent the infection from taking hold in that location. Once a location is fully transformed only HeroQuests or a miracle of some sort can save the victim. Amputating a transformed location simply leaves a chaotic stump that continues to imperil the adjacent locations.

House Li Halan

Maru Cruiser

Loved by her crews. Feared by her enemies. And rightly so.

Ijiri Light Carrier

Carries deadly flights of fighters into the midst of battle.

Iskati Frigate

Known to have engaged enemy destroyers one-on-one, and to have survived!



Dragon Destroyer

The accuracy of her weapons are legendary.

Cardano Galiot

Plays a vital, if secondary, role for any Li Halan task force.

Slayer Raider

Able to sweep aside enemy screens of explorers.

House al Malik



Moriah Cruiser

A competent all round design, capable in major battles as well as smaller skirmishes.

Asim Light Carrier

Able to bring decisive fighter forces to bear in even smaller scale battles.

Odyssey Explorer

Help main fleets avoid battle with Dreadnaught led enemies.

Efreet Destroyer

A favourite among al Malik officers. Not some much among their opposite numbers!



Matachin Stealthship

The commandos it carries are experts in ship boarding actions.

Rahimat Galliot

Often work in company with Matachin Stealthships. When enemies try to counter the stealthship the Rahimat often moves in unopposed...

Spider Frigate

An effective counter to enemy frigates.

PSYCHICS AND THEURGISTS

By Matthew Sprange

Introducing the Occult to A Call to Arms: Noble Armada

The superstitious and miraculous aspects of human consciousness have become real. Like the legends of old, humans can work magic and marshal amazing powers by thought alone... and make pacts with invisible entities best left to themselves.

Is magic just science from another perspective? Or is it something else entirely? Something antithetical to science, with its rational repetitiveness? Is it a thing of chaos, untamed? Or is it part of the deep unconscious of humanity's mind, ready to be tamed only by those who are willing to abide by its rules?

Whatever it is, the supernatural is a reality, although one whose main tenant is mystery: the unknown, the unsolvable, the ever-enticing carrot drawing one forward. The occult is not all light and crystals, however; it is more often dark and wild, sparking unforeseen reactions, often terrible to the initiator. The mind's powers often reveal they are greater than the ego which rules them, with wants and desires often at odds with their ruler. Theurgy can cause the initiator to lose grip with his finiteness, his smallness before creation, causing 'god complexes' and religious

tyranny. In the end, the measure of an occult power's good (or ill) effects is the person using them. However, unlike most tools, they are not neutral in their use. They enforce an ethical code, and can exact a moral price deeper and more obvious than a common tool. The user must be wary and on guard, lest his power control him.

In the Known Worlds Psychic and Theurgic powers have been used to aid battles in space. From the al-Malik Ur-Ukari psychics to theurgic Church Priests, they have become valuable in the vast distances of space combat.

Recruiting Psychics and Theurgists

Several ships in the fleet lists are permitted to buy one of two new traits – Psychic Crew X and Theurgic Crew X.

The score of both Psychic Crew and Theurgic Crew ranges from 1–6, depending on how much a player invests in the occult when he builds his fleet. This score is the number of psychic or theurgic powers a player may choose for his ship, picked freely from the lists below.

Naturally, a Psychic crew may not pick a theurgic power, nor may a Theurgic Crew pick a psychic power.

Psychic or Theurgic Crew: One ship for every 1,000 points or part of in the fleet may be purchased either Psychic Crew or Theurgic Crew. This will cost +20 points per level for Psychic Crew (maximum of 6) and +25 points per level for Theurgic Crew (maximum of 6).

House Hazat

Hazat Psychic Crews receive the Bedlam power for free, in addition to any others they purchase, due to their use of elite dervish psychic warriors.

House al Malik

Al Malik Psychic Crews receive a free bonus of +1 to their Psychic Crew score, due to their use of Ur-Ukari psychics. However, they can only have a maximum of Theurgic Crew 5 on any ship.

House Li Halan

Li Halan Theurgic Crews receive a free bonus of +1 to their Theurgic Crew score, due to their close association with the Church. However, they can only have a maximum of Psychic Crew 5 on any ship.

Using Psychics and Theurgy

A ship with the Psychic Crew or Theurgic Crew traits may use one psychic or theurgic crew power in each turn. This is declared at the start of each turn, before the ships moves and as any Special Actions are declared as well. It remains in effect until the End Phase.

When a power asks you to choose one or more ships, you may select the ship the Psychic or Theurgic crew is upon.

Psychic and Theurgic powers do not stack. A ship suffering from two psychics using Confusion against it will suffer a –1 penalty to its Troops Dice, not –2.



Li Halan Theurgic Crews are to be feared on any battlefield.

Psychic Powers

Ships with the Psychic Crew trait may pick a number of powers from the list below equal to their Psychic Crew score.

- ◆ **Confusion:** Any enemy Troops Dice rolled on any one ship within 12" suffer a -1 penalty.
- ◆ **Bedlam:** Any friendly Troops Dice rolled on any one ship within 12" gain a +1 bonus.
- ◆ **Crazed:** Any friendly Troops on any one ship within 12" become Marauders. However, if they fail to score a hit against an enemy Troop, they will automatically die.
- ◆ **Psi Shield:** The ship immediately gains +1 Shield.
- ◆ **Repel:** Any ship within 12" is moved 2" in any direction by the psychic crew. Its facing does not change.
- ◆ **Rotate:** Any ship within 12" immediately makes a 1/45° turn, as determined by the psychic crew.
- ◆ **Crush:** Causes 2 points of damage against any one ship within 12".
- ◆ **Slow:** Choose any ship within 12". This ship has its Speed halved for this turn.
- ◆ **Space Dance:** Choose any ship within 12". This ship has its Speed increased by 50% for this turn.

- ◆ **Brain Blast:** Immediately kill 1 Troop within 12". Marauders are immune to this power.
- ◆ **Mind Sway:** Choose any ship within 12". It will suffer a - 1 penalty to Crew Quality for this turn.
- ◆ **Senses Shock:** Choose any ship within 12". All of its weapons will gain the Inaccurate trait for this turn.
- ◆ **Truth:** The ship gains the Scout trait for this turn.
- ◆ **Block:** Automatically negates any one psychic power of your choice this turn.
- ◆ **Cloaking:** The ship gains the Stealth 4+ trait for this turn but may not use any weapon systems.

Theurgic Powers

Ships with the Theurgic Crew trait may pick a number of powers from the list below equal to their Theurgic Crew score.

- ◆ **Angel Wings:** Choose any ship within 12". This ship has its Speed increased by 50% for this turn.
- ◆ **Armour of the Pancreator:** The ship immediately gains +1 Shield.
- ◆ **Battle Sense:** Any friendly Troops Dice rolled on any one ship within 12" gain a +1 bonus.



House al Malik regularly uses Psychic Crews, dismaying their opponents.

- ◆ **Blessing:** The weapons on the ship gain the Accurate trait for this turn.
- ◆ **Censure:** Choose any ship within 12". It will suffer a - 1 penalty to Crew Quality for this turn.
- ◆ **Fading:** The ship gains the Stealth 3+ trait for this turn.
- ◆ **Faithful Heart:** Automatically negates any one psychic or theurgic power of your choice this turn.
- ◆ **Healing:** Either restores one lost Troop or will negate one lost Troop this turn.
- ◆ **Health of the Congregation:** Pick two ships within 12". Any Troops losses suffered in this turn by one ship will be automatically take by the other instead.
- ◆ **Heaven's Axe:** One Troop within 12" is changed into a Marauder for this turn.
- ◆ **Mend Vessel:** The ship automatically repairs a location of 1 Critical Score or, alternatively, the ship immediately regains one dice of Damage.
- ◆ **Zak's Eyes:** The ship gains the Scout trait for this turn.



Hazat Galliot benefit greatly from the Bedlam power used by the feared dervish psychic warriors.

Kat's Tales

By Katrina Hepburn

The next six days of travel back to Vinen went quietly, thankfully. At the LFC (Lothrain Free Company) debriefing the crew relayed everything they had experienced over the course of the mission, including the little side track to the Oculus Habitat, the captured pirates (who they received a bounty for) and their theories on the old mining station possibly being used for illegal genetic research (which the group was paid an extra 5,000 credit bonus to keep quiet about that little titbit). All in all it seemed like a profitable haul and were then given a week off! So spirits were high!

Nearing the end of the week, after much partying and frivolity, the team was once again contacted by Desna Greer, A high ranking member of the LFC and overseer of the mining station project, and were invited to attend a small party to discuss another work opportunity for Gabriel's team.

The job sounded simple: Go to the Shoranan Habitat (about 5 days travel away), pick up some parts for the mining station's reconditioning and bring them back to Vinen. So, after another 2 days rest and relaxation, the team suited up for their next job.

"We could cut our travel time if we slingshot the ship around this large asteroid here" Gabriel said enthusiastically as he pointed to the stargate.

There was a few mumbles of disapproval from most of the team in the cockpit of the ship as Gabriel started plotting the vectors into the computer.

"Sensors...Check"

"Astrogation...Check"

"Ok, Initiating slingshot."

The ships engine roared as Gabriel sat comfortably in the pilots seat adjusting the controls of the ship to keep it from burning up while in slingshot.

"Just out of curiosity" Cassie said as she overlooked the stargate while everyone else was busy contending with their ship duties. "Shouldn't we be pointing in the other direction?"

"Damn it!"

Gabriel's miscalculation ended up adding an extra day travelling time to Shoranan and still without a decent cook, the rancid food did not help towards the mood of the crew.

On arrival at Shoranan, the crew disembarked and began the standard paperwork to acquire the equipment and parts they had been sent to collect. Having been told by 'The Parts Guy' (who probably had a name but that was treated as inconsequential by the group) that it would take about 2 days to fill the order, the crew decided to look for some decent accommodation. Being cooped up on the ship constantly with bad food was no fun at all.

Cassie decided to go one better. She once had held a position of high social standing and because of this she knew a lot of influential people, including the governor of Shoranan. She ended up with a room at the most expensive and high class hotel on the planet. Where she immediately purchased the services of three entertainers (ahem) and a large amount of room service.

The two days passed rather quickly for Cassie (though she was completely oblivious to the rest of the crew) and eventually the team gathered back at the ship docks to receive the appointed cargo. Unfortunately the parts had been mixed up with the cargo of a ship owned by a rival belter outfit which had already departed the space docks. After a short comm to the other vessel it became clear they had coerced or bribed 'The Parts Guy' in order to sabotage our mission as they did not want to trade back our parts and had full intentions of delaying LFC's endeavour to rebuild their old mining station.

Thinking on his toes, Bram offered a bribe to 'The Parts Guy' to get the information on where the thieves' vessel was heading. We even remembered to call him by his name (Liam) as he was now an important person...

The team quickly bundled back into their ship and began to give chase...For 7 days...

Technically, under Belter law, the thieves were now the owners of the cargo and eventually they stopped and made a stand in a remote asteroid field. But nobody crosses Bram Mostly! (apparently). As we slowed and neared the vessel they shot three warning shots, one of which hit our ships fuel tanks and reduced our fuel by 10%. Gabriel was not happy! He set the engines to burn in an effort to close on the target while also opening fire and doing the same fuel tank damage in return.

"How close do you need to be?" Gabriel stated to Cassie with a knowing look on his face.

Cassie sighed and rubbed her forehead. "You know this is not an easy thing to do! Close, very close."

Cassie found a secluded part of the ship and stared outside the view port to try and judge the distance to the hostile ships cockpit. Luckily the ship was of a similar design to their own, so she had a rough idea of how the cockpit was laid out. She drew her sword as the air around her started to shimmer and buzz slightly.

The rival crew were taken completely unawares. Blood splattered the inside of the cockpit as Cassie re-materialised behind the ships navigator and virtually decapitated her with a single swipe of her sword. She swiftly turned towards the Captain and placed the weapon's (which is named Sasha) tip to the nape of his neck.

"Surrender or die" she said with a cold, serious tone.

The captain quickly surrendered and Cassie sent the message to Gabriel letting him know to dock with the ship and retrieve the stolen cargo.

After a few repairs to our own ship (taking fuel from the other ship to replenish our own stores) and making sure the other ship's communications were made useless, as well as their weapons being jammed, the team left the ship with an empty cargo hold to limp back with just enough fuel to reach the nearest port. The thieves were given a good talking to by Bram ('Nobody, NOBODY crosses Bram Mostly!'), which is probably more than anyone really deserves.

On the journey home the crew's spirits were high...until meal time (for the love of all that is holy, how difficult can it be for somebody to make a Steward roll?!). Of the 9 days worth of travel back to Vinen, most of it was taken up



Desna Greer - a woman who knows how to throw a great party!

in discussion about hiring an on-board cook out of the crews' own salary. On a positive note the diet most of the party is on is going particularly well, with plenty of weight lost since the first meeting of weightwatchers...

1,600 credits each was the pay for safely delivering the cargo back to LFC and all the information about the encounter with the rival belter corporation was relayed in the debriefing. It was decided by the team to relax and do a spot of clubbing after all the business had been sorted through.

The club was pumping with life. Cassie, Gabriel and An-Lee partied like it was going out of fashion and far too many drinks to count were consumed (free bar!).

Bram, on the other hand, was approached by some of the other LFC employees. Apparently a Sal Baleedo had been asking

questions about him and the mining station. We briefly wondered why this Baleedo character was asking after Bram, until we heard the phrase 'Nobody asks questions about Bram Mostly' in the background.

Bram also talked about Cassie with the other employees. 'Sod knows how Cassie does what she does' Bram said as he shot back another drink. 'You know she doesn't use a gun, Just that pig sticker sword of hers! I think she calls it Sasha. She scares me and I'm Bram Mostly! I'm sure she was special ops or something...'

Mental notes were made to look into finding Sal Baleedo as the team headed (staggered off) for bed that night. For some reason this man had an interest in the LFC's mining platform and it was causing problems. But tomorrow was another day and currently everyone needed to sleep off the booze.

Adventure Frameworks

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The following adventures are the top three winners of RedBrick's Earthdawn Adventure Contest that ran throughout 2010 to build up the Earthdawn Adventure Resource. The Earthdawn Adventure Resource is RedBrick's free online resource offering adventure frameworks for use in your Earthdawn games.

Adventure frameworks serve as blueprints that outline the basic events of a storyline, which the gamemaster can flesh out according to his own tastes. They are a middle step between the brief adventure hooks presented in our books and fully dramatized adventures like

Ardanyan's Revenge or those found in the Shards Collections.

Find the Earthdawn Adventure Resource online:

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Become a part of it! Every gamemaster has adventure ideas flying around which can be turned into a suitable adventure framework—all it takes is a little bit of typing, a check for grammar and ED3-style wording, and off it goes. Make it your own! Everyone can participate!





For the Tear of a Dragon

Dragons don't shed tears, just blood. Mostly that of others.

•Crimsonscale•

The group seeks to retrieve a vial of dragon's blood from a seemingly abandoned kaer for the magical research of their patron. The blood is actually a crucial component in a blood magic ritual keeping a powerful Horror trapped within the kaer. Stealing the blood releases the Horror and draws the attention of protectors of the blood vial.

Setup

Prior to the Scourge, a young dragon Named Crimsonscale built Kaer Wyrmhhold in the Dragon Mountains to shelter a village of Namegivers. Shortly before the kaer was to be sealed, however, Crimsonscale discovered that a bloatform Horror Named Oorx Tor N'kal had infiltrated the kaer. Crimsonscale used a blood ritual to seal the Horror inside, and then she constructed a new kaer, Wyrmsield, which protected the villagers during the Scourge.

An adventurer's journal, dated from the early days after the opening of Throal, has found its way into the Great Library. The journal describes its author, an ork Scout adept Named Gran'aldiz, discovering a kaer in the Dragon Mountains. (This is Kaer Wyrmhhold.) The kaer appeared to be abandoned, and showed no signs of ever having been inhabited. The journal describes the centerpiece of the kaer as an altar, upon which a large flask of living crystal holds what Gran'aldiz calls "a dragon's tear." The journal also contains a fairly detailed map for finding the kaer. However, the journal makes no mention of the trapped Horror.

The player characters may simply find the journal on their own, perhaps while researching in the Library. If they have a regular patron, such as the Eye of Throal, or His Majesty's Exploratory Force, they are assigned by their regular handler to investigate the kaer and retrieve the dragon's tear. If none of these are appropriate to the group of characters, they are hired by the Wizard Yirn Rinal (see below) to accompany him in acquiring the tear.

Yirn Rinal is a seasoned, but not elderly, human Wizard. While graying at the temples, he appears fit and eschews many of the stereotypes of wizards — he is disarmingly forthright in both speech and dress, forgoing ornate robes and verbal embellishments for simple traveler's garb and straight talk. He hires the adventurers in Bartertown (or wherever their home base may be), for a reasonable fee based on their Legendary Status (Player's Guide, p. 244). Rinal explains that he wishes the tear for his own magical research, but should it turn out to belong to a living great dragon, he would also happily return it to its owner for a reward. Rinal also has no knowledge of the trapped Horror.

Event One: To the Dragon Mountains

The easiest route, and the one suggested by Rinal if he is along, is to travel overland to the Coil River, and then by riverboat to Travar. The trip from Bartertown to Travar via riverboat is rather uneventful—though gamemasters wishing for more action may have the group attacked by pirates on the Serpent River, or by creatures of the Servos Jungle as they sail through it. Once they depart overland from Travar toward the Dragon Mountains, ork scorchers or any creatures from the nearby Badlands might harass them.

In any case, as soon as the group approaches the foothills of the Dragon Mountains, they notice a wyvern (see *Gamemaster's Guide*, p. 255) flying at a distance from their group. As they get closer to the kaer, the wyvern sightings get closer and more frequent—and it is unclear whether they are seeing multiple wyverns, or simply the same one multiple times. The wyverns do not attack, unless the characters attack first.

Event Two: Wyrmhhold

The characters enter the abandoned Kaer Wyrmhhold. Most of the kaer is empty, but for one large chamber in the back of the great hall leading to an ornate room with an altar. A large tear-shaped living crystal flask, the size of a Namegiver's head, rests in a carved recess on the top of the altar. Close inspection reveals that the flask is encircled with rune-covered orichalcum bands. Further, the liquid inside the flask appears to be blood red. The altar is also heavily trapped. Once the traps are disarmed or

sprung, the characters can easily lift the flask off the altar.

Event Three: Crimsonscale's Brood

As soon as the player characters leave the kaer with the flask, they are attacked by a number of wyverns. These wyverns are all descendants of Crimsonscale, whose blood this is, and are bound by old ritual magic to prevent the blood from leaving the kaer. The wyverns fight to the death to prevent anyone from taking the blood flask. They try to drive whoever is carrying the blood flask back into the kaer. If the characters retreat back inside, the wyverns do not pursue the characters, but wait near the entrance for them to emerge.

Event Four: The Guardians

Once the characters either defeat the wyverns or retreat into the kaer, they are met by two dozen or more armed and armored Namegivers. This group includes several adepts of Circles high enough to give the player characters a tough fight. These are descendants of the original kaer-dwellers, who were relocated into the nearby Kaer Wyrmsield. They explain the flask is sacred to them, as their protector, the dragon Crimsonscale, left it. It must not be moved — though, if asked, the villagers do not know why. The villagers all have very subtle hints of the dragonkin about them (see *Gamemaster's Guide*, p. 251), but many generations removed, and only noticeable on careful observation.

Social interactions are very important here, as the villagers do not attack immediately, but give the characters a chance to surrender the blood flask peacefully. If asked, the villagers explain that their ancestors once lived in this kaer, but were moved out of it shortly before the Scourge and into a different kaer in the next valley over. However, they were charged by their elders to protect the first, empty kaer and the blood flask, and to always watch the sky for the wyverns, a sign of trouble.

If Yirn Rinal is present, he attempts to negotiate with the villagers, offering to buy the flask. These negotiations likely fail unless the player characters step in with some impressive social interaction. If the villagers refuse to sell the flask, Rinal orders the characters to fight

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their way through the villagers. If the player characters refuse, Rinal prudently does not try to fight through the villagers himself, hoping to come back later for the blood tear with a more compliant group of adventurers. He moves to replace the blood tear, triggering the climax, below. Whether the characters choose to fight the villagers or not determines whether the villagers are the characters' allies or adversaries in the *Climax* below.

Climax

The flask of dragon's blood was a key component in a blood magic ritual that kept Oorx Tor N'kal, a powerful bloatform Horror, imprisoned in a hidden chamber beneath the altar (for bloatforms, see the *Gamemaster's Guide*, p. 286). Removing the flask from the altar has freed the Horror, which has been observing the characters' conflict with the villagers. It would normally be content to Horror-mark the characters or villagers from afar. However, it is afraid that should the blood flask be replaced it will be trapped again by the blood magic spell.

The Horror breaks out from under the altar and attacks anyone attempting to replace the blood flask. It takes the first opportunity to try to smash open the flask and spill the dragon's blood on the floor, though the living crystal flask is almost impossible to break. Should the Horror defeat the characters and villagers, it is content to leave weaker ones alive and Horror-marked, as long as it feels there is no chance of it being imprisoned again.

If a fight breaks out between the characters and the villagers, the Horror waits to see what happens. If Rinal and the characters defeat the villagers and are going to leave with the flask, Oorx Tor N'kal lets them leave, though it attempts to Horror-mark one or more of them before they do.

Should the characters destroy the Horror, there is no longer any reason not to take the blood flask with them, though they have to persuade any remaining villagers of this. If

Rinal survives, he takes the flask, and once back to Travar, pays the player characters their fee.

Sequels

The dragon's blood itself is a very potent alchemical ingredient—Rinal wishes to use it to create an elixir that he believes will grant Namegivers the longevity of a dragon. Simply drinking the blood with no other preparation, at the gamemaster's discretion, may give the drinker some of the benefits of a dragonkin (see *Gamemaster's Guide*, p. 251). It may also create a magical bond between the Namegiver and certain dragons, including Crimonscale and her sire—who could be any one of the great dragons the gamemaster wishes.

Speaking of Crimonscale, she appears to be a forgotten dragon—she has not been seen since the Scourge, and little knowledge of her exists. What happened to her during the Scourge? She could reappear, looking for her blood, or the ones who took it. Additionally, any of the great dragons will have an interest in retrieving the blood, as they fear it could be used against them in magical rituals. Mountainshadow, who would be a good choice for being Crimonscale's sire, could take a personal interest in these events, as could any of his enemies. Any interested dragons may send a drake or other servants to retrieve the flask—indeed, Yirn Rinal could be just such a drake—working for Mountainshadow or one of his rivals.

If word gets out about the existence of the blood flask, many political players and secret societies in Barsaive that wish an advantage against the dragons (such as the Therans, the Denairastas, the Hand of Corruption, the Keys of Death, etc) would want to acquire the blood. The Cult of the Great Hunter would have a particularly keen interest. The player characters may wish to sell the flask to any of these groups, or turn it over to the dragons in hopes for a reward, but they may also be pursued and attacked by any of these factions looking to take it by force. Yirn Rinal could secretly be an agent of any of these powers. Depending on how things were left with him, the group could have earned the unwitting patronage, or enmity, of whichever group Rinal works for.



Like Moths To A Flame

There was fear and suspicion before the Scourge, during the Scourge, and after the Scourge. Is it not time we stopped blaming the Horrors for all our problems?

•Kern Redbeard, Village Innkeeper •

A mysterious bright light has appeared in the Delaris Mountains, roughly ten days from Jerris. While the light cannot be seen from Jerris, it has been spotted by several passing airships and it can be clearly seen from a small group of villages situated in the foothills of the mountains. The light shines throughout the night and vanishes at dawn, just like all those who have tried to discover its source. Investigating the strange light, the characters discover a recently abandoned kaer — as well as a cabal of deranged magicians who have been holding the former kaer's residents hostage since the beginning of the Scourge.

Setup

Before the Scourge had fully seized Barsaive in its corrupt grip, fear and suspicion resulted in refugees being turned away from kaers that often had spare capacity to accommodate them. Those unable to find shelter often took their own lives rather than face the Horrors. For those who chose to make a stand, the Horrors took considerable delight in showing them the error of their ways. However, not all kaers turned away refugees, some showing kindness and compassion to their fellow Namegivers. Many that did accept strangers into their sanctuary regretted their decision, for it was often the cause of their downfall, and blame did not always lie with the Horrors.

One such kaer that fell to the depravations of their fellow Namegivers was Kaer Skyhorn. Its residents granted last-minute entry to a small group of Thera refugees claiming they got waylaid on their journey back to Thera. While the refugees were indeed from Thera, their tale was false and they had instead been exiled from Thera for the terrible crimes they committed. Soon after the kaer closed its doors, the refugees revealed themselves as a cabal of magicians. They took control and enslaved the population, bar a few who escaped into the mining tunnels used to construct the kaer. Those who escaped formed a resistance and swore to take back what was theirs.

Recently, a bright light has appeared in the mountains, and every night it can clearly be seen from the towns and villages in the surrounding foothills. Several curious villagers have made the journey to investigate and have never returned. The council of elders representing all the villages have decreed the area off limits and believe that a Horror is using the light to lure its victims.

The mystery light is emitted from the giant light quartz that once hung in the center of Kaer Skyhorn. Over the centuries, those who escaped to the tunnels waged a war of resistance against the cabal of magicians. They spent many years digging further tunnels to hide in. Over the centuries, the people of the enslaved kaer became brutalized and used in all manner of terrible experiments. The resistance, realizing they could not defeat the cabal directly, dug a series of tunnels to weaken the outside wall of the kaer. Over the course of generations they eventually succeeded, and the thick rock on the face of the mountain protecting the kaer collapsed, taking part of the kaer with it. Many of the resistance died in their efforts, preferring death rather than facing the Horrors. Of course, the resistance had no way of knowing the Scourge was long over. With the kaer no longer protecting them, and many of the kaer's residents dead, the cabal simply relocated to a small nearby village where they had an ample supply of fresh slaves to continue their experiments.

The player characters are hired by a distraught villager whose sons have traveled to the nearby mountains, disobeying the elders' decree, to find the source of the mysterious light and have not returned.

Event One: In Search of the Light

After the player characters have agreed to find the villager's sons, he takes them to his village so they can see the light for themselves. When they arrive, they are warned off from going any further by a village elder unhappy about outsiders having been brought to the village. Angry, he tells the player characters they are not welcome in the village and must leave immediately. From here the player characters go home or travel toward the source of the light, which would take several days to reach on foot. The characters are ambushed by a group of hunters from the village sent by the elder as they

continue their journey. The elder is terrified that the player characters may be captured and reveal the location of his village to a Horror. The hunters engage in missile combat from long range and scatter if they take a single wound or if the player characters attempt to engage them in melee combat. They use their expert knowledge of the terrain and the mystical silence of the Delaris Mountains to their best advantage. Later that night, the player characters see the bright light just as the villager described.

Event Two: Ruins

After a few days of hard travel, the player characters reach the base of the mountains and find the abandoned kaer just after dawn. From what the player characters can tell, part of the mountain face has collapsed revealing the kaer's entrance. The characters must climb the rubble pile to get in, carefully avoiding further rockslides. As they climb, they can see that a good part of the kaer has collapsed. Entering the kaer, they realise they are actually in its very center and they begin to explore the ruins. However, the group cannot initially find the source of the light. They discover many strange contraptions with dead Namegivers embedded in them, a result of the cabal's experiments in blood magic as a source of power. The player characters notice most of the kaer appears like a prison, with iron shackles hanging from all the available wall space. As the player characters continue, the daylight begins to fade to dusk. As it does, a bright light begins to shine from halfway down the rubble pile illuminating the area. The player characters cannot miss it and recognize it as the kaer's main light quartz. The light, however, attracts all manner of creatures including will o' the wisps, death moths, and the cadaver men left behind by the cabal. The characters suddenly find themselves facing an unprecedented assault, fighting running battles for their lives through the hours of darkness until the break of dawn. The only way the assault can prematurely be stopped, is if the light crystal can be smashed or its enchantment broken, but the player characters have to make the connection.

Event Three: The Village

Leaving the ruins behind, the player characters discover a previously obscured trail. The trail leads them to a small village protected by a simple wooden palisade of sharpened stakes and a deep moat fed by a mountain stream. A drawbridge leads to a small causeway that

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in turn leads to the village gate. As the group approaches the village, they are hailed by a guard on the palisade asking who they are and what they want. The guard truthfully tells the characters the name of the village and confirms they are the survivors from the collapsed kaer; however, he then lies if asked about the shackles in the walls of the kaer, stating the kaer was once a penal colony. After some debate, the guard agrees to let the characters enter the village.

This is a trap! As the player characters cross the causeway, the gates open, seemingly under their own power, as does the drawbridge, which rises behind them. Shackled to the back of the village gates is a Namegiver, his life force powering the cabal's magic. The player

characters cannot see this until they enter the village, however. As they get halfway along the causeway, a large pit almost the full length of the causeway opens underneath them; full of writhing metallic tentacles that try to grapple the player characters. Ensnared in the walls of the pit are Namegivers of various races whose life force powers the tentacles. Killing these Namegivers stops the tentacles and should be easier than defeating the tentacles directly; killing defenseless Namegivers, however, may be a step too far for some. As a guideline for the tentacle stats, the gamemaster can use the stats for creeping vines (see *Gamemaster's Guide*, p. 164). If the player characters are subdued, they are taken prisoner by the cabal.

Climax

The group must escape, otherwise they will be sacrificed one by one in a powerful blood magic ritual. The cabal consists of magicians of various Disciplines and Circles. Any battle against them involves lots of magic, summoned spirits, cadaver men, and a few downright odd contraptions (allowing the gamemaster to have some extra fun). The magicians have little or no hand-to-hand combat ability, but have an arsenal of minions and spell magic. If the battle looks to turn against the cabal, they offer the heroes eternal life in return for their own. If the player characters accept this deal, they become part of the cabal, using the life force of others to sustain their own, and are unable to travel without the cabal and their slaves as constant companions. If the player characters decline the deal, the cabal plays their final card telling them that if they die, so will the villagers. This is a partial truth—only those slaves that are currently feeding the cabal with their life energy would die, and most of the recently captured villagers and the two sons will survive. One member of the cabal proves his point by stepping forward, wounding himself. As he does, an old lady cowering by the village well slumps to the ground, dead.

Sequels

The group eventually returns triumphant, the missing sons and several dozen other rescued Namegivers in tow. However, after they leave, rumor of the strange light spread beyond the immediate area and a chapter of the Grim Legion arrived to investigate in the meanwhile. The Legionnaires wish to prove that the player characters and the rescued villagers are not Horror-marked—which undoubtedly takes various forms of unpleasantness...

Another sequel may be that not all of the cabal were present in the village when the player characters arrived. And as soon as they gather their strength, they become a constant thorn in their side. Not all the resistance died when Kaer Skyhorn collapsed, however, and they fled into the hills and will make likely allies for the player characters against the cabal. If the player characters take on the Grim Legion, they may also find themselves with more than one nemesis before the day is done.





The Cure for Evil

Be silent, children! Despite what you have been told — the Passions do not hear the prayers of slaves nor do they regard the cries of the weak.

•Jurou Urameshii •

Jurou Urameshii was a quiet, unassuming human living in the Cathayan Kingdom of Tiet Dei. As a petty bureaucrat in an empire at war, it was easy to be overlooked, and Urameshii was constantly overlooked. Although adept at Wizardry and alchemy, he did not stand out among his peers. Although he was a wealthy man with a notable estate, his wealth was waning and his slaves rebellious. Bound by countless fears and boundless ambition, Urameshii did the unthinkable: he entered into a pact with a Horror.

The Horror was not as terrifying as tales often told but instead appeared as a sorrowful woman or frightened child in tattered clothing. In exchange for power, Urameshii had agreed to satisfy the Horror's insatiable desire to feed on innocence. He began a campaign to root out enemy spies in the land and began to round up and torture the peasants and downtrodden people. When this attracted too much attention, he turned his eyes to less noticeable prey—children. In the war-torn kingdoms of Cathay there are more widows and orphans than one would imagine. They are ever-present yet invisible. This is especially true for the orphaned children of peasants and slaves. Urameshii had found a seemingly endless supply of food for his new master. As the children suffered, Urameshii's power and influence grew, but even the prayers of slaves will eventually reach the heavens.

Urameshii began to believe in his own might and power and in an act of unparalleled foolishness attempted to overthrow the Horror and claim its power for himself. The Horror struck out, setting fire to Urameshii's entire estate. Those who died were immediately reanimated as ghouls and cadaver men. Urameshii, the man who tried to do so much evil in secret, was now made a spectacle for the entire empire. Many bold adepts rose up that terrible night and ensured that this evil would not spill into the rest of the city. Moreover, they stormed the estate vanquishing the Horror and ending its threat. Urameshii, badly wounded and stripped of his newfound powers, was forced to flee into the night. His remaining servants gathered the children into prison wagons and escaped towards the mountains. Urameshii knows that if caught he will certainly be executed for his crimes, so he plans to hide in the confines of his mountain retreat.

Setup

The player characters arrive at the Imperial Capital at night to find an outer district under attack by undead minions. After cleansing the district alongside other heroes, they are honoured with a banquet. During the banquet the heroes meet Gensai, a dwarf Scout and questor of Two who enlists their heroes. He explains events leading up to their nightmarish battle with the undead, but also informs them that the person responsible for this evil, Jurou Urameshii, is currently on the run. Making matters worse is the fact that he escaped taking his child prisoners with him. Gensai is familiar with the lands and knows that Urameshii is taking a route around and into the mountains towards a hidden airship dock. If he is not apprehended prior to arriving, he may never be found again. Having already lost precious time, Gensai proposes a journey through little known paths over the mountains as opposed to traveling around.

After facing many dangers, the player characters finally arrive at a small village in the mountain peaks. There they learn a unique and dangerous way of travel allowing them to cover great distances at incredible speeds. Arriving at the port only moments after Urameshii's departure, the player characters learn of his hidden retreat in the mountains. With renewed determination, the characters storm his retreat, facing hideous and dangerous creatures to exact justice on the mad Wizard. During the encounter, at least one, but possibly several of the player characters suffer terminal illnesses after confronting the alchemically altered ghouls guarding the stronghold. Urameshii then forces the player characters to choose the cure in exchange for his freedom.

Event One: The Arrival

The player characters have been hired out to escort a caravan of merchants to the Imperial Capital. Arriving at night, they see a red glow on the horizon and smell smoke on the wind. This is likely to hasten their arrival, as they may believe the city to be under attack by unknown forces.

The player characters will arrive to find the city in chaos. Buildings are set ablaze, women and children run for safety as soldiers and civilians fight off nightmarish creatures in the city streets. The player characters immediately are thrown into the fray, cutting down cadaver men and ghouls. They valiantly slay the creatures, put out fires and rescue what lives they can. Soon the first light of day appears and the city is at peace again.

The player characters quickly learn that they have arrived on the tail end of an epic battle between champions and Horrors. Apparently

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the local noble Jurou Urameshii, who had dreams of ascending in his position, made a ghastly pact with a Horror that involved cannibalism of human flesh (preferably children's). The Horror was destroyed at the cost of many lives. In its death throes, the Horror transformed the dead into the abominable creatures that attacked the city. At midday the main hall of the city is open and a great feast is made in honour of the champions. Gifts of money and weapons are showered on all of the heroes who participated in the battle.

During the feast, the player characters have an opportunity to meet some of the champions who have survived the battle with the Horror. Although they volunteer information freely, it should be made clear that most are too injured to fight for some time. Gensai, a dwarf Scout and questor of Twoo, is the only champion who is still in fighting shape. Even in the midst of praise and adoration he seems very disturbed.

Gensai expresses his disgust for the feast and the gifts, stating that it is just a form of misdirection. He has just recently learned that although the Horror has been destroyed, the nobleman responsible has not been. He managed to slip away by chariot in the night as his estate burned to the ground. Even more troubling is the fact that his servants reported that at least three cage wagons filled with children were seen departing with him traveling towards the mountain. Gensai believes that many other nobles were part of this conspiracy and that they have been tricked into wasting precious time that could have been spent in pursuit. As a questor of Twoo he cannot allow this corruption go unchallenged. With his companions in no condition to

travel, much less fight, he desperately entreats the aid of the player characters to pursue and rescue the children as well as bring Urameshii's evil to an end.

Event Two: The Mountain

The player characters quickly but stealthily slip out of the banquet and gather up what supplies they will need for the journey. Being a Scout, Gensai is very knowledgeable of the terrain and the path that Urameshii is taking around the mountains. He informs the adventurers there is a little known dock on the far side of the mountain where pirate airships often stop to repair their vessels. With Urameshii being at least one full day ahead of them and traveling swiftly, there seems to be little hope he can be intercepted before reaching an airship and fleeing to safety with his captives. Gensai proposes a bold plan. He believes that he can lead the player characters over the mountain instead of going around it. Although the player characters may be skeptical of his plans for good reason, Gensai insists it can be done but will not at this time fully expound on how. Gensai states this is the only way to make up for the time lost already and asks the group to make their decision quickly and not to linger in the city longer than necessary.

Gensai and the player characters quickly leave the city behind and journey to the steep face of the mountains. From the ground a plateau can be seen, from where the player characters should be able to trek on foot to the snowy peaks. Soon after the climb begins, storm clouds appear. Midway up the wall the rain begins to pour, increasing the climbing difficulty due to the slippery rocks. The player characters also notice the earth in-between the rocks has become slimy and gelatinous. To their surprise, every time they reach for a hand- or foothold the slime solidifies pushing them away. Before their eyes the gel begins to

mold itself into creatures resembling bog gobs (see *Gamemaster's Guide*, p. 159). The creatures attack, attempting to use their Sticky Body Power on the heroes (adding a staggering 200 pounds to their weight). If they succeed, only the strongest of the heroes will be able to maintain their hold. If overtaken, they would face an assuredly fatal fall.

After taking a moment to gather themselves, the player characters have the choice to set up camp on the plateau for the night. Gensai reveals to them a mountain path leading to a snowy summit. The summit will take a full day to reach. At this time it is understandable if the adventurers are very skeptical that they can somehow cover such a great distance as to intercept the Horror-tainted noble, especially considering that he now has seemingly a two-day lead around the mountains. Gensai finally reveals that there is a tribe of Namegivers who live near the summit of the mountain. He continues to only give cryptic information concerning them, only stating they have the ability to cover great distances at tremendous speeds. He assures them that his plan will work, although it is dangerous.

Event Three: Xue Shang

Upon reaching the village of Xue Shang the player characters are warmly greeted and offered food and lodging for the night. The village is made up of various Namegiver races living simple lives away from society and war. They are ruled by an elder Monk and his family — many of whom are skilled Elementalists. They move about from one end of the mountain to the other traveling on skis and large wooden boards enchanted with elemental air. The elemental air allows the boards to skim across the surface of the snow at great speed while at the same time protecting the rider from the intense cold and wind-shear that would



come with traveling at high speeds through the snowy slopes. The Elder is sympathetic to the group's cause and agrees to assist them on their journey. In the morning, each member of the adventuring group is fashioned with their own board and given a crash course on how to use it. The Elder informs them of their route and provides a guide who will lead them along the shortest (albeit most dangerous) route down the mountainside.

The journey consists of three parts: part one is merely a journey from the shelf of the mountain to the slopes. This part is where the riders learn to control their speed and manoeuvre. The second part is where the slopes begin and the player characters begin to travel at impossible speeds down the mountainside. In this portion of the journey, maneuverability is the key as the player characters dodge large rocks and other obstacles that would end their journey painfully. The player characters are literally moving hundreds of yards in a matter of seconds and covering great distances. The final part is the dangerous section of the journey. The player characters pick up speed propelling themselves over chasms to continue their journey. In little over an hour they have reached the inner wall of the mountain and approach the airship landing docks.

Event Four: Abandoned

The snowy slopes eventually even out and the adventurers reach their destination. To their dismay, the player characters arrive just in time to see an airship departing. On the rickety wooden docks below are an abandoned carriage and three cage wagons. Heartbroken and exhausted, the player characters reach the docks. The small port is populated with non-adept pirates, who

were paid handsomely by Urameshii. Although fierce in appearance, the pirates do not threaten the player characters or attempt to harm them so long as they pose no obvious danger. If the player characters speak to them, they volunteer information about a mountain retreat often used by the noble that is only a few hours travel by airship. A second pirate ship arrives but will not lend its services to the heroes without pay.

After a short journey by airship, the player characters continue their journey on foot, following the mountain path leading to Urameshii's mountain retreat. The retreat is heavily fortified by an outer wall. Servants can be spotted fleeing the premises. When questioned, they reveal to the heroes that they were enthralled by their master but have recently broken his hold. It becomes clear the Horror's death has greatly diminished his power and the time is ripe for his downfall. The servants provide entrance through the wall and inform the player characters the children have been moved to the dungeon while their former master is in his observatory. They warn the party of ghoul-like creatures beyond the wall that will attack on sight.

Climax

Beyond the wall is a courtyard of dying trees and plants. The player characters should be able to easily dispatch the remaining staff still loyal to Urameshii before encountering the ghouls. The ghouls appear to have been augmented by some type of alchemy. They are larger, stronger and tougher than regular ghouls, and if injured, their poison takes immediate effect (no Test required). After defeating the ghouls, those who were poisoned become terminally ill. No potions or poultices will have an effect and other healing efforts only provide short-term relief. The only

hope is to find a cure in Urameshii's alchemy lab located in the observatory. When the player characters confront the fallen noble, he is a broken man. His powers have waned with the Horror's death and he has little hope of victory. He then plays his final card when he offers a cure in exchange for letting him escape.

If Urameshii is killed, the player characters must then search the cure in his lab (which should be a sufficiently difficult undertaking). If the player characters agree to Urameshii's demands, he will only reveal the location of the cure when he and his few remaining lackeys are on horseback. If all of the player characters are poisoned, he will stall for time, hoping they will succumb to the poison.

With Urameshii either defeated or dead, the player characters have no problem freeing the children from the dungeon. The surroundings suggest that a horrible fate awaited the children had they not arrived in time. In the alchemy lab, the player characters will be able to restock on nearly all potions or poultices offered in the *Goods and Services* chapter (*Cathay Player's Guide*, p. 140). A search of the noble's chambers will reveal his grimoire as well as a fair amount of silver and jewels.

Sequels

Searching through the records located in Urameshii's study, the heroes find documents and letters proving the conspiracy among a group of nobles. Their plan was to use child sacrifices as fuel for their Horror-granted powers in an attempt to overthrow their rulers. With proof in hand, the heroes know that they have no choice but to expose this evil when they arrive home — that is if they arrive at all!

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