

Palladium Books® Presents:

WAYNE SMITH'S

THE RIFTER™ #9 1/2

Special! Draw-your-own-cover

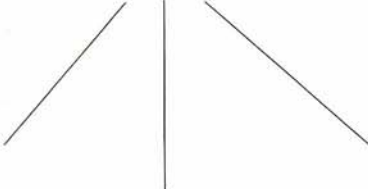

Put hero (your character?) here.



Put hideous monster or villain there.



— Carnage of destroyed city in flames for background (If you are a crummy or lazy artist, fill background with smoke or clouds. Swirling or graduated colors are okay too.)



Put "Blurbs" in this corner. (Blurbs are short, snappy highlights and captions telling the reader what he can find in this issue. For example:)

APRIL FOOLS' DAY SPECTACULAR

- COLLECTOR'S ITEM
- ZANY FUN
- SILLY ADVENTURES
- Exciting "but Goofy" Source-material
- SOMETHING DIFFERENT
- SATIRE, HUMOR, SPOOF
- READ AT YOUR OWN RISK!

Changeable cover! Use Crayons to remove and redraw your cover. The plastic lamination on this cover allows the artist to remove his drawing by wiping crayon away with a moist cloth. If this doesn't work, ignore this blurb.

Warning #1

The fictional Worlds of Palladium Books® are violent, deadly and filled with supernatural monsters. Other dimensional beings, often referred to as “demons,” torment, stalk and prey on humans. Other alien life forms, monsters, gods and demigods, as well as magic, insanity, and war are all elements in this book.

Some parents may find the violence, magic and supernatural elements of the game inappropriate for young readers/players. We suggest parental discretion.

Please note that none of us at Palladium Books® condone or encourage the occult, the practice of magic, the use of drugs, or violence.

Warning #2

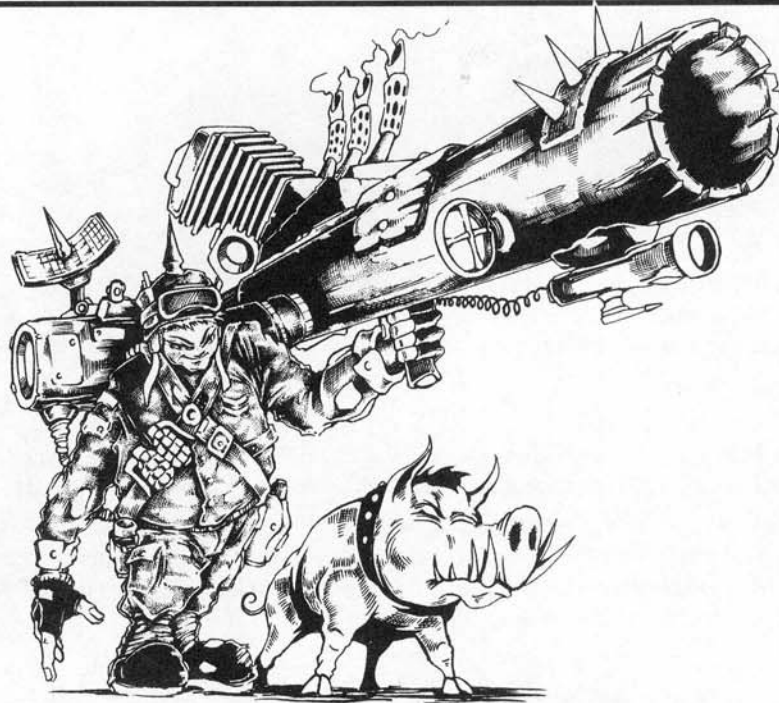
Without question, the reader’s sense of reality will be assailed by bad puns, inside jokes, and silliness.

Some parents may find the barriers of good taste breached by feeble attempts at satire, humor and spoof. We suggest parental discretion!

Please note that none of us at Palladium Books® condone or encourage anybody to take themselves or anything too seriously. Good natured fun is ... well ... fun!

Serious gamers turn back, now! Do not read any more!! Palladium has this crazy idea that games are “entertainment” — and that they are supposed to be fun and sometimes downright silly! A potential resource for cutting-loose and being goofy with friends once in a while and a way to have a few good laughs.

Read on at your own risk. YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED!!!



The Rifter™ Number Nine & a Half.

A once in a Millennium April Fool's Spectacular & Collector's Item.

Special Thanks to Wayne Smith for being a good sport, wonderful Editor-in-Chief, revolutionary thinker, and all around good lad. We don't know what we'd do without him (but we'd like to try). And to the rest of the staff and contributors for their contributions to the zaniness of this one-shot special.

First Printing — April 1st, 2000

Copyright 2000 Palladium Books Inc. & Kevin Siembieda

All rights reserved, worldwide, under the Universal Copyright Convention. No part of this book may be reproduced in part or whole, in any form or by any means, without permission from the publisher, except for brief quotes for use in reviews. All incidents, situations, institutions, governments and people are fictional and any similarity, without satiric intent, of characters or persons living or dead, is strictly coincidental.

Palladium Books®, Rifts®, RECON®, Nightbane®, The Palladium Fantasy Role-Playing Game®, The Mechanoids®, The Mechanoid Invasion®, and Megaverse® are registered trademarks owned and licensed by Kevin Siembieda and Palladium Books Inc.

Hey, while we're at it, Wayne Smith, Percy Ferkelberger (and family), Giga-Damage, Giga-Heros, Heroes Unlimited, Coalition Wars, Siege on Tolkeen, Coalition States, Erin Tarn, Emperor Prosek, Mega-Damage, Glitter Boys, and other nifty names, titles and likenesses of characters are trademarks owned by Kevin Siembieda and Palladium Books Inc. So if ya try to use 'em without permission we will sue the living daylights out of you. And don't think we're kidding.

Palladium On-Line www.palladiumbooks.com

The Rifter™ #9 1/2 — a Y2K Special is published by Palladium Books Inc., 12455 Universal Drive, Taylor, MI 48180. Printed in the USA.

Palladium Books® Presents:

WAYNE SMITH'S

THE RIFTER #9 1/2

Y2K APRIL FOOL'S SPECTACULAR

Meaningless Figurehead & Mascot: **Wayne Smith**

Coordinator & Editor in Chief: **Percy Ferkelberger**

CEO of Ferkelberger Games: **Percy Ferkelberger**

Vice President & Hot Momma: **Penelope Ferkelberger**

Writer & Boy Genius: **Peter Ferkelberger**

Contributing Writers & Madmen:

Percy Ferkelberger

Peter Ferkelberger

Penelope Ferkelberger

Paulie Ferkelberger

Prisilla Ferkelberger

Parcel "Tarzan" Ferkelberger

Philippe Ferkelberger

Foghorn Ferkelberger

J.P. Ferkelberger

P.O.D.

Typesetting: **Penelope Ferkelberger**

Contributing Editors: **Noah Body**

Cover Painting: **You! Compliments of Wayne Smith!!**

Keylining: **Percy Ferkelberger**

Based on the RPG rules, characters,
concepts and Megaverse® created by **Kevin Siembieda**.

Not a Ferkelberger:

Daniel Denis — Writer

Taylor White — Artist

Ryan Beres — Artist

Kent Burles — Artist

Scott Johnson — Artist

Ramon Perez — Artist

Freddie Williams II — Artist

Mike Wilson — Artist

Apollo Okamura — Artist

Wayne Smith — Mascot

The silly side of the Palladium Megaverse®

— Contents —

April Fool's Spectacular: The Rifter™ #9 1/2

The Cover

Hey, I realize we can't please everybody, so I, Wayne Smith, genius and breakthrough kind of guy, decided to present the industry revolutionizing concept of the "draw-it-yourself-cover."

Your "personalized" cover can be absolutely anything you want it to be. Heck, put your very own characters on it. Draw the kind of violence or shameless sexist material that Palladium is too timid and socially conscious to print itself. Freely plagiarize your favorite movie posters, comic book characters, book covers, non-Palladium RPGs and other things (for your own personal use and enjoyment) — just because you can!

Best of all, trick your friends into believing that "you" are Palladium Books' new, hot cover artist! After all, you have proof: a cover painting on **The Rifter #9 1/2** (Tee, hee, hee). And while you're bragging, make sure you tell them that you got paid at least \$10,000 dollars for it (you are limited only by your imagination).

Page 5 — Art

Taylor White did up this Coalition recruitment poster. We liked it, got permission to use it and printed it. Cool, huh?

Page 6 — From the Desk of Wayne Smith

Mr. Smith goes on something of a power-trip and despicably funny commentary about soliciting bribes from people who want to get published in **The Rifter™**. What a kidder. Don't encourage him. Oh, the next time you run into him, remind Wayne just how lucky he is to be working at Palladium Books and that he should ask for a pay cut to show his appreciation. Art by Apollo Okamura.

Page 7 — Palladium News, Info, & Coming Attractions

Big news, acquisitions, shocking revelations, and relocation to Borneo tops the news this issue. Plus coming attractions. Just remember, you can't always trust what you read, especially on April First. Art by Scott "I'm a funny guy" Johnson.

Page 9 — The Rifter Credit Card?

This is the brainchild of Priscilla Ferkelberger and wholeheartedly approved by Peter Ferkelberger as a sure-fire way to build experience points for your characters while spending cash like a drunken sailor. Go for it!

Page 10 — Giga-Damage®

— The next BIG thing in gaming

Indomitable Peter Ferkelberger presents his vision of a new and more powerful gaming world. Power gamers everywhere can rejoice! Their day has come! Artwork by poor ol' Ryan Beres.

Page 17 — Silly answers to some silly questions

You wanted Questions & Answers, you got 'em. Be afraid, very afraid. Written by J.P. Ferkelberger with a little help from Percy. Art by Apollo (the Greek god not the guy in Toronto), Wilson, and Perez-ed.

Page 22 — For Heroes Unlimited™ and Ninjas & Superspies™

Where's Wayne?

An adventure worth it for the stats on Wayne Smith alone, not to mention the villainous *Motown Maniacs*. Art by Ramon Perez.

Page 28 — Wacky Powers for Heroes Unlimited™

Don't laugh, this stuff is both awesome and practical! Yummy fun brought to you by Paulie and Percy Ferkelberger. Art by Scott "we love him (you should too)" Johnson.

Page 31 — Heroes Unlimited™

Heroes & Villains with Unusual Powers

Paulie strikes again, presenting such amazing super-dudes as *Frank & Beanz*, *Pasta Man* and *Dragonbreath* — art by Scott "comic genius" Johnson. J.P. jumps in with a few of his own creations — art by Freddie Williams the Two-ith.

Page 41 — Heroes Unlimited™ — Reality Twist

Inspired by Century Station, P.O.D. presents his own batch of wild superhuman heroes and villains. Art by Freddie Williams II.

Page 55 — Heroes Unlimited™ (Again!?)

Paulie and Percy present a variety of humorous defects to many of the super abilities in *Heroes Unlimited™*.

Page 58 — Unlikely Gods for Rifts® & Palladium Fantasy®

Wait till you get a load of these questionably divine beings. Art by Kent "he's bent" Burles.

Page 64 — For Rifts®, Palladium Fantasy®, & HU2™.

The Trickster by Percy Ferkelberger and the *Ludicrous Mage* by Daniel Denis, along with 100 new spells! Art by Mike Wilson.

Page 93 — Crazy Accoloth's Discount Alchemy (Fantasy)

Priscilla Ferkelberger presents a few delightful and rare magic items and magic spells. Who needs art when you have great material like this?

Page 97 — The Tourist O.C.C. for Rifts®

Philippe Ferkelberger strikes gold with this hilarious new character class (easily adaptable to any Palladium RPG). Art by Scott "clean shaven" Johnson and Mike Wilson.

Page 102 — Rifts® Short Story

Cousin Foghorn Ferkelberger presents a dog-gone good story.

Page 111 —

The *truth* behind this issue!

WE WANT YOU!



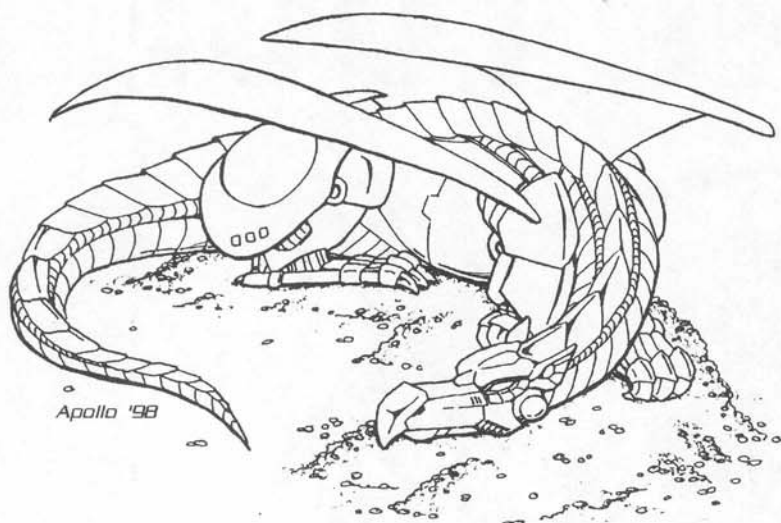
TO JOIN THE COALITION ARMY

FOR EMPEROR AND COUNTRY

Sign up at your local recruiting office today!!

Paid for by the Propaganda Department of the Coalition States

by Taylor White



From the Desk of Wayne Smith™

Hello, I am Wayne Smith. Many regulars readers may have noticed my name in *every* issue of **The Rifter™** since number one. That's because I am the true GENIUS behind each and every issue of **The Rifter™**. I am the man who brings you the raw excitement, finds new talent, and collects and edits all the cutting-edge masterpieces that have made **The Rifter™** what it is today!

I am power.

Okay, sure it was Maryann and Kevin Siembieda's idea to do **The Rifter™** and to use lots of cool fan stuff. And it was Kevin Siembieda that made me use the name "**The Rifter**," casting aside my superior, original title suggestion, "Wayne Smith Presents," but I'm sure he had his reasons. True, I don't actually write much of anything for **The Rifter™**. Heck, I can barely write my name, but "I" am the one who selects the material that goes into each book, pretends to edit it, and presents it for publication. I've earned the Siembiedas' trust, so I can slip in anything I desire. Anything, I tell you. Anything! You don't believe me? Well, just look at the book in your hands. Do you think Kevin or Maryann would ever let something like this see the light of day. Ha!

But I digress. My point is that all you would-be contributors must remember that I, Wayne Smith, am the one who has absolute power picking the writers and artists who see print in **The Rifter™**. It is I who select the "chosen ones" — the potential young demigods — from the hundreds of submissions we receive and cast aside those who do not please me. Once selected, it is I, and I alone, who can do a good edit or a poor edit on your

submission! I can suggest to Kevin a lousy new, two-bit, run of the mill beginning artist-hack still in grade school to illustrate your submission, or a talented newcomer, maybe even a seasoned professional.

It is for these reasons that I must strongly suggest that would-be contributors to all future issues of **The Rifter™** shower me with gifts and gratuities. I'm not kidding. Ever wonder how fellows like *Steve Trustrum*, *David Haendler* or *James M.G. Cannon* get published over and over again? Is it because they are really talented and prolific young writers? Get real. It's because they were smart enough or desperate enough (I really don't care what one's motives are) to give me gift after gift. In fact, that's the real reason you won't be seeing any more of *Erick "I can't afford to pay you any more, Wayne" Wujcik* in **The Rifter™**.

Here are some helpful tips for every beginner to keep in mind.

- When you see Kevin or Maryann Siembieda at a convention or on the street, go to them and tell them what a great job I am doing and that whatever they are paying me, it is not enough.

- Treat me to expensive meals for lunch and dinner. And make sure the restaurant has "Cherry Coke." The type made from real Grenadine mixed with Coco Cola and at least two yummy, sweet cherries on top.

- Free "samples" are always nice. Please understand that the Siembiedas' have something they call "scruples." I don't know if that's a religion, disease or what, but it means they will not allow any of us to accept gifts or cash, so you need to mark such items as "samples." **Note:** Two of my favorite "samples" are *small green etchings* of President Grant and Benjamin Franklin on the \$50 and \$100 bill (please no foreign money ... I mean samples). I collect these two whenever possible, so feel free to send as many as you'd like.

- Cash "accidentally" (I don't know why, but the Siembiedas' are opposed to bribes and morally questionable activity, so we must be discreet) paper clipped to your submission is always a plus. The greater the amount, the more likely you are to get my attention. A new sports car will forever burn your name into my memory and put your every submission at the top of my list every issue, for at least two years. Maybe I can even get you a special all (insert your name) issue of **The Rifter™**. Think about it. It's worth it.

As for this issue of **The Rifter®**, I put it together while Maryann was out of the country on one of her famous cruises to exotic places, and while Kevin was too busy writing *Coalition Wars: Siege on Tolkeen* to keep close tabs on me. It's not like either of them will notice. As long as this issue sells reasonably well, they won't give it another thought. Since you've all come to know this publication as **The Rifter™**, I could not use the better title of *Wayne Smith Presents*, but that's basically what you have. Wayne Smith's pure vision. My unique view of reality. When you see how superior it is to Kevin's, please be sure to let him know that he should give me more freedom with **The Rifter™** and doesn't even need to glance over it. Oh, and mention that whatever it is he's paying me, he should double it. Enjoy.

— Wayne Smith, April 1st, 2000

Palladium News, Info, & Coming Attractions

By Percy Ferkelberger (the guy who should know)

News

Palladium Books sold to the famous Ferkelberger family

Under the terms of the sale, the Ferkelberger family will immediately take over the operation of Palladium Books.

The new CEO, Percy Ferkelberger, released the following statement in a press release.

“Long-time fans of Palladium Books have nothing to fear. We know a good thing when we see it and have no desire to change this wonderful company and popular game system. Of course, that having been said, there will be a few *minor* changes, but they will all be good for the future of Palladium Books. For example, the Siembiedas and the entire Palladium staff have been immediately replaced by highly qualified members of the *Ferkelberger family*. While it is true that none of us has ever designed a game before in our lives, we are all long-time fans and are confident we can continue the legacy that has made Palladium Books great.

“As for the game system, we are a planning to replace the old, tired, albeit proven and fun game rules — rules played and loved by millions of people worldwide — with Peter Ferkelberger’s cutting edge **Giga-Damage** system. Fans will love it!

“We are also thinking of changing the company name from Palladium to **Ferkelberger Games**, but we’ll float this by our fans first. After all, we want to keep everybody happy and only make little changes to improve things.”

As per the “This town ain’t big enough for the both of us” legal clause in the buy-out contract, the Siembiedas have left the country and are setting up shop in Borneo.

“It’s really very nice here,” said Maryann Siembieda, “although those wild men can get pretty obnoxious sometimes. Borneo opens up an entirely new market. Who knows where we can go from here. Kevin is busy working on his next project even as I speak.”

Kevin Siembieda & Steve Jackson are one and the same.

And together they secretly own half the RPG industry!

In a startling revelation only expected by a few conspiracy theorists, Kevin Siembieda reveals that Palladium Books has secretly acquired half the role-playing companies on the market.

This list includes:

Palladium Books Inc.
Steve Jackson Games
White Wolf
Wizards of The Coast (WoTC)
Kenzer Co.
Dream Pod Nine and others!

“It all started back in the late Seventies, when I was a kid. You see, the rumors that **Steve Jackson** and **Kevin Siembieda** are one and the same ... well, they are actually true! There never was a Steve Jackson, that was my grandfather’s name on my mother’s side, and I assumed it in my younger years in role-playing,” admitted Kevin Siembieda in a shocking meeting with the press. “That’s also why selling Palladium to the Ferkelberger family is no big deal.

Why the charade?

“I didn’t know if I could make it in gaming,” admitted Siembieda, “so I didn’t want to use my real name in case I was embarrassed. My problem was that SJG became a big success and everybody admired this fictional Steve Jackson. Jealous of my own success, I decided to set up the SJG company to run on its own and I started a second RPG company using my **REAL** name as author and publisher. That was Palladium Books. The man industry people and fans think of as Steve Jackson is just an actor hired to make appearances at conventions.”

“Of course, this also explains why Palladium Books is always late releasing product. I’ve been busy doing double duty secretly writing games for both companies. That’s pretty difficult and causes delays at both companies.”

Observers noted that this explains everything. Why both companies regularly used cover artist **John Zeleznik**, how it happened that **Kevin Siembieda** the artist just happened to do artwork for SJG in the early 1980’s, why both companies have one “universal” game system, and why Palladium Books and Kevin Siembieda attends so few conventions, while Steve Jackson attends so many. Oh, and why are there no photographs of the two together?

Then came another startling revelation.

“I’m also **Steven Wieck** of White Wolf, and **Stewart** is really my brother Brian Siembieda. I met Mark Rien●Hagan in the late Eighties and we really hit it off. Consequently, when he was looking for a partner to run the business end of things and had this great idea for a new RPG centering around *Vampires*, I jumped at it. We came up with the name **White Wolf** and the rest is history. Well, except for the part about me being the secret Kingpin of Role-Playing Games (which is cool because the Kingpin has always been one of my favorite Marvel supervillians).

“Once I started assuming other identities, I just couldn’t stop. It became an obsession, the ultimate role-playing ‘game.’

Thankfully, I only need two hours of sleep a night, or I could never pull this off. I work virtually around the clock and spread myself thin, but the timely advent of the Information Age with its computers, fax machines, the Internet, etc., all made it possible for me to work behind the scenes without anybody suspecting. I was actually shocked when the rumor recently started to circulate that Steve Jackson and I were the same man. I mean, heck, I had kept that secret for nearly 20 years. Not bad.”

When asked what other identities he may have assumed, Mr. Siembieda confessed that he was also **Jolly Blackburn**, adding, “I was amazed nobody suspected this, our art styles are so similar. I thought people could see right through me.”

Why reveal himself now?

“It has just gotten too hard to maintain the multiple illusions in my life, and besides, I thought it would be fun to let people know that I’m *King of the World* — well, at least the role-playing world. I thought today, April Fool’s Day, was especially appropriate.”

Coming Attractions

In addition to the handful of things already in the pipeline, we will be taking all of Palladium’s game lines in new, exciting directions.

Siege on Tolkeen will forever change the face of Rifts®

Hey true believers, you know all of those **Rifts®** characters, O.C.C.s, R.C.C.s., people and places you have grown to know and love? It all changes here and now! The world of **Rifts®** will never be the same!!

Yes, we’ve taken our cue from comic books who take your beloved favorite heroes and villains, and throw them into a contrived earth-shattering crises so one or more are killed off or hideously scarred or mutated, a new team selected, good guys turned into psychotic killer clones, and completely change everything you thought you knew.

Highlights for *Siege on Tolkeen* include:

- The all new, all different Cyber-Knights. Lord Coake’s rule usurped by the rogue knight, Doctor Pepperheimer.
- The magic of Tolkeen: Elemental powered giant robots, demon vehicles and petunia powered weapons!
- Joseph Prosek II replaced by his fun-loving clone, Lenny.
- The Coalition abandons its dark and menacing “Death’s Head” look for light suits of frilly, pink, ballet costumes made of flexible *Giga-Damage™* material, designed to confuse and mock the enemy.
- The destruction of Tolkeen! Don’t miss the excitement of the CS turning the sorcerers’ own magic against them and turning the entire city into gingerbread!
- At last, the answer to the question everybody has been asking, “Is Erin Tarn really a man!?” Find the answer to this and many other pulse-pounding questions.

Just a few reasons not to miss this epic saga of the *Siege on Tolkeen*. And hey, if you hate it, a year or two from now we’ll change it all back just like the comics do, and everything will be fine until the next great event. Yeah baby!

New Direction for Palladium Fantasy RPG®

With that stick in the mud, Kevin Siembieda out of the way, and Bill Coffin drugged into submission, the Ferkelberger Family will bring a new direction to the *Palladium Fantasy Role-Playing Game®*.

The Palladium “Super” Third Edition will introduce a revolutionary new game system the new owners fondly call, “Tell the freakin’ story, we don’t need damn rules in our way.” This is another brain-child of *Peter Ferkelberger* in which virtually no rules exist and the Game Master can do anything he wants.

“This goes beyond diceless,” trumpeted the proud Peter Ferkelberger. “It is the ultimate in pure storytelling and chaos. Truly cutting edge concepts. It will revolutionize role-playing as we know it and *will* be the next big thing!”

Having used up all the cliches he could think of, Mr. Ferkelberger excused himself to complete the writing of “P-Super-3” while jetting to Paris on the Concord. The game is scheduled for release at Gen Con 2000.



More to come ...

That’s not all, it’s just all we can reveal at this time. Things are happening and changing so fast since the Ferkelberger acquisition that we dare not say more until next issue. Trust me when I, Percival Ferkelberger, tell you that Peter and I have so many great ideas, they are like a dime a dozen.

RIFTER™

THE POWER TO PURCHASE THE MEGAVERSE®

Introducing the new RIFTER™ credit card,
exclusively for the fans of Palladium Books!®

The card that earns experience points for every dollar you spend.



The purchasing power of the Megaverse® is now yours, for a low introductory 4.9% APR*, available for a limited time to Rifter subscribers

- No annual fee
- Low, low introductory 4.9% APR*
- Up to \$1,000,000 credit line
- Armored vehicle rental coverage plan**
- Internet account access and bill payment
- \$500,000 travel insurance***

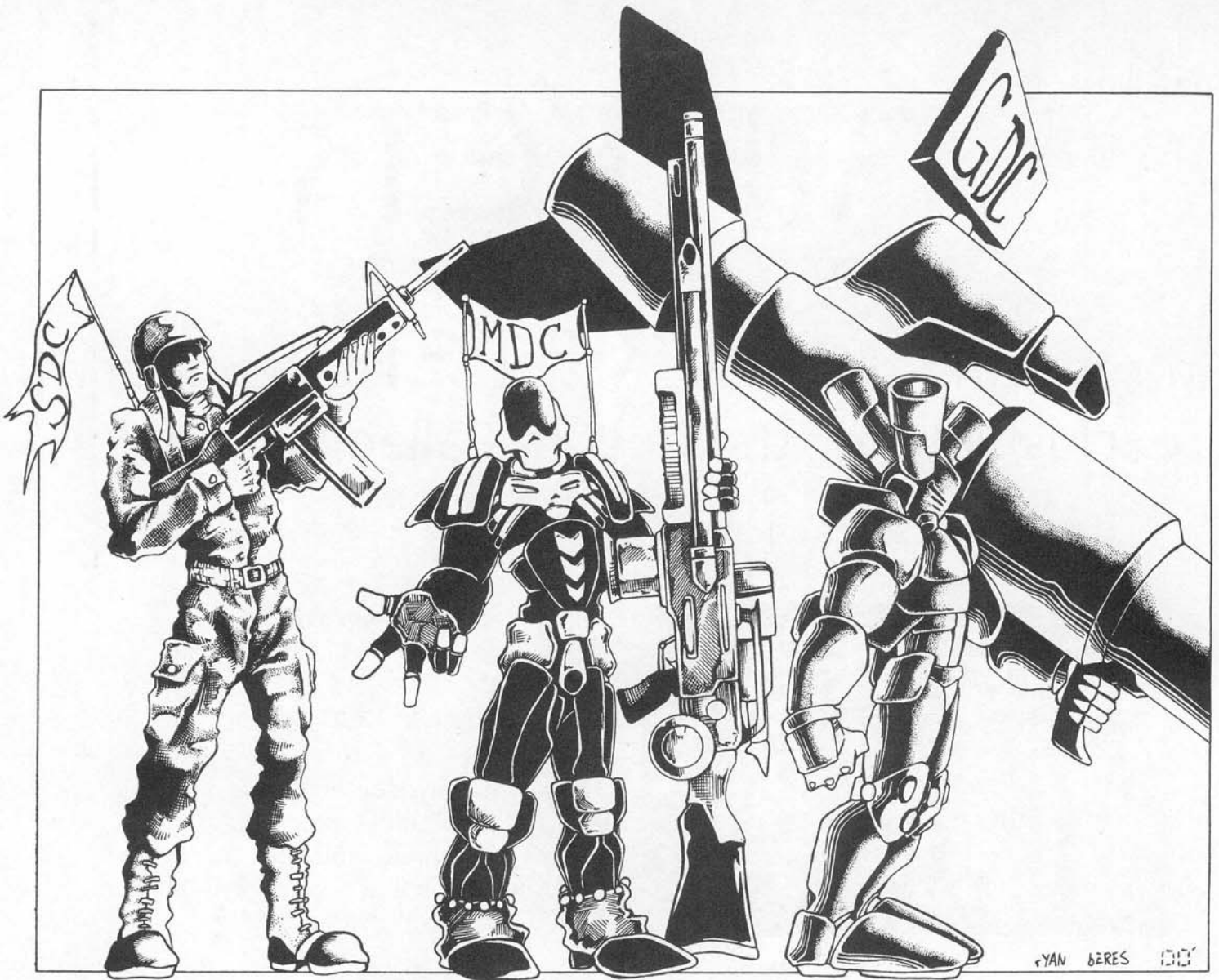
Want to earn free experience points?
Here's how it works:

Every time you make a purchase with your Rifter™ card, we credit your Rifter Membership Experience account with one experience point for each dollar of the purchase amount! Then, when you're ready to cash them in to boost your character to a new level, just call the toll free number or log on to your online account, and we'll give you a certificate for the points redeemable at your nearest GM. The more you shop, the faster your characters will grow!

*Introductory APR applies for first six months, after which the rate is 15%+prime.

**\$25,000 collision coverage for armored vehicle rentals when you use your Rifter card.

***Travel accidental death insurance does not cover deaths due to combat engaged in while traveling.



GIGA-DAMAGE™

The next BIG thing from Palladium

By Peter Ferkelberger

We Need Bigger Guns

In the beginning, there were just **Structural Damage Capacity (S.D.C.)** weapons and armor in the Palladium Megaverse®, relatively wimpy fare capable of only blowing to pieces an average person or a very light vehicle with a single, high-powered attack. If you kept up an attack for a whole melee round or more, maybe you could take out a tank with S.D.C. rocket launchers or high level superpowers, but really, this wasn't much fun at all, since it slowed the players down from racking up *major* amounts of experience points in as short a time as possible.

Then came **Mega-Damage**. Pure, sweet, Mega-Damage, oh how we loved thee! Now, even with an *M.D. peashooter*, a character can punch a hole through the biggest S.D.C. tank! It was awesome! There was just nothing cooler than you and your bud-

dies flanking a skyscraper, shooting out its corner foundations and watching the sucker fall. (Of course, in **Rifts®**, this honorable pastime was marred only because most skyscrapers generally don't have any people in them. Oh, well.). Yeah, baby, a giant (or not so giant) robot could level a town or battle a dragon, maybe even take on a demigod! The sense of power and wonder. It was a power gamer's dream come true.

But have you noticed how *everybody's* got Mega-Damage stuff nowadays? It's totally not any fun! I mean, what's the point of having Mega-Damage weapons and armor if the guy you're trying to turn into pâté is packing the same hardware? I mean, that requires you to think up strategies and tactics for your character, and where's the fun in that? It becomes too much like work, since you have to hit him a bunch of times, and if he hits you, you can take damage too! Why Palladium let everybody else get Mega-Stuff is beyond me, but I tell you, it's going to be the downfall of that company yet. (**Editor's Note:** Over the last 20 years, Percy has predicted the imminent demise of Palladium Books 241 times.)

But there is a way to fix things! No, really, there is! It's a great new concept, and it's finally going to put the **power** back into power gaming! Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears, for I bring to you the new face of ultimate destruction for fun and profit! I bring you, **Giga-Damage!!!!!!**

The concept behind Giga-Damage is simple. What Mega-Damage was to S.D.C., Giga-Damage is to Mega-Damage! Except, it's been made better to get rid of some of the really annoying things about Mega-Damage that have *ruined* so many of my games over the years. Like first, it always bugged me that 100 S.D.C. essentially equaled 1 point of M.D.C. Sure, S.D.C. weapons can't hurt Mega-Damage structures, but come on! That 100:1 ratio is just way too wimpy, and it gives S.D.C. gamers the delusion that maybe, just maybe, they could take out a Mega-Dude if they used their brains and came up with a really good plan. As if *that* has anything to do with role-playing!

To prevent this same trend from happening with Giga-Damage, I have upped the G.D.C./M.D.C. ratio to 1,000,000:1. That means one point of Giga-Damage equals one million points (that's 1,000,000) of M.D.C. And, Mega-Damage weapons simply can not hurt Giga-Damage structures, ever. Only Giga-Weapons can harm Giga-Structures. Exactly what constitutes a Giga-Structure is something I'll get to later in this article, but for now, let's just say that things like small planets and specially outfitted suits of power armor are two good examples.

The best way to incorporate Giga-Damage into your campaign is when only you and your buddies' characters have Giga-Stuff, and nobody else. That way, you won't have any annoying Giga-Battles to figure out. And if you have any intra-party conflict, do yourselves a favor and cut your fellow character's throat while he's sleeping to spare your character a nasty battle in the morning. Besides, then your character can keep all of his stuff undamaged for resale.

Giga-Stuff

Sometimes, articles like this put the weapons and armor stats in the back, so you have to flip through the whole thing to get to the good part. I hate that. That's why I'm putting it here, so you can grab what you came here for and return to gaming.

For those of you boring people who actually want to know the history behind these things, Giga-Stuff is native to **Rifts**® Earth, and was designed by the Coalition to totally kick everybody else's butt. The scientist behind the effort was Doctor Leopold Jupiter, a 53rd level Rogue Scholar/Scientist I used to run when **Rifts**® first came out. Jupiter is himself a Giga-Damage creature with the Giga-Psionic power of *Annihilate Enemies*, so don't even think about trying to take him out, because you can't.

G-1 Derringer

Giga-Damage: 1D4.

Rate of Fire: Once a melee round.

Range: One mile (1.6 km).

Payload: 10 shots per Giga-Clip.

Weight: One pound (0.45 kg).

Cost: 10,000 Credits for the gun, another 1,000 for each Giga-Clip. **Notes:** This weapon is so stupid. I don't know

why I even invented it. I mean, it hardly does any damage, but I guess it's cool to hide in your shoe or something or to prove your superiority by frying a Glitter Boy with it.

G-5 Light Laser Pistol

Giga-Damage: 3D6.

Rate of Fire: As many times as you have attacks in a melee round.

Range: 10 miles (16 km).

Payload: 100 shots per Giga-Clip.

Weight: One pound (0.45 kg).

Cost: 100,000 credits for the gun, and 10,000 credits for each Giga-Clip.

Notes: Remember that hot chick who wore a lot of leather in that kewl movie about that world that was really a computer world that starred Keanu Reeves that came out last summer? Well, I lost a bet with a friend who said that leather chick was hotter than that hot Lara chick in that computer game where you run around finding stuff and shooting stuff, so as a result I had to invent this weapon. I hope you like it, because I sure don't.

G-10 Heavy Energy Pistol

Giga-Damage: 1D4x10.

Rate of Fire: As many times as you can attack in a melee round. Don't worry, this single-fire crap is about to end.

Range: 20 miles/32 km.

Payload: 200 shots per Giga-Clip. Don't worry about this limited ammo thing, either. That too is about to go the way of the dodo bird. Or the Simvan, for that matter, since my crew took out the last of them back in February. That campaign was so sweet.

Weight: One pound (0.45 kg).

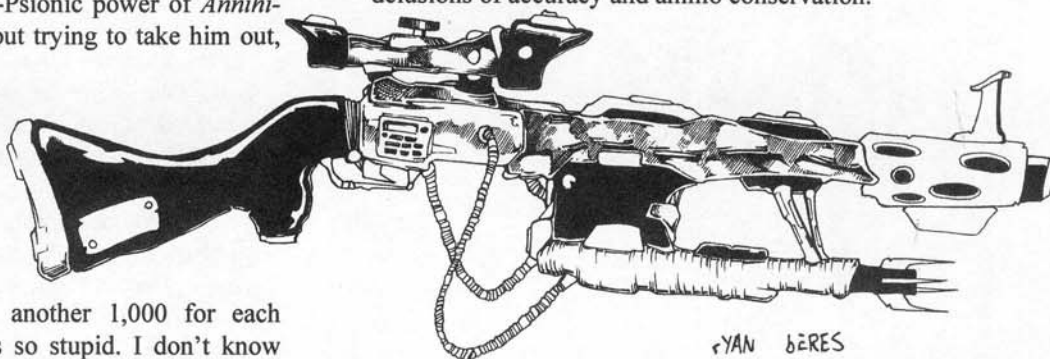
Cost: 200,000 credits for the gun, and 20,000 credits for each Giga-Clip.

Notes: The only thing that makes this gun really worthwhile is that it looks just like a bigger, kewler version of that blaster gun used by that smuggler guy in the old space movie about some whiny kid with a laser sword (probably only Mega-Damage), some old dude who was always trying to teach him stuff, some chick with goofy hair and way too much clothing, a robot butler and an automated trashcan. I can't remember the movie's name, but I guarantee you that any of *Jean-Claude Van Damme's* movies are better. So are the ones by that uptight American guy with the black hair who grabs people and breaks their joints the other way. I love it when he does that.

G-25 Particle Beam Rifle

Giga-Damage: 1D6x10.

Rate of Fire: Full auto only. Burst firing is for elitists who have delusions of accuracy and ammo conservation.



Range: 50 miles (80 km).

Payload: Unlimited! The gun has an internal generator that gives this weapon the limitless ammo capacity that all Giga-Guns rightfully deserve.

Weight: Two pounds (0.9 kg).

Cost: 500,000 credits, plus a \$5 real-life donation to the Peter Ferkelberger Discretionary Income Fund. The trusting fools at Palladium will see that I get my money or I shall send

them all to the Black Pit of Calcutta! Or Troy, N.Y., depending on my mood. **Notes:** I thought about putting a Giga-Grenade Launcher on the underside of this but I decided not to since you're better off just putting another G25 on the underside and firing them both at the same time. If you wire together the triggers, you can do it without losing any attacks per melee, too.

G-60 Machinegun

Giga-Damage: 3D6x10.

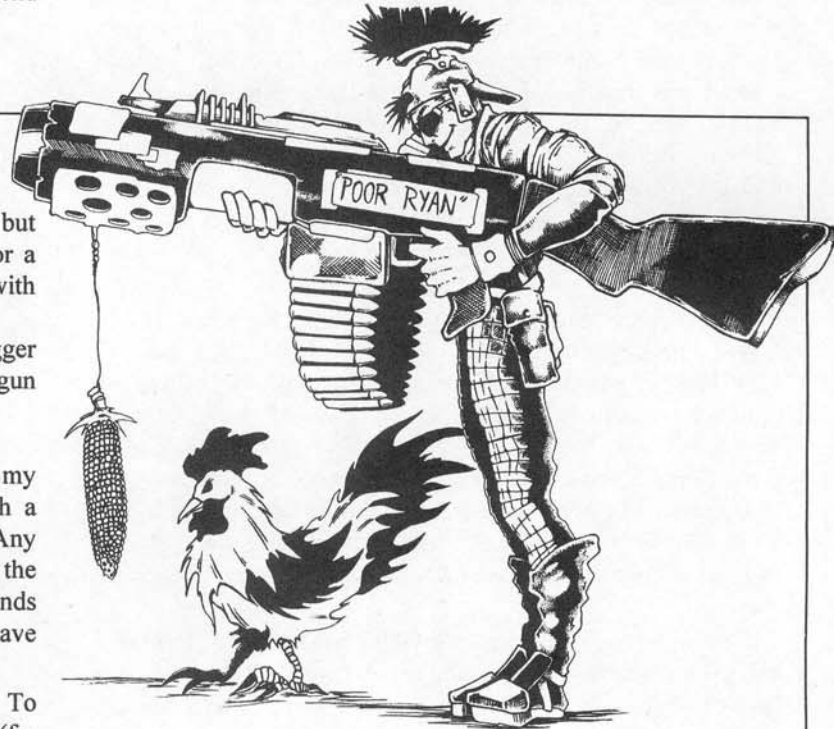
Rate of Fire: Double Auto! The weapon fires on full auto, but so fast, it's like firing two full auto spreads at once. For a 1,000 credit upgrade fee, all Giga-Guns may be fitted with this feature. **Range:** 100 miles (160 km).

Payload: Unlimited, like the G-25. Only the generator is bigger and resembles a big ammo drum, mostly because this gun didn't look right without it.

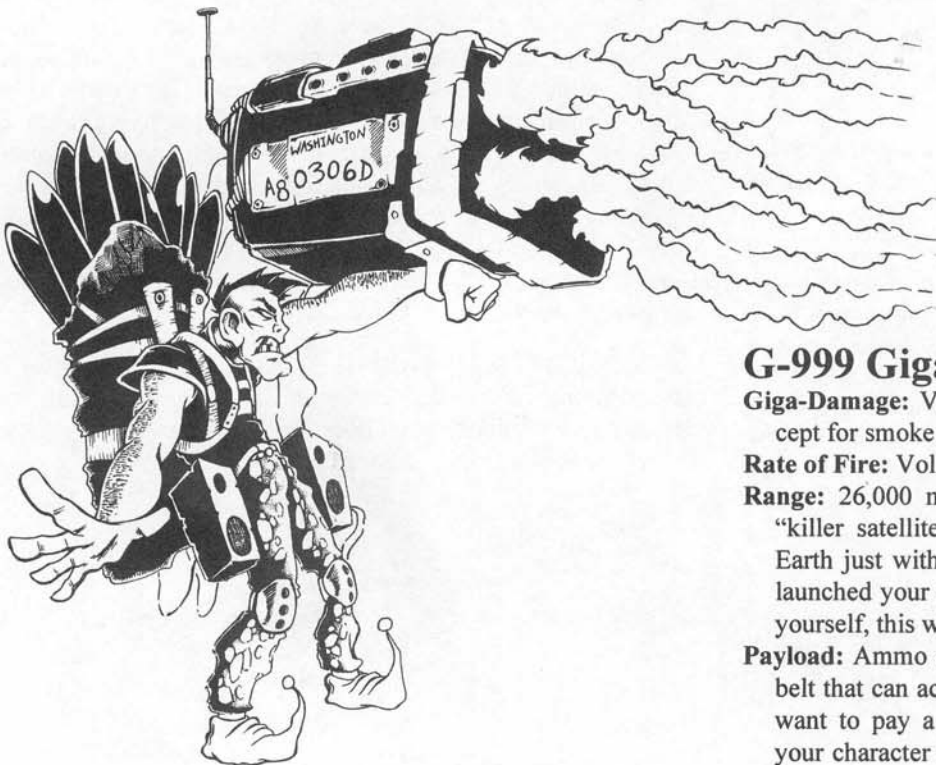
Weight: Three pounds (1.4 kg).

Cost: 1 million credits. Or, if we play together and you do my characters some favors, I *might* just give you one with a built-in expiration date of one month on the generator. Any efforts to remove the expiration date will result in the weapon's explosion, removing you and your pitiful friends from the Megaversal continuity, which means I will have gotten your credits for nothing!

Notes: This weapon is designed to be fired from the hip. To get the perfect effect, the character should have no shirt on (female characters especially) and have a really good war face.



RYAN BEREZ 100



G-999 Giga-Missile Launcher

Giga-Damage: Varies by warhead, but all do 10D10x100, except for smoke warheads, which inflict only 1D6x10.

Rate of Fire: Volleys of 10, 25, 50 or 100.

Range: 26,000 miles (41,600 km). This puts those rumored "killer satellites" that prevent anybody from leaving Rifts Earth just within range. But, since you've probably already launched your own Killer Satellite Satellite Killers into orbit yourself, this whole exercise is moot.

Payload: Ammo drums of 100 missiles or a disintegrating link belt that can accommodate up to 10,000 missiles. You might want to pay a professional illustrator to draw a picture of your character firing the G-999 in one hand, and feeding the ammo belt with the other hand. I did. And believe me when I say it looks great mounted on my wall, next to my framed re-

straining orders filed by Kevin Siembieda, Steve Jackson (ever notice how much he and Kev look alike?) and some old RPG guy named Gary.

Weight: Four pounds (1.8 kg), because the missiles add to the weight.

Cost: Half million credits, plus 50 credits for each missile.

Notes: This unit can be hidden in a guitar case for covert operations, but mini-missiles are carried in a backpack or briefcase. That's the problem with missile launchers, they and their missiles are bulky.

G-69 Support Cannon

Giga-Damage: 6D6x10.

Rate of Fire: Triple Auto! Like Double Auto, only Triple.

Range: From Los Angeles, California, to Santiago, Chile, however far that is (gotta be at least 2000 miles, eh).

Payload: Special! This weapon regenerates ammo so fast that if you don't shoot it every 10 minutes, it begins having an energy build up that will eventually melt the weapon!!!!!! The only way to prevent this is to tape the trigger back so it is always firing. Then you can just mount the weapon on a turret mount and slave it to a motion tracker or something, but tricked out so it won't hit anybody you like.

Weight: Five pounds (2.25 kg), because this baby is really big.

Cost: One million credits, plus 50 credits for the mount and 500 for the slaving system. In certain weapons trading areas, a successful Streetwise roll will get you the peripherals for free. **Notes:** It's kind of like a wave-motion gun from *Star Blazers*, only a bit smaller and you don't get to wear the bell bottoms all of the crew members wore on that show.





G-1000 Gigasaurus Rex

(energy cannon)

Giga-Damage: 3D6x50,000!

Rate of Fire: Unlimited!

Range: Unlimited!

Payload: Unlimited!

Weight: 8 pounds (3.6 kg); sorry it's so heavy.

Cost: Unlimited!

Notes: This weapon is a massive, shoulder-fired bazooka-style weapon like the G-999, except it is a beam weapon and looks way kewler. You can fire it one-handed, but shooting two G-Rexes like paired weapons will incur a -1 to strike. Characters generally should not get access to this particular weapon until at least 2nd level.

Additional Notes: As I wrote up this weapon, I got an idea for a **Heroes Unlimited™** sourcebook called **Giga-Unlimited!** in which I will introduce the **Giga-Hero**.

G-123 Giga-Boomer

Giga-Damage: 3D12x10.

Rate of Fire: As many times as you can attack in the melee round. This stupid rule got snuck in by an old G.M. because I owed him some money. Still, you can get around this hobble by adding up to five more barrels to the weapon, making it a true six-shooter. Multi-barreled Giga-Boomers can either fire all barrels at once in single-shot setting (for six times the normal damage, of course), or can fire gatling-gun style, on Giga-Auto mode, which equates to the entire payload shooting out in a single attack.

Range: All the way around the world minus 10 feet (3 m). This way, you can fire a shot and it will kill everybody in its path on the entire planet! But don't worry, because I made the range just a little off so the slugs will fall to the ground before they hit you in the back.

Payload: Ammo drums of 1,000 to 100,000 flechette rounds. All ammo drums are the same size, though, thanks to the in-

YAN BERES 103

credible flechette miniaturization technologies pioneered by **Top O' the World Industries**, a cutting-edge weapons designer featured prominently in my soon-to-be written **Rifts® Greenland** manuscript.

Weight: Five pounds (2.25 kg), because it is really big too.

Cost: All the money you have.

Notes: This weapon is a typical Glitter Boy's Boom Gun upgraded for Giga-Damage purposes. The great thing about this is that since it has no recoil (a side effect of the Giga-Upgrade), you don't have to fire your heel spikes into the ground when you fire, freeing your legs for some sweet roundhouse kicks/Giga-Boomer combinations.

Giga-Damage Q&A

Since I've introduced this great new concept on the Internet, I have received over 2,350 flames and death threats via e-mail, and I even had a few guys hack into my website (<http://www.ferkelberger.com>) in order to erase my original Giga-Damage rules! One person even usurped my e-mail address and credit card number and bought me a 50 year subscription to *Grit* magazine (<http://www.grit.com>). Nice try, you guys. But now that Giga-Damage is in print, it's official and you have to deal with it!

Anyway, those people who AREN'T totally immature and who APPRECIATE what I'm trying to do have sent me a lot of really good questions on Giga-Damage. To better explain this concept (which will totally revolutionize role-playing, BTW), here are some of the better questions and answers on this überkewl topic.

Q: How come there is no Giga-Armor yet?

A: When I began writing this article, I thought I would include some Giga-Stats for Giga-Armor, but you know what? I like it better with people just having Giga-Guns. It makes it easier to blow stuff up. Besides, the time I spend writing up Giga-Armor could be much better spent playing **Giga-Bots and Giga-Babes™**, my awesome new collectible card game. (Editor's Note: Be afraid. Be very afraid.)

Q: Okay, if you blast some hoser in M.D.C. armor with a Giga-Gun, he's pretty much toast. But what happens if you hit some S.D.C. guy with a Giga-Gun?

A: Good question! You can play it two ways. One, that the S.D.C. guy is completely vaporized. I mean, not even his boots are left standing! Nothing, nada. Zero. Poof. Gone. The same is pretty much true of S.D.C. walls and vehicles. You can figure a blast punches a hole in a wall the size of a Volkswagen Beetle. And probably the wall behind it too! Little cars, motorcycles, hover cycles, and man-sized robots are zapped into nothingness too.

The second way to play is my personal favorite. Not only is the target 1,000,000% vaporized, but he is erased from the entire continuity of the Megaverse! Everything that person said or did is as if it never existed!!

This is really cool for re-writing history or for making things easier on yourself when you have some annoying S.D.C. political figure who keeps messing with you. Find his parents and Giga-Blast them, and erase the dude from existence. It works! S.D.C. structures are likewise erased from

the Megaversal continuity. Like this one time my character actually found a piece from the original *Nina, Pinta and Santa Maria*, and I Giga-Blasted them, which meant that those ships never existed, so Christopher Columbus never came to the New World, so the U.S. was never founded, so the Coalition was never founded after the Apocalypse. That's why my character is Overlord of Illinois right now.

Q: If I have a Giga-Gun, then what is the point of using Mega-Stuff anymore?

A: Just because Giga-Stuff totally blows away Mega-Stuff doesn't mean there is no more use for Mega-Stuff. For example, say your character needs to hunt for food (hypothetical, since real heroes don't eat), and you Giga-Blast a dinosaur. There won't be anything left to fill your stomach. Now if you Mega-Blast that same dinosaur, then not only will you have plenty left over for dinner, but it'll be cooked to a nice, juicy medium well done, too.

Here's an even better example. You want to capture an important building. If you Giga-Blast it, there won't be much of anything left to plunder afterwards. But if you only Mega-Blast it, you should have big hunks of it left to plunder at will. That's how my character got so rich — if I had laid siege to the First Bank of Iron Heart with my Giga-Guns, then I would never have been able to sack the bank of the 77 trillion credits that now sit in my character's private Giga-Vault along with his collection of rune weapons.

Q: One of my friends said he fired a Giga-Gun at the fabric of space and time and created a Rift. I told him that was stupid.

A: It's not stupid. It's brilliant! Just think, now your mecha pilot can control beings from another dimension without having to learn all that magic crap! One look at your Giga-Guns, and any creature from another world will be licking your boots so clean they shine! That's why my character currently has the Legion of Dragons as his housecleaners. Never underestimate the presence of overwhelming firepower to get other people to do what you want.

Q: I took a bunch of characters with Giga-Stuff over to the **Palladium Fantasy** game setting, and we totally blew the place up! Was that kewl or what?

A: Dude, that's totally kewl! My advice for bringing Giga-Stuff to less powerful gaming environments (namely, anything in which Giga-Stuff is not prevalent) is to say that 25% of the world will be totally destroyed by your characters within 1D6 months, after which you will be lord of that realm. That's for handling this quickly, in case you don't have the time to actually role-play the domination of the world. If you have the time, then I'd suggest you actually play out the Giga-Combat scenarios. They're über-fun.

Q: Sometimes, Mega-Stuff isn't Mega anymore when it goes to a S.D.C. world, though. Does that happen with Giga-Stuff?

A: Of course not. If that were the case, then my characters could never have taken over the **Nightbane®** world the way that they did. Let me tell you, having Nightlords serve you dinner on a nightly basis is well worth the hassle of reducing their realm to utter ruin with a few well-placed Giga-Blasts.

Q: Can you upgrade Mega-Stuff into Giga-Stuff?

A: Yes, but only Rollo Masamune, my 100th level Operator, can do it, and he charges one million credits for every point of G.D.C. he bestows upon your equipment. Don't try killing him or making threats either, or his fully automated G.D.C. Ulti-Max will put the smack down on you faster than that time Bronkus Hogsworth, my 80th level Mega-Cyber-Juicer-Cosmo-Headhunter, smoked the Four Horsemen in less than a melee round. Masamune's workshop is in the Kingdom of Ferkopolis, which is where Chi-Town would be if Bronkus hadn't taken it over already.

Q: Are there any spells capable of Giga-Damage?

A: I suppose if you really wanted to, you could make a spell with Giga-Damage in it, but why would you want to? The only way I could see this being any fun at all is if you had a guy with a big suit of mecha that could cast spells. Hey, that's a pretty good idea, come to think of it. I think Rollo's Ulti-Max is gonna get an upgrade. Thanks for the suggestion! I'll be sure to mention you when I include this in my upcoming **Nightbane®** sourcebook, **Through the Glass Partly**.

Q: Can a Giga-Damage weapon kill a mythological god? What about Superman?

A: Heck yeah! Figure any G.D. weapon that does at least 1D4x10 G.D. per blast can kill a god (any weapon that does less takes triple the amount of attacks and wastes time). Figure a demigod or godling like Hercules can get taken out with 1 or 2 blasts. A full-fledged, but lesser god in 3 or 4, and a big-shot god like Zeus, Jupiter, Odin or Ra, even Thor, in like, 6 or 8. Same thing goes for Alien Intelligences and the Splugorth, 6 or 8 (only one or two from the ultra-rare *Gigasaurus Rex*) blasts and they are history! Oh, as for Superman, figure him to be like Zeus, I guess.

Giga-Adventures

So you say you've destroyed everything you can think of with your Giga-Stuff and now you're bored and don't know what to do? Well, chances are you haven't thought of these über-kewl Giga-Adventures yet. Try these on for size, sparky, and you'll be singing my praises as all-time best adventure maker of all time. In the unlikely event that these don't keep you amused long enough, don't worry. I hear Palladium's coming out with some new **Palladium Fantasy RPG®**, **Heroes Unlimited™**, **Systems Failure™**, and **Nightbane®** stuff this year, so you can always "Rift" over there and take that stuff out, too. Oh, and don't forget about adapting your favorite movies and TV shows. With Giga-Damage gizmos you can terminate the Terminators, destroy the Death-Star, and boldly go wherever the heck YOU want! Get the idea?

Tolkeen Must Die!

Hook: Tolkeen is very annoying to the Lords of Ferkopolis, and they have ordered you to destroy it immediately and return for lunch. Failure to do this will result in your agonizing death. (And my characters are totally powerful enough to do it, too. So you better take this seriously.)

Line: You wouldn't mind taking all the valuable stuff Tolkeen has hidden in its treasure vaults, but if you simply Giga-Blast everything, there will be no pay-off for you.

Sinker: Ah, screw it. Warm up the Giga-Blasters and have fun. You can always treasure hunt later by visiting **Diamond World™**, my upcoming Megaversal sourcebook about an uninhabited world made up completely of a huge flawless diamond worth over one decillion credits. If you crack the planet in smaller pieces with a few well-placed Giga-Blasts, you can cart the stuff home and be as rich as sin.

Atlantis Must Die!

Hook: You have decided to conquer Atlantis single-handedly. Without any Giga-Stuff to defend it, the island is doomed.

Line: If you Giga-Blast the Splynn Dimensional Market, you won't have anywhere to sell the fragments of **Diamond World!** What do you do?

Sinker: No problem. First you Giga-Blast the City of Splynn into submission. This should take 2D6 melee rounds if you're not a total loser. Then either force Lord Splynncryth to accept you as the true leader of Atlantis (you might want to leave Splynncryth as a figurehead) or blast him to atoms and proclaim yourself new Lord of Atlantis. Once you control the island, you give those **Diamond World** pieces to those blind hotties that are on the cover of the **Rifts®** main rule book. The island is practically crawling with those chicks, so if you give them big diamonds, they'll totally fall for your character. After that, it won't matter if the place is a smoking ruin or not.

The NGR Must Die!

Hook: Now that you control Atlantis, you've decided to reveal to the world that the New German Republic is just a big collection of wimps and sissies, after all.

Line: This one is no contest, especially if you set up a Giga-Sniping station on Mount Everest. If you want to do this the hard way, actually fly to Germany and Giga-Blast the country along its borders with the rest of Europe. Once the nation is set adrift on the open sea, the inhabitants will totally lose their cool and will submit to you as their rightful Overlord.

Sinker: Hey, that's a good idea. Send it to Davy Jones' locker with a nice Giga-Blast right in the center. Just make sure you don't do this before you've taken everything you want from the country first.

All Cosmo-Knights Must Die!

Hook: Everybody keeps saying how Cosmo-Knights are way too tough. This exercise in true power will end *that* little debate once and for all.

Line: The big pain here is the Cosmo-Knights are all the way on **Phase World®**, which means you'd have to Giga-Blast a Rift open and actually go there. Since you probably just got back from Germany, the last thing you need is another boring road trip. So, fire a few Giga-Blasts into the Sun and blast it apart. That will get their attention, and they'll be coming to your doorstep in no time. Before you do this, make sure you've got a scroll with the *Replace Sun Spell of Legend* on it or else you'll have to move to another planet or parallel dimension. But, if you prefer cinematic campaigns that aren't so annoyingly obsessed with realism, then overlook this part.

Sinker: No Cosmo-Knight can stand up to a meaty barrage of Giga-Damage, so the big question is how many of these suckheads you want to take prisoner? Since you've already got like half the Splugorth race waiting on you hand and foot, having more flunkies is only going to clutter up your Giga-Fortress, so you might as well waste 'em.

Optional Sinker: Instead of putting out your own sun, you could actually go to **Phase World™**, steal a spaceship, mount it with a couple hundred Giga-Turrets and go around putting out everybody else's suns. Now that I think about it, I'm going to have my characters do it instead. Forget about this last part.

Repeat your Favorite Adventures

This really isn't an HLS Adventure, just some worldly advice. If you really had a great time, say, taking over Atlantis or blast-

ing Tolkeen to kingdom come, you can do it again by Rifting to a parallel world. You know, an alternate reality. This way you can relive your greatest adventures over and over again.

Coming Next Issue (in Y3K)

The next evolution in gaming: **Tera-Damage!!!!!!!**

Editor's Note: Giga-Damage is being added to the Palladium Megaverse® in large part because Mr. Ferkelberger has incriminating photographs of nearly every Palladium staff member and freelancer (including some choice shots of Bill Coffin, Scott Johnson and Ramon Perez whooping it up at a monster truck rally, as well as Maryann and Kevin Siembieda dropping water balloons from a hotel window at Gen Con). Palladium Books Inc. takes no responsibility for whatever mayhem the new **Giga-Damage** rules do to your campaign. God save us all.

Silly answers to some silly questions

By J.P. Ferkelberger

Warning: Some of these questions and answers may be considered in poor taste. And as for being humorous. Um, humor is in the heart of the beholder? Yeah, that's the ticket. **Fun Fact:** 95% of these questions were actually asked by *real* people (you know who you are).



Rifts® Questions

Question: In the first printing of the **Rifts RPG**, there is a reference to an *Emperor Tromm*. In later printings, Tromm was replaced by Prosek. Who was Tromm?

Answer: Tromm is a typo of sorts. Before the name of Prosek was finally decided upon, Tromm was the name we were working with. After changing it to Prosek, we somehow missed correcting it in *one* place in our first printing (since then, we have corrected the error). Not that this fast, decisive correction has stopped thousands of fans asking us who "Tromm" is. We find this both amusing and puzzling since there are only about 10,000 copies of **Rifts®** with the mention of "Tromm" buried in one, lone paragraph out of a 254 page book done in 9 point text, and there are over 140,000 copies of **Rifts®** with the correction. You'd think the name "Tromm" would have been

forgotten about years ago. One of our pet theories is that there is some fan-boy with the last name of "Tromm" who keeps this question alive, so that he can be part of the **Rifts®** saga. Well, Mr. Tromm, all we can say is — STOP it right now!!

Alternative answer: Tromm was Prosek's unflattering childhood nickname (much like "Stinky"). Anyone who is foolish enough to utter this nickname in earshot of Prosek is summarily executed as a traitor to the State.

Question: If our playing group had control of the SDF-1 (or SDF-2 or 3 for that matter), could it destroy Chi-Town?

Answer: Um ... I ... uh, maybe. I have to wonder how the heck your player group got control of the SDF-1 (etc.) in the first place! That seems rather improbable. Second, what the heck is it doing on Rifts Earth? Oh, and why would it, you or the RDF want to destroy Chi-Town? While many of its government and military rulers are evil, there are millions of innocent people living in Chi-Town and in the surrounding 'Burbs.

For those of you who do not know, "SDF" stands for Super-Dimensional Fortress and is from the **Robotech®** role-playing game. It is a massive, miles long, spaceship that combines human and alien technology. It's cool and incredibly powerful, but it has nothing to do with **Rifts®**. Then again, we do say that **Rifts®** is limited only by one's imagination. The bottom-line is that whatever unfolds in any adventure depends on the Game Master, the ingenuity of the player characters, and the roll of the dice.

Question: Here's another SDF query. This is a two-part question that arose in my campaign: A) If a Greater Old One were to convert Mount Nimro into a giant suit of power armor, how many M.D.C. would it have?

B) If this Old One were then to don this suit of armor and battle the SDF-1, who would win?

Answer: A) 410,565 M.D.C. The exact logarithmic formula we used to compute this number is probably beyond your human comprehension, so take it or leave it.

B) Although it would probably be a fierce battle, the Main Gun/Reflex Cannon of the SDF-1 (which destroys EVERYTHING in its line of fire) should ultimately give it the victory.

Question: Our group has a dispute that we hope you can settle. As you know, in hand to hand combat, a character with the skill of Boxing automatically knocks out their opponent on a natural 20. One of the players is running a Smuggler with average strength (P.S. 9) but with the boxing skill. This player often rolls natural 20's in combat and frequently knocks out his opponents (They are legitimate rolls. He's not cheating, he's just extremely lucky). At first, when the Smuggler started decking foes who were twice as strong as he was (such as Juicers and 'Borgs), we thought it a bit odd but just chalked it up to the character just getting in a lucky punch now and then. Actually, we thought that it was pretty funny. As the campaign went on and the Smuggler subsequently flattened such foes as a Vampire, a Mechanoid Brute, and even a 22 foot (6.7 m) tall Poptal giant, it seemed weirder and weirder, but the G.M. insisted that a natural 20 is always a knockout as stated in the rules. However, recently when the puny Smuggler knocked out the Greek God Ares (who has 10,000 M.D.C. and a P.S. of 42), even the G.M. began to wonder if he was interpreting the rules correctly. As of now, our group is arguing this point. One side feels that a natural 20 is ALWAYS a knockout while the other side feels that it depends upon the specific situation. Who is correct?

Answer: The side that feels that it depends upon the situation (and opponent) is correct. The rule about a natural 20 being a knockout is not an absolute and should be modified by logic and common sense. Here are some guidelines:

1. Characters that cannot inflict Mega-Damage™ cannot knock out Mega-Damage opponents such as demons, dragons, gods and other supernatural beings. However, Mega-Damage beings themselves can knock out other Mega-Damage adversaries (and must be careful not to kill S.D.C./Hit Point creatures with a mere slap).

2. The attack must strike some vulnerable part of the target capable of rendering the victim unconscious. For instance, a 6 foot (1.8 m) tall human will not be able to knock out a 22 foot tall Poptal or Pucara giant by hitting them in the shin or knee-cap!

3. Because they lack a central nervous system, robots and androids (of whatever size) are immune to being knocked out. Characters who are cyborgs (particularly if clad in environmental body armor) are likely to be impervious or at least resistant to a "knock out" from a punch. Getting knocked off the roof may be another story. Likewise, those wearing power armor or piloting a robot, or who are ethereal/intangible or composed of living energy or elemental forces can not be knocked out.

Question: I am interested in integrating Pokemon characters into my Rifts® campaign and can use some assistance. Do you have any stats available for the various Pokemons? I know that as G.M. I can assign what I feel is fair but I don't want any arguments from my players if what I make up is different from the officially sanctioned Palladium-approved material. Also, how would the Coalition States feel about the Pokemon? Would they try to destroy them on sight?

Answer: No problemo. Kevin Siembieda has nothing but spare time on his hands and would be glad to sit down and tool up some quick stats for the Pokemon characters. Of course, understand that it is this dedication to our fans that causes our books to be eternally late.

Seriously, Palladium does not have the license for Pokemon, so we cannot offer any "official" stats or assistance in that respect, even if we wanted to. Moreover, we do NOT have the time or resources to provide free game rules, character stats, etc., upon request. Hey, creating characters for "your game" is YOUR job.

As for the Coalition, instead of trying to kill the Pokemons, they might try to catch them all, open a zoo and charge admission. Or start their own Pokemon tournaments, or ...

Question: Since the Biomancy spell Shrink Plant will reduce the size of a plant by as much as 90%, can a Biomancer shrink a Millennium Tree (specifically the 2000 foot/610 m tall **Tree of Darkness**) into a Millennium "Shrub?"

If so, will the tree's M.D.C. be cut by 90% as well? What about the beings that inhabit the tree? Will they shrink down with the tree or be crushed to death? If they do shrink down to 10% of their former size, will their powers and abilities also be cut by 90% or will their magic and psionics continue to work at full strength despite their diminutive size? What about their Hit Points and M.D.C., will they stay the same or get cut?

Answer: Yikes, hold your horses and get real. Millennium Trees are not ordinary plants. They (including the Tree of Darkness) are intelligent, creatures of magic much too powerful to be affected by the Shrink Plant spell. Likewise, why would the people and animals living in the tree be affected by a spell that "shrinks plants?" It is a Shrink Plant spell not shrink squirrels and people.

Question: This is really embarrassing, but I have a problem that I could use some advice with. I recently started going out with this girl who knew nothing about gaming. So, to get her involved in my Rifts® campaign, I let her play Erin Tarn as a character. Unfortunately, after a recent argument, she deliberately had Erin Tarn go toe-to-toe with a squad of Undead Juicers and got her killed. She claims that she was just playing in character but I suspect that she got Erin killed out of spite. My other players are indignant about this because they do not want to be known throughout the gaming community as the group that let Erin Tarn get killed. I am not sure what I should do. Although as G.M., I could probably declare that adventure as just a practice run or a dream that they had and it never really happened, would that be cheating? Would Erin Tarn still officially be dead? And suppose my girl friend and I make up? Should I let her back into the campaign? What do you advise?

Answer: Are you asking for advice on your campaign or your personal life?

Bringing Erin Tarn back to life can be surprisingly simple. When Ms. Tarn was in Africa with the Gathering of Heroes to battle the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, one of her friends and fellow heroes was Ley Line walker Katrina Sun (who was actually the goddess Isis suffering from amnesia). With her memory restored, Isis should be able to bring Erin Tarn back to

life. Or, if you deem that Isis has not yet recovered enough of her divine power to personally resurrect Erin Tarn, she can call in a favor from her fellow deities, such as Ra or Thoth, either of whom should be able to accomplish this deed without too much fuss.

Another alternative could be that it was NOT Erin Tarn who died. Instead it was some poor misguided woman with brain damage and a striking resemblance to the genuine article who perished. Or similarly, some brainwashed clone or magical doppelganger created for some nefarious purpose, but who wandered away and thought she was the real Ms. Tarn. Any of those should do the trick.

As for your girl friend, relationships are based on respect, trust, and mutual compatibility. Anyone who has so little regard for your feelings as to let a character like Erin Tarn get killed (whether intentionally or not) in the fashion you describe is not a team player and probably not the kind of person that you want to be associating with.

(If I may interject. My unofficial, smart aleck response is: Are you crazy?! Who in their right mind would let their girl friend — or anybody — play a pivotal, ongoing character like Erin Tarn in the first place? Don't you know how fragile relationships are? Don't you know that there is nothing worse than the wrath of a woman scorned?! Of course she killed Erin Tarn out of spite!! Just make sure you aren't next on her hit list, buddy!! — Percy Ferkelberger.)

Question: Recently, while gaming at a friend's house, I looked through his old copy of **Beyond the Supernatural™**. While skimming through it, I noticed a couple of passages taken from the book **Worlds Within Worlds™** by Victor Lazlo. Once I found out that this was the same Victor Lazlo that the Rifts city-state of Lazlo would later be named after, I decided that I wanted to get a copy of this book. Unfortunately, it is not at my local libraries nor do any of my local bookstores carry it. Do you know where can I obtain a copy of **Worlds Within Worlds™**?

Answer: You can't. **Worlds Within Worlds™** is a book that we made up for BTS and does not exist (at least, not in this reality).

Question: At a recent gaming session, one of my buddies looked over a copy of **Xiticix Invasion** and pronounced Xiticix as "City chicks." The thought of an invasion somewhere by a group of sexy girls from some city struck us as hilarious and we all broke up. Pretty soon we were all making jokes based on mispronouncing the names of different creatures, places, and things in **Rifts®**. I can't remember the last time I laughed so hard. Some of the best things we came up with were Size Talker, the Collision States, At Land This, Not runny aliens, and Fat on Juice, sir!

Did you guys know about how you can make these jokes by altering their names and plan it that way? I figured you did, but if not, then I wanted to share with you what we did. Anyway, your company can probably use a funny group of gamers like me and my friends. How do we become official play testers for you?

Answer: Admittedly, Kevin and the Palladium gang of creators are geniuses, but no, they did not create these names with

humorous alternatives in mind. Those are the products of your own fertile imagination (You seem to have quite a sense of humor).

As for play testers, Palladium does not do as much play testing as one might think and it is all done "in-house" — i.e. Palladium staff members, friends and handpicked play testers. But thanks for offering.

Palladium Fantasy & Miscellaneous Topics

Question: Since Vampires are hurt by running water, how much damage is inflicted when a character spits on a vampire? How about if someone "pees" on the undead?

Answer: Spitting will do no damage to the vampire but figure on plenty of damage done to the spitter once the vampire gets its hands on him. Saliva is NOT considered to be running water and will not affect a vampire (except to enrage it).

As for pee-pee, since it is not just the water itself but the cleansing power and purity of the liquid that hurts vampires, generally, the chemical solution that is urine will not harm vampires. And if you think a vampire gets angry from being spit on, you ain't seen nothin' until you've seen a vampire with a wet yellow streak running down his leg! Look out!

Some have suggested that angel pee would make an effective (albeit rare) defense against vampires. However, as far as our research can tell us ... well, angels don't pee.

Question: One of the new players in my Palladium Fantasy campaign has an evil Paladin with SEVEN(!) rune swords and the Mask of Pith. How do I hold him in check to keep him from destroying the campaign?

Answer: Rune swords are notoriously egocentric (if not outright megalomaniacal) and most would resent having to share their wielder with more than one other rune weapon. A character with more than one may find himself subject to so many curses, pranks and rebellious behavior from his jealous weapons that he might be hard-pressed to survive, let alone affect the world around him! Also, when word gets out that someone is walking around with a number of rune weapons, squads of assassins and even armies might be sent by sovereigns near and far to "confiscate" these marvelous weapons for themselves.

Finally, as a last resort, you could have this evil paladin encounter a good paladin with EIGHT rune swords and the Mask of Ra! It's an idea.

Question: Why don't you have rules for "luck" in your game?

Answer: Duh, "luck" comes with every roll of the dice, genius. Chance and luck are built into every role-playing game that uses dice to determine the outcome. To put a luck skill "in" the game is redundant and silly.

Question: One of the players in my campaign has an Air Warlock with the spell Dissipate Gases. He maintains that: a) since over 95% of the human body is composed of water; and b) water, being composed of two separate gases (Hydrogen and

Oxygen) is the same as being a gas. Therefore, c) the Dissipate Gases spell will allow him to effectively dissipate/disintegrate people! Is this correct?

Answer: Zoinks! Talk about self-serving extrapolations of reality and physics. No way, Jose!! Although water may be a combination of two gases (two parts Hydrogen to one part Oxygen), it is a liquid, NOT a gas (unless it is heated up enough to become steam) and will not be dissipated by that spell. And by the way, people are NOT gas! Then again, I have an uncle who is a walking gas bag — but the answer is still no.



Question: Recently, a situation came up in my *Heroes Unlimited*TM campaign that I had never encountered before. There are 10 different Power Categories (Experiment, Mutant, Physical Training, etc.) and, until now, all of my players selected one of these categories and stuck with it. However, a player new to our group wanted to bring in his character from an H.U. campaign from a different G.M. This particular character originally started off as a Psionic but then, during the course of that campaign: a) got access to some high-tech Hardware; b) was recruited by a top-secret organization and underwent Special Training as a secret operative; c) gained new powers as the subject of an Experiment; and d) was given a Magical enchanted weapon by an alien deity he had assisted. This effectively makes him a FIVE-Category character!

I need some ground rules on how to handle these types of characters. Is there an official maximum on how many categories a character can become? Would it be possible for a character to become all ten of the categories? How about assigning bonuses (combat or other) — based on the category that the character is using at that time or is this a cumulative thing for all his categories? How about awarding experience points? Are they awarded to his most recent category or are they divided up somehow? If they are divided up, are they divided up evenly be-

tween all the categories or are the points awarded based on which powers, skills, or abilities are used at any particular time? Finally, is there anything that I overlooked or any special advice you can give me to dealing with a character like this?

Answer: Although in the course of a campaign it is possible for a character to undergo various changes, the intended design of *Heroes Unlimited*TM involves players choosing just one of the Power Categories and staying with that one (as you were originally and correctly playing it). With the exception of some Aliens who get a sub-category (Alien Mystic, Alien Mutant, etc.), HU characters are not supposed to have more than one of the power categories.

At the risk of being flip, how about prohibiting characters like these? Wow, talk about “tweaking the system” for the purpose of power gaming. Holy cow! According to Kevin Siembieda, a character should only select ONE Power Category — not two or five or ten. Of course, if you really want an incredibly, super-high-powered campaign, you can adjust and modify the system any way you want, but that’s not the way it was intended by the designer. Moreover, it’s been our experience that characters like the one you described tend to be a bit ridiculous and are not much fun to play. There actually is such a thing as being “too powerful.”

And now for the opposing view from Peter Ferkelberger: Right on, man! I don’t know why I never thought of that myself?! I rolled up an eight and ten Power Category superhero as soon as I read this. Man, he rocks! I call one Overload and the other Planet Killer. I will save many a world — galaxies even — with this dynamic duo. Too much is never enough! Power is good. Take a look at my Giga-Damage system for some real high-powered butt-kicking action! Keep up the good work.

Question: Were the *Algor* giants and the sea god *Algor* named after Vice President Al Gore? If so, why? Does Mr. Gore know about them? If so, how does he feel about these beings sharing his name? Do you have any plans to name other gods or creatures after other presidential candidates such as Bill Bradley, George W. Bush, Ross Perot, or Pat Buchanan?

Answer: Gee, back in 1979-1983 when Kevin Siembieda was developing the game, none of us had ever heard of Mr. Gore. It is sheer coincidence that the giants have the same name (more or less) as a public figure such as Al Gore. Vice President Gore has never contacted us, so we do not know if he is even aware of his, um, RPG “namesakes,” let alone his feelings on the matter. Finally, there were no plans to name anything else after any other politicians (However, now that you have brought this to our attention — oh, the possibilities. A monster called a rossperot, hmmm?).

Question: Help, I’m a novice *Game Master* with a problem. I’ve run other game systems where experience points are based on killing things and gathering loot. With your system being more subjective, my campaign has run into a snag. Since experience points are awarded for performing clever actions and skills, one enterprising player made sure his character had the Gymnastics skill. The character then proceeded to do back flips and somersaults repeatedly. At 25 points per flip, this character was soon amassing experience points in the thousands. When the other players saw how this character was progressing in levels,

they soon got their characters killed off so that they could create new characters who had either the Acrobatics of Gymnastics skills. Now, instead of the various adventures that I planned for the campaign, the last two gaming sessions were basically gymnastic marathons. What can I do to restore my campaign back to normal?

Answer: The error you made in running your flippin' campaign (pun unintended but unavoidable) was in automatically awarding experience EVERY time a character used a skill of theirs. Points should be awarded for performing a skill only when they are appropriate in the context of the game. Back flips and somersaults, for example, may be required to evade oncoming attacks, or to reach something or someone, or even to amuse/entertain a crowd (either as a distraction or for money). For these situations, experience points may be awarded. However, a character who arbitrarily flips and rolls for no valid reason other than to acquire experience points should NOT be awarded any. The subjective nature of the system should allow you to ignore and discount silly attempts to abuse the game system as you described. In fact, if any skill is extremely common and used frequently it should only garner experience points under high stress situations or when used with cunning and cleverness.

Consequently, instead of gaining experience points and attaining higher levels, these flippin' characters should have only experienced dizziness and nausea. Moreover, regularly performing somersaults, flips and such, could easily be considered reasonable practice to maintain one's current level of skill and physical conditioning — most professional acrobats, aerialists and athletes practice several hours every day!

Question: For my birthday, my parents took me out to play Badminton for the first time. It was a lot of fun. Recently, when at a friend's house, I noticed that one of the games in his collection was an RPG based on professional wrestling. Have you ever considered doing a role-playing game based on Badminton? If not that sport, how about a game based on one of the following: Ice Hockey, Softball, Canoeing, Ski Jumping, Australian Rules Football, Horseshoe Pitching, Basketball, Lawn Bowling, Lacrosse, Cricket, Golf, Table Tennis, or Basketball?

Answer: Can't say that we have, but thanks for the suggestions.

Question: I need some advice on how to deal with high-powered characters. Your books only go up to 15th level with most O.C.C.s and R.C.C.s. In our campaign, several of the characters are already well beyond that. I have just bumped up their bonuses the best I could but I am not sure if there is a specific method of doing so that Palladium approves of. Also, in combat, if a character has a bonus of +20 or higher, does he automatically succeed in striking, parrying, or dodging? What if the opponent also has a bonus of +20 or more?

Answer: First of all, the reason that most (the vast majority, in fact) O.C.C.s and R.C.C.s. are only listed to 15th level is that we do not see many characters ever surpassing that. Ever hear of an athlete reaching his "peak" level of performance, or the "peak of his career?" After a certain point, any additional improvements are incremental and barely noticeable. Additionally,

in the real world, most athletes begin to slow down from age (at the young age of 30-35, no less!) and/or suffer the effects of physical wear and tear on the body. Even superstars like Michael Jordan begin to tire a bit more quickly, slow down and become more prone to injury toward the end of their careers.

There should always be the possibility of error and accidents. NOBODY is perfect! Accidents happen and even the best have a slow day, stumble, slip or have a bad day. You see this in professional sports all the time, and it should be an element of any good role-playing game. Having characters with truly awesome combat bonuses (i.e. +19 or 20 to strike, parry, etc.) defeats the purpose that we had in mind when we created our combat system.

In our experience, we have found most players "retire" their high level characters upon reaching levels 10-12 to opt for new, fresh characters to run and build. However, if you really insist on having an over-the-top, mega-powerful campaign, modify the rules and bonuses as you deem appropriate and rock on. We don't recommend it, but role-playing is very personal. Oh, to attain levels after 15, the character should have to acquire at least 100,000-200,000 experience points, and experience should come much slower (i.e. slash the amount of experience awarded in half) because they are already so experienced and powerful that things come easier for them and they already know so much.

Question: Why do we seem to consume mass quantities of junk food during a game? You know, Corn Curls, Potato Chips, Twinkies, popcorn, cookies, and soda pop by the gallon. Is this why so many older gamers are ... well ... so large?

Answer: Adrenaline and nervous energy, my friend, combined with a festive "party" atmosphere with friends. In the heat of the excitement you stuff whatever edibles are available into your mouth (the same phenomenon happens at sport arenas around the world). Stuffing one's face with junk food once or twice a week while sitting around a table may contribute to becoming "large," but the real culprit is lack of exercise (quit watching those Trek reruns and go for a walk) and regularly overeating.



Where's Wayne?

A Heroes Unlimited™ adventure

By Paulie Ferkelberger

Wayne Smith, Editor-in-Chief of **The Rifter**®, has disappeared. According to sources close to the investigation, Wayne was kidnapped while leaving the Palladium Books offices. According to witnesses, a beat-up white van suddenly pulled into the office parking lot, several masked individuals stormed out and grabbed the startled young editor. It has been several days and still no word has been heard from the kidnappers. Palladium officials are very concerned as the next issue of **The Rifter**™, without Wayne Smith, will be late — and **The Rifter**™ has NEVER been late! (Note that nobody at Palladium is particularly worried about Wayne's safety. That's just how dedicated we are to our fans and the promise that **The Rifter**™ will come out on time. Any superheroes who get involved, especially those who are fans of Palladium Books, are likely to be just as concerned for Wayne's safety as hitting the deadline. Maybe even more so.)

Word on the street is that a villainous group of young punks known as the **Motown Maniacs** are responsible. The Maniacs are so notorious that no one on the streets will dare turn them in or let the authorities know where their secret hideout is located.

As it turns out, the Motown Maniacs have indeed kidnapped Wayne Smith. They so love playing **Rifts**® and other Palladium games, that they decided it would be cool to get Wayne as their own personal Game Master and "gaming guru." (guess they don't know him very well, do they?)

Even more bizarre, is that so far, they have treated Wayne like a celebrity. They are willing to do almost anything for him (other than let him go), as long as he cooperates and Game Masters their games and answers their game questions.

What Wayne doesn't realize is that his needs and desires, often lead to new crimes. For example, Wayne missed his ol' lap-top computer, so the gang went out and got him the best one they could find. Of course, they had to knock over a computer store to get it and in the process, they wiped the store clean. Nor does Wayne yet realize the length the gang is willing to go in order to keep their favorite "pet" happy. Another example is that they robbed a local steakhouse, patrons and food, just so Wayne could have a medium rare steak and a "bloomin' onion."

Wayne has been treated so well that he hasn't even had a chance to miss home yet. As time goes on, the gang will continue to spoil their pet and make Wayne as comfortable as possible. After a week or two, however, Wayne will start to get homesick and begin to wonder what will happen to him when they tire of him. In the meantime, Wayne can do no wrong as long as: 1) he does not try to escape, or 2) let anyone know his whereabouts. At least one person is with Wayne at all times and he is not allowed to use the telephone or the Internet unsupervised.

The gang's hideout

The hideout is a second story loft in downtown Detroit. The loft is 100 feet (30.5 m) long and 40 feet (12.2 m) wide. The main entrance is via an old, noisy elevator. An outside, crickety stairwell serves as an emergency exit. Access to the stairwell is awkward, a person must exit through one of the loft's windows in order to get to it. A number of silent alarms and security cameras will alert the gang to unwanted intruders.

Wayne has his own personal area, complete with video games, DVD player, large screen television, VCR, the latest computer system with peripherals and devices fully loaded, his own refrigerator stocked full of food and drinks (mainly Cherry Coke, Doctor Pepper and Tommyknockers), plenty of snack foods, a nice comfy bed and easy chair, a stereo system, tons of CDs, an air hockey table, and a large table with eight chairs for playing and laying out his gaming campaigns, along with many other warm, fuzzy, feel-good toys and items. Needless to say, everything Wayne uses is stolen goods. The gang has been planning to kidnap Wayne for some time, so they had plenty of time to prepare his "perfect" living area.

The player characters' goal is to rescue(?) Wayne and bring him back to Palladium alive.

The secondary goal is to capture and turn all the gang members over to the police. The gang will abandon their hideout and Wayne if things get too dangerous, and individual gang members may actually flee the country if they have an inkling that they are about to be captured or put under siege by superbeings. After all, they can always steal more stuff, but they are not very enthusiastic about giving up their freedom for prison. Some may even fight to the death if cornered. These misanthropes may be a bit wacko and goofy (Why else would they want Wayne?), but they are also dangerous, superhuman criminals.

Wayne Smith

Wayne has no super abilities (at least at this point in time) and is a mere demigod in the Pantheon of Palladium. He is still relatively new to the company, but we are working on infusing some real powers into him (a difficult, but not impossible process as the lad shows some hidden talent). We will keep readers updated in future issues of **The Rifter**™.

Note: Assume Wayne is a pretty typical suburban 24 year old, with a natural aptitude for computers, editing and writing (see, we told you he had some hidden "talent"), but is otherwise average in most categories.

Alignment: Scrupulous.

Attributes (don't hate us Wayne): I.Q. 14, M.A. 12, M.E. 10, P.S. 12, P.P. 13, P.E. 9, P.B. 12, Spd 10.

Approx. Height: Six foot, one inch (1.8 m).

Approx. Weight: 210 lbs (94.5 kg), all muscle! Well, Wayne insists he plans to make all that mush into muscle someday. Really.

Experience Level: 3rd level writer/editor and 5th level computer tech.

© April fools...
with apologies to Wayne
Ramon Perez



Combat: Two attacks per melee (five and +5 on initiative when playing air hockey, at which he is quite expert and may be an idiot savant in that regard; even the Motown Maniacs are impressed by Wayne's prowess in air hockey); no other significant pluses or minuses.

Skills of Note: He is literate, knows basic math, speaks English and knows how to turn a computer on and off — seriously, he knows computer operation (+25%), computer repair (+10%), basic electronics (+10%), basic mechanics (+10%), pilot automobile (+15% and likes to go fast), research (+10%), and writing (+10%). Wayne usually sends messages via e-mail, but is known to talk on occasion as well. He has a good sense of humor (we hope!), enjoys a good meal (and how!), a good night of gaming and a good-night "kiss" from his pet pooch, Alex. (The doggie not Marciniszyn!!! Hey, this is a family publication, so get your minds outta the gutter!) Other than that, Wayne pretty much enjoys the same kinds of things anyone in their twenties does, including girls, sleeping to noon, and spending money.

Motown Maniacs

- 1. Bungee:** 22 year old male, Physical Training (especially loves rock climbing, bungee jumping, rappelling).
- 2. Crashley:** 19 year old female, Hardware: Computer Hacking.
- 3. Headcase:** 21 year old male, Master Psionic, gang leader.
- 4. Burnout:** 18 year old male, Mutant: Control Elemental Force: Fire — twin brother of Dusty.

5. Dusty: 18 year old, female, Mutant: Control Elemental Force: Earth, and twin sister of Burnout.

6. Wizzer: 20 year old male, Hardware: Mechanical Genius.

Bungee

Bungee was born into a circus family. His parents incorporated him into their high-wire act by the time he was five years old. Despite his agility and knack for stunts, Bungee always longed to escape circus life. Several years ago, while the circus was in Detroit, he decided to leave and set out on his own.

Bungee was immediately attracted to the city's nightlife and underground party scene, and met up with **Headcase** at a local rave. They immediately developed a friendship and subsequently Headcase invited Bungee to join his gang. Meanwhile, his parents have left the circus and found permanent jobs performing in Las Vegas. They are under the impression that Bungee is working as a used car salesman (which are plentiful in the Detroit area).

Bungee is a loose cannon who prefers living an "extreme" lifestyle. If push comes to shove, he would rather *die* trying to escape the law than be taken alive. Losing his freedom would be the ultimate punishment for this chaotic, free-spirited individual.

Real Name: Enrico Rodriguez

Aliases: Bungee and Stunter.

Alignment: Aberrant.

Hit Points: 50, S.D.C. 50

Weight: 185 lbs (84 kg), **Height:** 5 foot, 10 inches (1.78 m).

Age: 22

Attributes: I.Q. 10, M.E. 12, M.A. 15, P.S. 24, P.P. 20, P.E. 18, P.B. 12, Spd. 21

Disposition: Daredevil, risk taker, extroverted, full of energy and always seems wired. Fast talker, one would think he really is a used car salesman.

Experience Level: 5th

Combat Skills: Defensive and Fast Combat skill (see page 188 of *Heroes Unlimited™, Second Edition*), automatic back flip and dodge, karate style punch does 2D4 damage, karate style kick does 2D6, critical damage body flip/throw (double damage).

Attacks per melee: 7

Combat Bonuses: +4 initiative, +5 strike, +9 damage, +5 parry, +6 dodge, +6 roll with punch, +5 pull punch, +3 disarm, +2 body flip/throw.

Other bonuses: +16% versus coma/death and +2 versus magic/poison.

Super Power Category: Physical Training (agility and speed).

Special Abilities:

1. Power Punch: double damage, counts as two melee actions.

2. Power Kick: double damage, counts as two melee actions.

3. Force of Will: ability to function even when all hit points and S.D.C. are depleted, see page 189 of *HU2™*.

4. Strength is equivalent to the Minor ability of Extraordinary Physical Strength.

Education Level: High School.

Scholastic Bonus: +5%

Skills of Note: Climbing 95%/rappelling 85%, prowl 75%, acrobatics, gymnastics, swimming 80%, running, safecracking



55%, pick locks 75%, find contraband 61%, card sharp 63%, pilot: automobile 75%, basic math 75%, general maintenance/repair 65%, computer operation 70%, art 65%, writing 55%.

Secondary Skills: Pilot: motorcycle 80%, horsemanship 70%, streetwise 40%, pick pockets 50%, palming 45%, basic: mechanics 55%, auto mechanics 50%, concealment 40%, W.P. sword, W.P. whip.

Appearance: Hispanic-American with thick, curly dark hair. Usually dresses in black and has quite a collection of sunglasses/shades that he wears. Spider tattoos decorate both forearms.

Occupation: Member of the Motown Maniacs.

Weapons: Carries two knives, a blackjack and brass knuckles. On his motorcycle he carries a whip and a sword.

Vehicle: Motorcycles. Owns several at all times. One is for riding during the day for normal living purposes and has at least two more stolen bikes for use in future crimes. The stolen bikes are usually dumped once they are used in a crime.

Money: Earns about \$10,000.00 per month from his criminal activities, sends half of it to his parents for safe-keeping.

Crashley

Her father is a member of a radical militia group and she herself has developed her own version and interpretation of their beliefs. Crashley is trying to prepare people for the upcoming "world revolution" that she and her parents see as inevitable. Her desire is that the common people rise up and overthrow evil corporations and all current governments all over the world in one massive, global rebellion.

Crashley focuses her "talents" on computers, hacking and the Internet in order to spread her propaganda and finance her mission in life. She has successfully hacked into banks around the world and stolen tens of thousands of dollars from them. In addition, she has hacked into and stolen secrets from several governments, which she subsequently has sold on the Black Market. She typically accesses the layout and floor plans of the **Motown Maniacs'** next target of theft, as well as formulates escape plans and such.

Crashley received some militia training from her father and is pretty proficient with rifles and pistols. In addition, Crashley maintains contact with several militia and radical underground groups. She has the means to disappear or flee the country at a moment's notice.

She has joined the Motown Maniacs with the idea of someday molding them into the core of a formidable militia group, one that she controls. As a result, she and Headcase are often jockeying for control of the gang.

Real Name: Ann Common

Aliases: Crashley, The Net Prophet, Black Widow (both names are Internet aliases)

Alignment: Anarchist.

Hit Points: 25, S.D.C. 35.

Weight: 155 lbs (70 kg), **Height:** 5 foot, 6 inches (1.7 m).

Age: 19

Attributes: I.Q. 19, M.E. 17, M.A. 16, P.S. 12, P.P. 12, P.E. 17, P.B. 15, Spd. 8

Disposition: Kind of bossy and controlling. Serves as sort of a surrogate "mom" to the rest of the gang. She is tomboyish,

loves to argue and won't back down from anyone. She is also an animal-lover with very strong pro-environmentalist beliefs.

Experience Level: 6th

Combat Skills: Basic Hand to Hand combat skill (taught to her by Daddy), and has the following weapon proficiencies: revolver, auto-pistol, bolt action rifle, auto rifle and shotgun.

Attacks per melee: Four

Bonuses: +5% on all skills, +1 save versus psionics, insanity, magic and poison, +5% save versus coma/death, 40% trust/intimidate

Super Power Category: Hardware: Electrical Genius.

Education Level: One year of college.

Scholastic Bonus: +10%

Skills of Note: Hot wiring 101%, computer hacking 93%, electronic construction 99%, electrical engineer 85%, read sensory instruments 85%, surveillance systems 85%, optic systems 85%, computer operation 105%, computer programming 85%, radio: basic 100%, basic mechanics 85%, basic math 100%, advanced math 100%, pilot: auto 75%, languages: German 95%, French 95%, Spanish 95%, Japanese 95%, basic electronics 85%, radio scrambler 80%, television/video 64%, and cryptography 70%.

Secondary Skills: Cook 70%, sew 75%, research 85% plus her weapon proficiencies noted above.

Appearance: Caucasian, slightly overweight but very attractive. Short brown hair and likes to wear military clothing, sometimes with a beret.

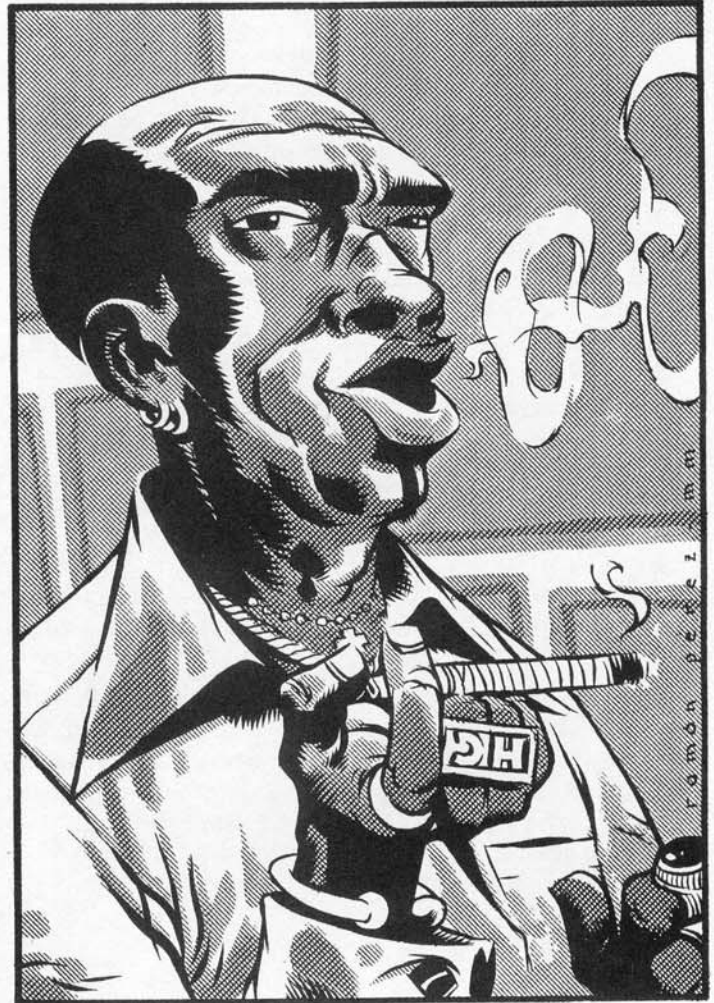


Occupation: Member of the Motown Maniacs; unofficial Second-in-Command.

Weapons: Keeps an auto-pistol within reach at all times, either in her work area, vehicle or hidden on her person.

Vehicle: Pickup truck.

Money: Usually has 1D6x\$5,000 dollars hidden in her living area, probably under a floor board. Also has a Swiss bank account with \$250,000 in it, along with bank accounts in Canada, Mexico, Germany and Japan with about \$75,000 US dollars in each. She also has fake passports for those countries, in case she has to flee the US on a moment's notice. Her teammates have no idea she is this wealthy.



Headcase

This tough guy has been hanging with street gangs since he was seven. His father left home when he was three, and no one has heard from him since. Headcase's mother, working two jobs, tried her best, but just couldn't keep Bobby out of trouble. He has a long list of juvenile offenses, but so far, no felonies or convictions as an adult despite his brazen life of crime.

Headcase has been the main organizer of the **Motown Maniacs**, meeting and recruiting most of the gang members at various nightclubs, parties or raves. All see him as the founder and leader of the gang, even Crashley (grudgingly).

Headcase's only goal in life is to have a good time. He sees life as something that you live day-to-day. "No sense in worrying about tomorrow" is his motto. He spends money almost as

fast as he gets it, and that's thousands of dollars a week. He is reckless and unpredictable, but also cunning, a good strategist and thinks quick on his feet.

Real Name: Bob Jones

Aliases: Headcase, Brain-o, Slim, and Jonesey.

Alignment: Anarchist.

Hit Points: 25, S.D.C. 40

Weight: 165 lbs (75 kg), **Height:** 6 foot, 3 inches (1.90 m).

Age: 21

Attributes: I.Q. 15, M.E. 17, M.A. 20, P.S. 15, P.P. 14, P.E. 14, P.B. 18, Spd. 22

Disposition: Leader of the Motown Maniacs, he is attractive, popular with the women, and loves to party. Mainly uses the gang to help finance his extravagant and devil-may-care life-style. Unlike Crashley, Headcase has no agenda of taking over the world or toppling governments. He just wants to have a good time, do whatever he wants when he wants to, and is willing to manipulate others to attain his goals. He often seems over-friendly, since he is really sizing up his opponent or next victim, and is trying to determine how best to take advantage of the person's weaknesses. Real charming and convincing too, which makes him very dangerous.

Experience Level: 4th.

Combat Skills: Karate style kick does 2D4 damage, snap kick does 1D6 damage.

Attacks per melee: 5

Combat Bonuses: +3 parry/dodge, +3 roll with punch, +2 pull punch.

Other bonuses: needs a 9 to save versus psionics, +1 versus insanity, 60% trust/intimidate, 40% charm/impress.

Super Power Category: Natural Psionic.

Psionic Powers: 154 I.S.P.

Super Psionic Powers: Hypnotic Suggestion, Bio-Regeneration, Bio-Manipulation and Psi-Sword.

Other Psionic Powers: Mind Block, Object Read, Sixth Sense, Levitation, Spontaneous Combustion, Resist Hunger, Resist Fatigue, Resist Thirst, Presence Sense, Impervious to Toxins, See The Invisible, Total Recall, Summon Inner Strength, Impervious to Fire, Impervious to Cold, and Telekinetic Punch.

Psionic Attacks Per Melee: 5

Education Level: High School

Scholastic Bonus: +5%

Skills of Note: Art 60%, photography 60%, research 75%, general repair 60%, hand to hand: basic, running, athletics, swimming 75%, pilot: automobile 73%, and basic math 70%.

Secondary Skills: Pilot: race car 67%, pilot: boat/motor-types 75%, first aid 65%, computer operation 60%, W.P. auto-pistol, W.P. knife, streetwise 36%, prowl 45%, pick pockets 45%, pick locks 50%.

Appearance: African-american male with a shaved head. He is quite a fashionable dresser and always wears gold jewelry.

Occupation: Founding member and leader of the Motown Maniacs.

Favorite Weapons: Gold-plated auto-pistol.

Vehicle: Sports car. Loves fast cars and drives an excessively fast Trans-Am.

Money: Earns about 2D4x\$1,000 a week and always has \$3,000 in savings hidden under his mattress. The rest he spends on

cars, women, jewelry and just having a good time. Live fast and die hard is his motto.

Burnout and Dusty

Both Burnout and his biological twin sister, Dusty, have been in and out of foster homes for their entire lives. They never knew their biological parents, who were killed in an automobile crash just a few days after they were born. Both have been arrested as minors for relatively minor offenses, such as shoplifting, curfew violations, and trespassing, but have no felonies — yet.

They dreamed of someday becoming entertainers and ran away from their last foster home at age 16. They had been living on the streets with other teenage runaways until about a year ago, when they met a couple of the Maniacs at a party.

The two are inseparable and are willing to risk anything to protect the other. Conversely, there is a certain degree of sibling rivalry. When the two do get into an argument, it is best to stay clear and let them cool down. They both have quick tempers, but are just as quick to apologize to one another. Outsiders who interfere will face the wrath of both.

Burnout

Real Name: Robert McDougall

Aliases: Burnout, Robby and Mac.

Alignment: Aberrant.

Hit Points: 35, S.D.C. 35.

Weight: 175 lbs (79 kg), **Height:** 6 foot (1.83 m).

Age: 18

Attributes: I.Q. 12, M.E. 12, M.A. 12, P.S. 18, P.P. 14, P.E. 14, P.B. 14, Spd. 24

Disposition: Like his sister, he is quick tempered. He always seems angry or pissed off about something and always ready and looking for a fight. Not much of a sense of humor. Tenacious and single-minded. When someone double-crosses him, he can think of nothing else but vengeance.

Experience Level: 4th

Combat Skills: +3 roll with punch/fall, +2 pull punch, karate kick does 2D4 damage, and snap kick does 1D6 damage.

Attacks per melee: 5

Combat Bonuses: +3 damage, +3 parry/dodge

Super Power Category: Mutant: Control Elemental Force: Fire.

Super Abilities: Fire-Blast, Spontaneous Combustion, Fuel Flame, Create Flame Wall, Extinguish Fire and Create Smoke.

Education Level: Street-schooled.

Skills of Note: Streetwise 50%, prowl 50%, W.P. knife, concealment 36%, pick pockets 45%, cook 55%, sew 60%, general repair 55%, literacy 50%, basic math 65%, and pilot: automobile 68%.

Secondary Skills: Hand to Hand: Basic, running, swimming 70%, climbing 60%/rappelling 50%, general athletics, land navigation 52%, W.P. revolver, and W.P. auto pistol.

Appearance: Irish American with curly red hair, mustache and is often is unshaven. Blue jeans, T-shirts and tennis shoes are his common wardrobe.

Occupation: Member of the Motown Maniacs.

Weapons: Always has a gun and at least two knives hidden on him. He never knows who might cross him next.

Vehicle: Currently drives a ten year old Camaro that he likes to think of as a "classic."

Money: 3D6x\$100.

Dusty

Real Name: Elizabeth McDougall

Aliases: Dusty, Liz, and Libby.

Alignment: Aberrant

Hit Points: 30, S.D.C. 35.

Weight: 135 lbs (61 kg), **Height:** 6 foot (1.83 m).

Age: 18

Attributes: I.Q. 12, M.E. 12, M.A. 12, P.S. 14, P.P. 17, P.E. 14, P.B. 20, Spd. 22

Disposition: Seductive but quick tempered. One minute she can be affectionate and the next thing you know she is stabbing you with a knife. Very self-conscious of her looks and appearance.

Likes to flirt, which often gets her victim in hot water with her overprotective brother. Very charming and has a fairly good sense of humor.

Experience Level: 4th

Combat Skills: +2 roll with punch/fall, +2 pull punch, karate kick does 2D4 damage, and snap kick does 1D6 damage.

Attacks per melee: 5

Combat Bonuses: +1 strike, +3 parry/dodge.

Other Bonuses: 50% charm/impress.

Super Power Category: Mutant: Control Elemental Force: Earth.

Super Abilities: Wall of earth, tower of earth, hurl earth, quicksand, rend earth, sand/dust storm, and encase in earth/snare target.

Education Level: Street-schooled.

Skills of Note: Streetwise 50%, prowl 50%, W.P. knife, seduction 35%, pick pockets 45%, palming 40%, sing 55%, dance 50%, art 55%, literacy 50%, basic math 65%, and pilot: automobile 68%.

Secondary Skills: Hand to Hand: Basic, running, swimming 70%, climbing 60%/rappelling 50%, cardsharp 44%, concealment 36%, pick locks 50%, and land navigation 52%.

Appearance: Irish-American. Tall, slender, long-legged with red hair. Could pass for a professional model. Loves wearing black leather clothes and outerwear.

Occupation: Member of the Motown Maniacs.

Weapons: Always has one or more knives hidden on her.

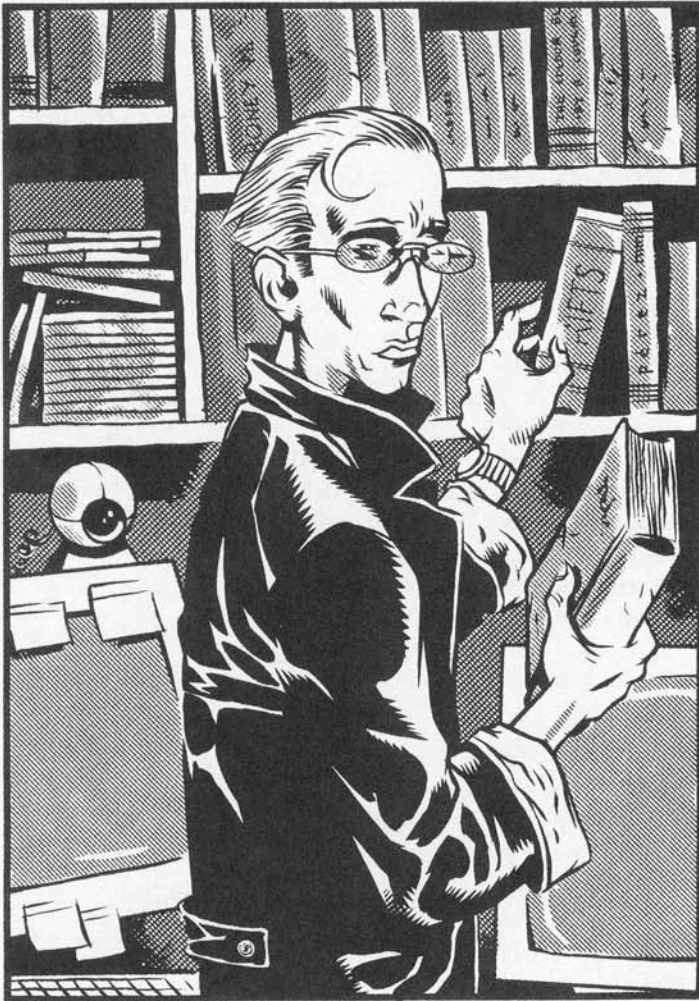
Vehicle: Shares a ten year old Camaro with her brother.

Money: 4D6x\$100.

Wizzer

Wizzer comes from a wealthy family; both of his parents are attorneys. He was raised in the best educational environment possible, but left home because his parents were too overbearing. One day he just snapped, dropped out of college and moved out on his own. His parents are unaware of his criminal activi-





ties and would be horrified to learn the truth. Moreover, they would go to great lengths to cover it up.

Wizzer is a member of the gang because it makes him feel important. He has always been a nerd, a loner and social outcast. It feels good to be wanted and treated as someone special. Plus, he has a crush on Crashley whom he met over the Internet. As a result of his crush, he has learned some of the same skills in order to impress her and has opportunities to talk to her about common interests. So far, she has been ignoring his advances and brushes him off with a quick, snippy remark or cold silence.

With Crashley's help, Wizzer has acquired technical plans for all kinds of new and experimental devices. The gang does not yet fully realize the full potential of Wizzer's information and the power that these devices could provide the gang. Instead, they have been focusing their efforts on easier petty crimes, using Wizzer mainly to maintain and enhance their vehicles, bypass alarms or pick difficult locks. With the help of Wizzer and Crashley, however, the gang has the potential to steal just about anything, anywhere, at any time! Truly becoming super-villains and a major criminal force if they ever live up to their potential.

Real Name: Terrence Williams

Aliases: Wizzer, Whiz-kid and Jack (as in jack-of-all trades).

Alignment: Anarchist

Hit Points: 25, S.D.C. 35

Weight: 135 lbs (61 kg), **Height:** 5 foot, 9 inches (1.75 m).

Age: 20

Attributes: I.Q. 24, M.E. 12, M.A. 12, P.S. 12, P.P. 10, P.E. 10, P.B. 10, Spd. 10

Disposition: Shy and naive avid reader. Lets people push him around too much. The security of the gang is very attractive to him. No one will mess with him as a member of the Motown Maniacs or they face the wrath of the entire gang.

Experience Level: 4

Combat Skills: Just weapon proficiencies in revolver and auto-pistol.

Attacks per melee: Three.

Bonuses: +10% on all skills.

Super Power Category: Hardware: Mechanical Genius.

Education Level: Two years of college.

Scholastic Bonus: +15%

Skills of Note: Hot wiring 98%, building super vehicles 102%, recognize vehicle quality 80%, basic mechanics 90%, weapons engineer 85%, aircraft engineer 85%, mechanical engineer 85%, auto mechanics 80%, robot mechanics 75%, locksmith 75%, read sensory equipment 85%, basic electronics 70%, advanced math 101%, pilot: automobile 98%, pilot: race car 97%, pilot: airplane 96%, basic math: 101%, computer operation 85%, research 95%, surveillance systems 75%, writing 70%, chemistry 75%, astronomy 70%, astrophysics 70%, and analytical chemistry 70%.

Secondary Skills: W.P. auto-pistol, W.P. revolver, cook 65%, sew 70%, first aid 75%, holistic medicine 50%, radio basic 75%, television/video 51%, and language: French 80%.

Appearance: White-bred suburbanite. Wire-rimmed glasses, slicked back hair and wears a leather jacket that is too big for him. He definitely looks out of place when compared to the other gang members, like a little kid playing dress-up. Very youthful looking (looks about twelve) and clean shaven. Grew up in a rich suburban neighborhood, so he does not have a hardened street look or sense about him.

Occupation: Member of the Motown Maniacs.

Weapons: Revolver or auto-pistol, whatever the gang has in abundance.

Vehicle: Small sports car.

Money: 1D6x\$10,000 dollars. Spends a lot of money on gadgets and toys, which he views sort of as inanimate pets.

WACKY POWERS

Food Manipulation Powers

Foods as a source of power!

By Paulee & Percy Ferkelberger

Although a rarity, there are a variety of superhumans who can manipulate and/or transform and mold ordinary food into dangerous weapons and potent attacks. When this rare power occurs (a type of alter physical structure or molecular manipulation power), the character is most likely to be an Alien, Experi-

ment (gone terribly wrong), or Mutant. Consuming more of the same type of food usually has no cumulative effect once the powers are activated, nor does it increase duration. In all cases, when not in the capable hands of a superhuman Food Manipulator, the food stuff immediately returns to its natural state. Use common sense and standard stats for throwing range, etc.

Any two of these abilities counts as ONE *Minor "Food Manipulation" Power*. The following are *some* of the most common food types and related powers:

Apple: You know what they say, "an apple a day, keeps the doctor away." To the Food Manipulator, eating an apple will restore half the Hit Points/S.D.C. lost from poison, disease or physical damage from combat, as well as instantly cure stomach upset, acid indigestion, and all types of nausea. Furthermore, he or she is +3 to save vs disease and drugs/toxins for six hours after eating an apple, and impervious to the Stomach Flue. The character can also accurately throw apples up to 100 feet (30.5 m) like a baseball! Damage from a thrown apple, however, is only 1D4 points.

Banana: When thrown, the fruit operates like a boomerang, doing 2D6 damage and returns to its wielder. Just the peel can be thrown surprising distances in order to cause someone to fall from slipping on it. Or the peel can be used to entangle, like bolas! Bola damage is 2D6 if thrown from a distance greater than 10 yards/meters, otherwise damage is 1D6. The character will also have many other ingenious uses for bananas and their peels.

Chicken Soup: Reduces the length of a cold, flu or fever by two thirds, penalties due to such illness are also reduced by two thirds, cures the sniffles, makes him feel warm and resistant to cold (does half damage), and makes the super being +2 to save vs disease for 24 hours — after all, "soup is good food." Of course this only works on the character with this Food Manipulation power. **Eggs:** The Food Manipulation character can use eggs in a variety of ways.

1. Accurately throw eggs up to 100 feet (30.5 m) away. Damage from a thrown egg is zero, but it makes a terrible mess, is likely to piss off those pelted with them, and if a victim is hit in the face, all combat bonuses are half until the egg is wiped or drips away.

2. Rotten Egg! Oh man, you are talking "stink bomb." Typically thrown to release noxious fumes upon impact. Everybody within a 20 foot (6 m) diameter from the impact point must roll 16 or higher to save versus non-lethal poison — in this case, putrid fumes. A failed roll means everybody within the range of the stench is -1 for one melee attack and all combat bonuses are half. The foul stench will also cause nausea and the eyes to water. Those who save are only -2 on initiative. The Food Manipulator can instantly transform any egg still in its shell to turn into a rotten egg simply by holding it and wishing it to putrefy (can effect as many as four eggs, two in each hand, at a time).

3. Cook eggs on his bare hands! The super being can effectively poach, hard boil and even fry or scramble an egg in his opened hand without benefit of any apparent heat source! A great trick at parties and when looking for a quick snack.

Food Preparation & Affinity. This often overweight character has a superhuman "affinity" to food (like *Steve Sheiring* at Palladium Books). He knows and loves everything about food and cooking. This means he can expertly prepare and cook all

types of food in half the normal time, and his instinctive cooking ability is equal to that of a five-star chef with a 95% skill level. He knows virtually everything there to know is about foods and their preparation. Recipes are committed to total recall and easily remembered. Unfortunately, unless the information is somehow connected to, or associated with *food*, this individual tends to have a poor memory, forgets appointments and is a bit absent-minded. ("Yes, I distinctly remember Milton Conrad, he was the one eating the Philly-Steak sandwich when we first encountered him," or "Yeah, the guy whose face was as flush as a glazed ham," or, "Boy, that battle with the Motown Maniac was something, but at least we got to eat at Greek Town afterward, Opa!" and, "I know the location, it's right down the street from Angelo's Pizzeria," and so on).

Food Preservation. This is a power that keeps any food on the character's person (held in hand, in pocket, contained in a belt pouch or backpack) perfectly "fresh," crisp and tasty. Even frozen foods will not defrost while contained in this character's strange stasis field. Applies only to organic "foods;" people and inorganic substances are not affected in any way.

Fruit Grenades! Pineapple, Pumpkins, Coconuts & Melons: Like a hand grenade and bombs, these bulbous fruits and vegetables are thrown like a grenade or rolled like a bowling ball. In the hands of the Food Manipulating super being, *small melons* and *pineapples* do 3D6 damage, watermelons, large pumpkins and coconuts do 5D6 damage. Throwing range is 120 feet (36.6 m) +10 feet per level of experience for fruit large and small.

Garlic: After each bite, chewing and swallowing (counts as three melee actions) a bit of garlic, the character can breathe fire for 1D4 melee rounds +1 melee round per level of experience. The fire blast does 2D6 points of damage +2 points per level of experience. Range is only 12 feet (3.6 m) +1 foot (0.3 m) per level of experience. In addition, the eating of garlic makes the super being resistant to fire and heat (does half damage), and +2 to save vs toxic fumes — these powers last for one hour after eating garlic. Loves garlic on everything.

Hamburgers, Sausage Patties, Pizza, and other flat, disc shaped food: These food-types function like frisbees or a discus, can be thrown and rotate at high speeds and penetrate low S.D.C. targets (A.R. 10 or less). Typical damage is only 1D4 but the food stuff makes a terrible mess and clearly marks one's opponent. Damage is 1D4 for small items like hamburgers, 2D4 if large like a pizza, or 1D6 and 2D6 respectively if the food is *frozen*.

Ketchup: In this case the "catch-up" has an almost magical quality in which the person it is sprayed upon is (somehow) slowed down to allow the Ketchup wielding superbeing to "catch up" to his quarry. The victim's speed is reduced by one quarter (25%) for three melee rounds (45 seconds). The Ketchup manipulation power also enables the superbeing to squirt the substance on the ground and slide on it, going up to 50 feet (15 m) at double his normal speed, bobbing, sliding and weaving as if riding a skateboard. Very strange.

Lettuce: The leaves of lettuce and other leafy greens (romaine, spinach, etc.) can be peeled off and stuck onto the character as if they had a natural glue on them. The superbeing can stick and remove them with ease, without any sort of actual glue or residue. He can use this ability to conceal himself or inani-



mate objects but not other people. Bonuses when covered in greens: +20% to camouflage skill, +10% to prowl and tail (surveillance), but only when among vegetation, wilderness or even a green lawn or garden.

Milk: Gives the character one of the following *Major Abilities* (pick one or roll percentile): 01-50 Alter Physical Structure: Bone or 51-00 Growth. See HU2, page 275, for *Growth*. The character either has one or the other, not both powers, nor can he switch from one to the other. A single eight ounce glass of milk will bestow this power for 30 minutes plus five minutes per level of experience. "Got Milk?"

Alter Physical Structure: Bone is fundamentally the same as "Stone," except as follows:

Body becomes covered in a bony exoskeleton with an A.R. 15, S.D.C. 400, can carry 100 times P.S. in pounds, can lift 200 times, and fatigues at half the rate of normal humans. Increased Mass & Weight: Weight is doubled, the physical strength is increased 10+1D4, and is considered to be Extraordinary P.S. Not only does the S.D.C. recover at three times the normal rate, but drinking an eight ounce glass of milk instantly restores 2D6 S.D.C. and cracks in the natural bones of the body instantly heal! Other abilities: Can "grow" bony spines on the forearm, shoulders and head, and retractable bone claws to use as weapons (typically do 2D6 or 3D6 damage depending on size plus P.S. damage bonus). Speed is reduced by half, and the bone character is susceptible to gases, suffocation, fire, heat and disease as much as anybody.

Mustard: Increases the speed at which an object covered in the stuff can be thrown. Adds 1D6x10 mph to speed of an object and 1D6 to the damage of the item. If ingested by the super being, it adds 1D6+12 to Speed attribute for ten minutes.

Onion: Emits an odor that allows the super being to mark a specific person or object and sniff them out later even if camouflaged, invisible or "chameleoned." Basically, the character emits an onion spray or mist-like breath that attaches itself to his victim or target. The odor from the spray remains strong enough for the super being (and others with a highly attuned sense of smell like a dog) to detect for 1D4 hours +1 per level of experience. During that time, the super being can detect the presence of anyone he has sprayed up to 100 yards/meters way.

Orange Juice: Drinking a full eight ounce glass of orange juice, or eating two oranges will empower the Food Manipulation super being with the minor power of *Bend Light* for 10 minutes per level of experience!

Pickles & Cucumbers: The super being can make a pickle into a food that causes confusion and temporarily reduces one's ability to think. The intended victim must either ingest a slice of the altered pickle or get sprayed with pickle juice. Victims must make a roll of 16 or higher to save vs the mind-numbing effect. A failed roll means skills are reduced by 30% and lose one attack per melee round for 1D4 minutes. Beware of people carrying Super-Soakers!

Tomatoes & Fruit Pies: Another throwing attack in which the fruit or pie is typically thrown in an opponent's face. The



super being is +1 on initiative, +2 to strike and +3 to disarm when using one of these, um, weapons. The victim can attempt to dodge only (no parry). If struck in the face (always assumed to be the usual target of the super being unless he says otherwise) the victim always loses initiative and one attack, plus has goop all over his face and may suffer from surprise (lose another melee action) or penalties for being angry or embarrassed (all of the victim's attacks are -3 to strike for the next 1D4 minutes). Throwing range is 200 feet (61 m) +20 feet (6 m) per level of experience. **Note:** This "power" can also be used to knock weapons out of an opponent's hand or to hit and push a button or lever, but is -1 to strike small targets.

Spooning: The ability to take foods like oatmeal, mashed potatoes, baby food, and other mushy foods and use the spoon as a potent catapult. The food can be left a mushy mess to taunt, mark or toy with an opponent or be "manipulated" to turn it into a solid ball that can inflict damage. Once it hits the target, it splatters causing a mess, pain or confusion.

Speed of the ball is initially 50 mph (80 km) +10 mph (16 km) per level, and does 1D6 damage +1 additional point per level of experience. Spooning/catapult range is 100 yards/meters +10 yards/meters per level. **Note:** This "power" can also be used to knock weapons out of an opponent's hand or to hit and push a button or lever, but is -3 to strike targets smaller than a hardball.

Squeezable Juicy Fruits (Lemons, Limes, Oranges, Grapefruit, etc.): The character can squeeze these fruits in his bare hands and direct a squirt of juice up to 10 feet (3 m) away +2 feet (0.6 m) per level of experience, with amazing accuracy! This power can be used to put out a cigarette/cigar, candle or similar small fire, or to squirt the juice into somebody's mouth (cause him to gag, lose initiative and one melee action) or eye.

Getting juice squirted in the eye(s) causes it to burn, close and water profusely, effectively *blinding* the character (-10 to strike, parry and dodge) plus lose one melee attack per round until the burning juice is washed out. **Range:** 10 feet (3 m) +2 feet (0.6 m) per level of experience.

Twinkie Power (or other high sugar "junk food" cake). Eating two Twinkies (or similar cakes) will give the Food Manipulation character the power of *Extraordinary Speed* for 15 minutes per level of experience! Plus Twinkies last for months in storage.

"Wonder" Bread: "Builds bodies 12 ways." Eating a slice of plain Wonder Bread will grant this strange character the following 12 bonuses and temporary abilities for five minutes at a time:

Natural A.R. 11+1 attack per melee round.

+20 to S.D.C. +1 to Strike.

+1 to P.E.+1 to Parry.

+6 to P.S.+2 to Dodge.

+6 to Spd.+1 on initiative.

+1 to save vs Magic.+6 inches (0.15 m) to height.

Note: Characters with this rare power are always a little bit crazy, so either have the player "pick" one insanity of his/her choice or make a Random Insanity roll. This might be a good candidate for a Crazy Hero.

Heroes & Villains with Unusual Powers

By Paulie Ferkelberger

The following Non-Player Characters can be used as NPC characters and as a basis for other wacky food-based characters. The powers described for each can be used as more *optional* Food-Based Minor Super Abilities. See what happens when you unleash your imagination!

Frank and Beanz

A dynamic food duo

Frank Smaczne and Elroy Beanz were boyhood friends who discovered they had rather unique but limited super abilities when they were in high school. Ever since then, they have teamed up to fight crime and injustice wherever fate may lead them.

Frank and Elroy are now in their early thirties, have no families or girlfriends, and travel from town to town living off of odd jobs and the goodwill of others. They have no bank accounts, credit cards or even a permanent mailing address. As a result, they are difficult to get in touch with and equally difficult to trace.

Their one weakness is that they enjoy a drink every now and then. Not that they are alcoholics or drunks, it's just that they get a bit loud and rowdy and may reveal a secret or two they later wish they hadn't. Of course, most strangers won't know this up front.

Frank Smaczne — Sausage Expert

Frank has the ability to turn an ordinary hot dog, polish sausage, frankfurter or other variety of sausage into a lethal weapon. He can throw the sausages with incredible accuracy, even when firing several in a row without stopping to aim each one.

Real Name: Frank Smaczne

Aliases: Frank

Alignment: Scrupulous

Hit Points: 35, S.D.C. 65

Weight: 235 lbs (106 kg), **Height:** 6 ft, 3 in (1.90 m), **Age:** 32

Attributes: I.Q. 12, M.E. 11, M.A. 10, P.S. 18, P.P. 22, P.E. 15, P.B. 10, Spd. 7

Disposition: Quiet and shy around strangers, usually just manages a polite smile. Prefers to fade into the background. Fairly extroverted and loud around friends or once he has had a couple of drinks. Beer and wine drinker.

Experience Level: 5

Combat Skills: Knock out on natural 20 when using fists, incapacitate/pin on roll of 18, 19 or 20, crush attack does 1D4 damage, body/block tackle does 1D4 damage, kick attacks: 2D4 for karate kick/1D6 for snap kick.

Attacks per melee: 6



Combat Bonuses: +1 initiative, +3 damage, +5 strike, +8 parry/dodge, +4 roll with punch or fall, +2 pull/punch.

Super Power Category: Food: Sausages

Super Powers: Food to Weapon Transformation (Major):

Each sausage temporarily turns into a hardened baton, roughly equal to a small blackjack or billy club depending on its size. It stays a hardened baton while held in Frank's hand or until it is thrown and hits something (at which point, it becomes an ordinary sausage and can be eaten or cut). The transformation only takes place while it is used as a weapon and in the hands of Frank. Stylistically speaking, Frank throws a sausage like a knife thrower rather than like a javelin thrower. Sausages like Kielbasa and linked hot dogs can be used like a chain weapon or nunchuks (both do 2D6 damage)!

Weapon Knowledge: Instinctively knows how to use this food as a weapon and automatically gets the skills Targeting, Paired Weapons, W.P. Blunt and W.P. Chain.

Food Knowledge: Can recognize and name all types of sausages from around the world, and instinctively knows their best applications as weapons and as food.

Damage: 1D6 per small sausage/hot dog; 2D6 for large (salami, etc.) or chain/nunchaku/"linked" lengths of sausage.

Bonuses and Accuracy: +2 on initiative, +2 to strike when thrown at levels 1, 3, 6, 9, and 12! +3 to strike as a blunt or chain weapon, +2 to parry at levels 1, 4, 8 and 12. Elroy is very effective at distracting an opponent there by creating easy targets for Frank.

Throwing Range: Frank can throw a sausage up to 200 feet (61 m) — 100 feet (30.5 m) +20 feet (6 m) per level of experience.

Rapid Fire Attack: Can simultaneously throw two small sausages +1 per every other level of experience at the same target with one throw for increased damage. Frank (5th level) can throw four sausages in a single melee action.

Education Level: High School

Scholastic Bonus: +5%

Skills of Note: Cook 65%, basic math 75%, fish 70%, sew 70%, pilot:auto 70%, prowl 55%, wrestling, boxing, body building and weight lifting.

Secondary Skills: First aid 70%, holistic medicine 45%, hand to hand: basic, streetwise 40%, palming 45%, concealment 40%, art 60%, preserve food 50%, and identify plants/fruits 50%.

Appearance: Short blond hair, fair complexion, no facial hair. Dresses pretty normally in order to blend in with the crowd. Except for his size, you would hardly notice him.

Occupation: Prefers indoor jobs like chef, short order cook, bartender, waiter, fast food worker, cashier, stock clerk. Has worked in every type of restaurant and supermarket imaginable.

Weapons: Swiss army knife and a package of hot dogs.

Vehicle: Shares a 10 year old van with Elroy. Often used as their bedroom and base of operations.

Money: Usually has \$100-\$600 dollars on him at all times. Frank and Elroy have another 1D6x\$200 dollars hidden in their van and a savings account with \$9,000 in it.

Elroy Beanz

Elroy derives his main powers from the consumption of kidney beans. Light colored kidney beans give Elroy increased speed, while dark colored ones allow Elroy to emit various clouds of stench. Eating the two types together can result in unpredictable results and is to be avoided. Furthermore, Elroy must wait at least five minutes after the effects of the previous beans have worn off before consuming new beans, otherwise the powers will not activate. An ordinary-sized tablespoonful of beans is all that it takes to activate the powers. Consuming more of the same type of bean has no cumulative effect once the powers are activated.

Real Name: Elroy Beanz

Aliases: Beanz and Roarin' Roy.

Alignment: Scrupulous.

Hit Points: 40, **S.D.C.** 35

Weight: 165 lbs (75 kg), **Height:** 5 foot, 10 inches (1.78 m).

Age: 32

Attributes: I.Q. 14, M.E. 12, M.A. 12, P.S. 16, P.P. 12, P.E. 22, P.B. 14, Spd. 17

Disposition: Polite, friendly and extroverted. Always has a story, joke or anecdote ready for any occasion and will talk to anyone about anything. Offer him a drink, whiskey is his favorite, and you'll get an earful. Especially if you're buying.

Experience Level: 5

Combat Skills: Karate kick does 2D4 and snap kick does 1D6.

Attacks per melee: 5

Combat Bonuses: +1 initiative, +1 damage, +1 strike, +3 parry/dodge, +3 roll with punch/fall, and +2 pull punch.

Other Bonuses: +14% versus coma/death, +4 versus magic/poison.

Super Power Category: Food Manipulation: Kidney Beans (minor).

Super Abilities: 1. Bean Powered Speed:

Light kidney beans: Increases Elroy's speed temporarily by 4D6 for 3D6 minutes. Consuming more light kidney beans during this time has no affect and does not add to or prolong the increased speed.

Baked Beans: Enables Elroy to leap an extra ten feet (3 m) high or 15 feet (4.6 m) across. However, there is a noticeable farting noise at take off and halfway through the leap.

Create five clouds of stench: Eating Dark Kidney Beans enables Elroy to create the dreaded clouds of stench. There are five types of clouds that he can create by passing gas. Elroy must visualize the cloud type within 30 seconds of consuming the beans, otherwise nothing happens. Once visualized, a gaseous cloud is instantly expelled from Elroy. After a cloud is created, it lasts for the duration and cannot be moved or canceled by Elroy, although a normal or magical wind of over 25 mph could move the cloud.

1. The Stinker: Noisy and mildly smelly, anyone within a 5 foot (1.5 m) radius has a 01-35% of losing a melee attack due to laughter. Duration: One round.



2. **The Skunk:** Emits a quiet but deadly skunk-like smell, anyone within a four foot (1.2 m) radius will be overcome by the smell for 1D4 melee rounds (no initiative, lose one melee attack and reduce combat bonuses by half — plus will desperately want to flee the area. Roll 15 or higher Horror Factor to fight the stench and stand one's ground, otherwise run for relief). Anyone within an 8 foot (2.4 m) radius will lose initiative and is -1 on all combat moves due to tearing. Duration: The cloud remains for 1D4 minutes.

3. **The Room Clearer:** Anyone within a 10 foot (3 m) radius will be overcome by the fumes and start to cough, gag and may even vomit unless they immediately flee (need to save vs Horror Factor 17 to stand and fight in this toxic cloud). Those who *flee* or stay at least 10 feet (3 m) from the noxious cloud lose one melee attack and suffer a penalty of -3 to all combat moves for 1D4 melee rounds.

Those who miraculously stay in the Room Clearer Cloud are reduced to tears, one melee attack and no bonuses! Run for your life man! Run for your life. Any roll to save that is 10 or lower will cause that character to mercifully pass out and fall to the ground. Duration: The cloud remains for 1D6 minutes, besieging all who enter.

4. **The Paint Peeler:** Anyone without an artificial breathing apparatus or special power to survive gaseous environments will automatically pass out! After five minutes in the cloud, the victim will start to take 1D6 S.D.C. damage every eight minutes. The Cloud lasts 2D6+6 minutes, has a radius effect of 30 feet (9 m). Inanimate objects will take 1D6 S.D.C. damage every 10 minutes.

5. **The Atomic Blast:** Unless you can survive a gaseous environment, do not go in the vicinity of this one. Anyone within the damage radius of the cloud takes 1D6 S.D.C. and 1D6 Hit Point damage every minute (4 melee rounds) in the cloud. Artificial breathing devices or environmental suits are required, otherwise anybody who enters will fall unconscious. Exposure to the cloud for more than 10 minutes will cause hair to start falling out and skin to burn and peel. Radius of damage: 50 feet (15.2 m). Those within 21-30 feet (6.4 to 9.1 m) of the "Blast Cloud" will suffer as if they had been exposed to a "room clearer." Inanimate objects in the damage radius suffer 1D6 S.D.C. every five minutes. The cloud lasts 1D6x10 minutes.

Note: Frank and Elroy are totally unaffected by the clouds. They can walk around in them without problems or taking damage.

Unpredictability Table: Roll percentile on this table when Elroy consumes the opposite type of bean during a time in which one of his powers is active.

1-30 Nothing happens.

31-40 Wind rush. A gale force wind will be emitted from Elroy's backside, knocking people and objects to the ground. Duration: One minute.

41-50 Elroy turns beet red and emits periodic blasts of steam from his mouth, ears and nose. Lasts five minutes.

51-60 Power swap. If the current power was speed, it then becomes stench. If the current power was stench, it then becomes speed.

61-70 Spinner! Elroy will spin like a top with flames constantly shooting from his buttocks for one minute. These are ac-

tual flames and can cause fires. Anyone within six feet (1.8 m) of him is in danger of taking 5D6 damage from fire or heat every melee round.

71-80 Negates current powers. The current cloud vanishes and Elroy must wait at least five minutes before activating a new power.

81-90 Loud stomach rumbling lasting 10 minutes, starts at 90 decibels and increases 20 decibels per minute. Only Frank and Elroy are impervious to its deafening sound.

91-00 Minor earthquake! A small earthquake from Elroy's behind (directed away from Elroy) will last for 30 seconds, knocking people and objects to the ground.

Note: Once the unpredictable power ends, Elroy must wait five minutes, otherwise new beans have no affect.

Education Level: High School.

Scholastic Bonus: +5%

Skills of Note: Pilot: automobile 70%, basic math 75%, sing 65%, play guitar 65%, fish 70%, dance 60%, general repair/maintenance 65%, computer operation 70%, research 80%, photography 65%.

Secondary Skills: Hand to Hand: Basic, palming 45%, concealment 40%, streetwise 40%, prowl 50%, basic mechanics 55%, auto mechanics 50%, swim 75%, athletics, and carpentry 50%.

Appearance: Dark, average length hair with long sideburns. Casual dresser, prefers blue jeans, cowboy hat and boots.

Occupation: Prefers outdoor jobs, such as construction work, lawn/pool care, snow removal, and farm work.

Weapons: A pair of can openers (one hidden in his boot), spoon and at least two spoonfuls of both light and dark kidney beans (typically two cans of each for about 40 spoonfuls).

Vehicle: Shares a 10 year old van with Frank.

Money: Usually has \$50-\$300 on him at all times. Frank and Elroy have another 1D6x\$200 hidden in their van.

Tony Riga — Pasta Man

Tony has the ability to derive super powers from his home-made pasta and special homemade tomato sauces. Whether the actual source of his powers is Tony or his special ingredients, including a rare type of olive oil and some special homegrown herbs, is unknown, but is probably the former.

Tony owns and cooks at a popular but relatively inexpensive Italian restaurant. It is a family-run business, employing Tony's wife and many of his friends and relatives.

Tony loves sports and often attends local sporting events. His restaurant is decorated with pictures and autographs of athletes who have eaten at his place. He sponsors softball, bowling and little league baseball teams and is part of the bowling team. Frank and Beanz have inspired him to go forth at night and during times of need as (the indescribably delicious) **Pasta Man**.

Real Name: Tony Riga

Aliases: Pasta Man, Tony, Noodles and Tony Noodles.

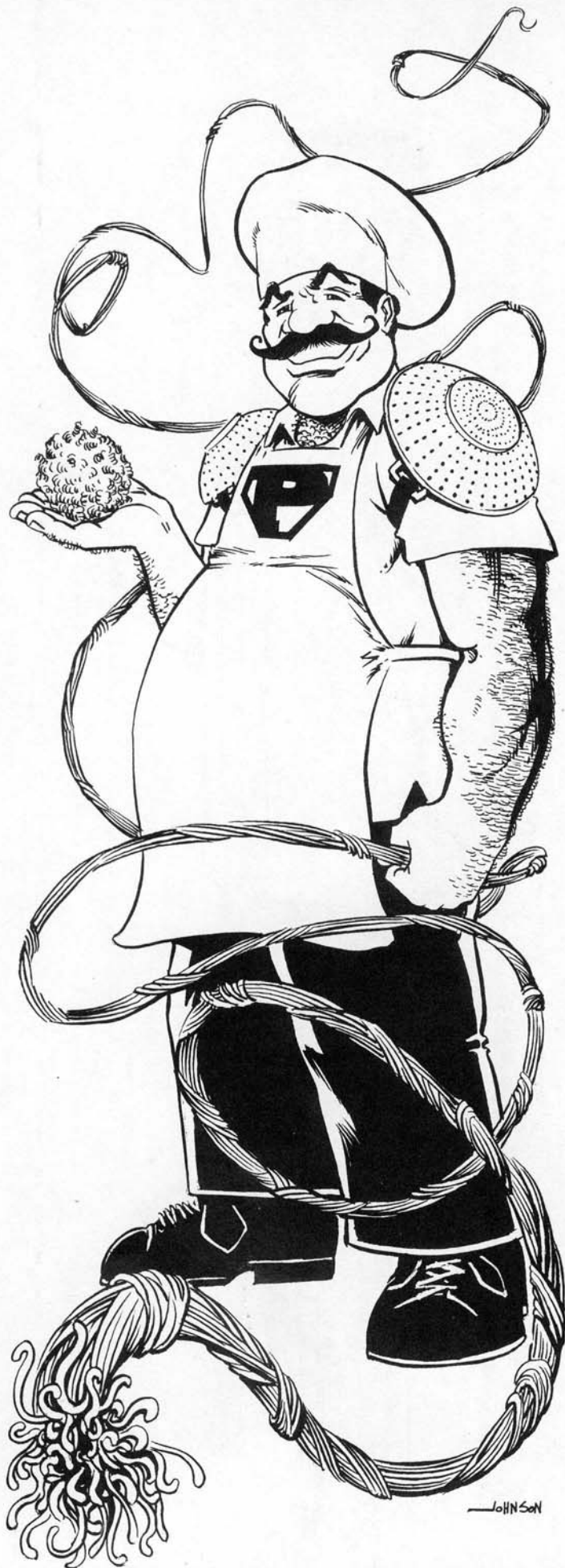
Alignment: Scrupulous

Hit Points: 55, S.D.C. 75.

Weight: 235 lbs (106 kg), **Height:** 5 foot, 10 inches (1.78 m)

Age: 35

Attributes: I.Q. 15, M.E. 12, M.A. 20, P.S. 22, P.P. 19 P.E. 12, P.B. 9, Spd. 5



Disposition: Jolly and boisterous. Always humming a tune or singing to himself. Loves being around people. If he likes you, he will go out of his way to cook you a special meal which usually turns into a several hour-long feast. Always testing out new recipes, "Here try this," can be heard quite often coming from Tony.

Experience Level: 7th.

Combat Skills: Knock out on natural 20 when using fists, incapacitate/pin on roll of 18, 19 or 20, crush attack does 1D4 damage, body/block tackle does 1D4 damage, kick attacks: 2D4 for karate kick/1D6 for snap kick, critical attack on natural 19 or 20 (double damage).

Attacks per melee: 6

Combat Bonuses: +1 initiative, +9 damage, +3 strike, +6 parry/dodge, +4 roll with punch or fall, +2 pull punch.

Other Bonuses: 60% trust/intimidate.

Super Power Category: Food Manipulation: Pasta (Major Ability).

Super Powers: Gets the following bonuses and abilities after eating pasta and/or tomato sauce.

1. Add 15 points to both Hit Points and S.D.C.

2. +15% to Cooking skill.

3. Ingesting just a half cup of his homemade tomato sauce gives Tony the two minor super abilities of *Heightened Sense of Taste* and *Heightened Sense of Smell* for 2D4 hours. This power can be used in conjunction with his other powers. Each additional cup adds 2D4 hours onto his minor abilities.

4. Tony can shape and manipulate his pasta (considered a separate Minor ability) in the following manner:

a) **Baseball:** He can instantly shape his pasta into a baseball and throw it at high speeds (over 100 mph/160 km). The victim will react like he has been hit by a high speed baseball and will suffer bruises or unconsciousness. Damage: 2D4 or 1D8. Each throw counts as one melee attack. 01-33% chance that the victim is knocked unconscious with a 01-40% chance of falling.

b) **Entanglement:** A handful of pasta can be thrown up to 100 feet (30.5 m) and once it hits the victim, forms into a pasta net entangling the victim. The net has an S.D.C. of 70 and is very sticky, making it nearly impossible to move once snared (reduce the number of attacks for those captured by half and no initiative). Duration of Net: 1D6x10 minutes.

c) **Carpet of Adhesion:** Tony can throw a handful of pasta which will turn into a 10x10 foot (3x3 m) carpet of extreme stickiness. The carpet has an S.D.C. of 80 and requires a combined strength of 40 to pull someone loose. Duration of Carpet: 1D6x10 minutes.

d) **Rope Trick:** Pasta Man can turn a handful of pasta into a twenty foot (6 m) long rope. Two handfuls will create a 50 foot (15 m) rope.

e) **Rope Vine:** Tony can create a single vine that is twenty feet (6 m) long which can wrap itself around a small object and return it to Tony. The rope sort of slithers along the ground as it moves, like a snake. The object must weigh less than 15 lbs (6.75 kg) and be no more than 60 inches (1.5 m) in diameter. The vine starts from the point where Tony is located at the time he creates it. This is intended for use with small objects in particular, such as guns or keys. The vine has a strength of 18.

Tony does not have to concentrate on the vine and can use other powers simultaneously. Duration: 10 minutes. Rope speed: 17.

f) **Sculpt Pasta:** Tony can use dry pasta as pieces to make arts and crafts, and clump together wet pasta and mold it like clay.

g) **Dry Pasta:** In Tony's hands, pasta can become a dangerous weapon or tool with the tensile strength of iron! Spaghetti noodles can be used as needles (one point of damage each) and as lock picking tools.

Small noodles and dumplings can be used for pelting (do one point of damage per handful of thrown small noodles or per a single dumpling).

Large flat noodles, like those used to make lasagna, can be used as a saw to cut wood or steel and as a small pry bar.

Note about these abilities: Once the pasta hits its victim and serves its function, the starchy material reforms into ordinary pasta and can be eaten or cut — only in the hands of Pasta Man is it more than a mere noodle. In order to use his abilities, he simply has to visualize which pasta ability he wants to use. Finally, Tony is not affected by his own pasta and cannot be captured or entangled by it.

Education Level: High School.

Scholastic Bonus: +5%

Skills of Note: Cook 85%, basic math 85%, fish 80%, sing 75%, pilot: automobile 79%, prowl 65%, wrestling, boxing, body building and weight lifting, and play musical instrument: harmonica 75%.

Secondary Skills: First aid 80%, holistic medicine 55%, hand to hand: basic, streetwise 48%, carpentry 60%, concealment 48%, W.P. knife, W.P. throwing weapons, preserve food 60%, and identify plants/fruits 60%.

Appearance: Very Italian. Big, burly and hairy. Lots of hair. Bushy, black hair. Large, thick handle-bar mustache. Hair all over his body. Just plain hairy. Likes to eat and it shows; has a nearly perfectly round belly.

Occupation: Restaurant owner and head cook.

Weapons: Butcher knife, pasta and homemade sauces.

Vehicle: New luxury car.

Money: Well-off. Earns \$150,000 per year from his restaurant. Roughly \$200,000 in several bank accounts. Lives in a moderately expensive suburban house (\$450,000-\$750,000).

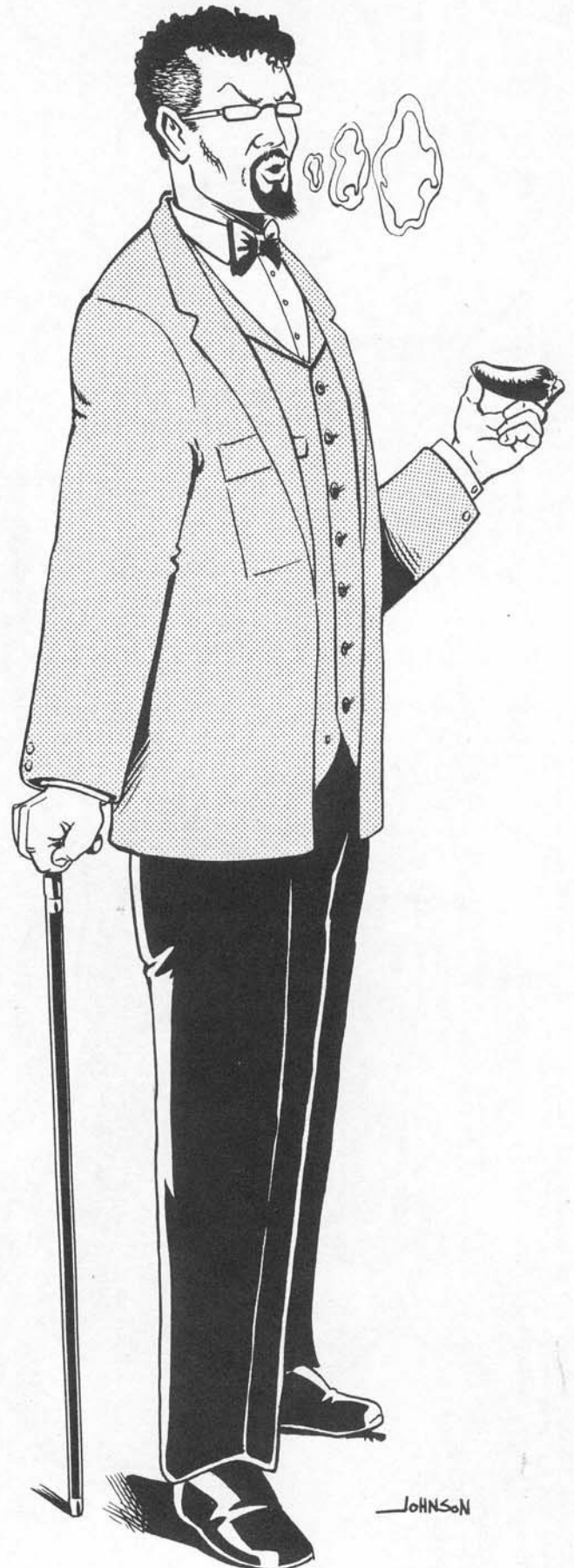
Dragonbreath

Professor Thomas Dragonweed

Professor Dragonweed derives his powers from consuming peppers. There are several types of peppers that he consumes: green peppers, yellow peppers, chili peppers and jalapeno peppers.

The Professor is a well-respected anthropologist whose powers manifested themselves after a trip to the South American jungles. He looks like a rather meek individual, until he opens his mouth. The good professor can then belch out a magical breath that would make any dragon proud.

The Professor has many professional connections, both within the university he works at and through his many lectures and book tours. He is an excellent researcher and can usually dig up information on just about anyone or anything. He has traveled extensively and has been in just about every country of



the world. He leads a double life as a thief known to target precious antiquities, particularly small sculptures, ancient coins and jewelry.

Real Name: Thomas Dragonweed

Aliases: The Dragon, Thomas

Alignment: Anarchist with strong leanings toward Miscreant.

Hit Points: 40, S.D.C. 30.

Weight: 150 lbs (67.5 kg), **Height:** 6 foot (1.83 m).

Age: 50

Attributes: I.Q. 24, M.E. 12, M.A. 12, P.S. 12, P.P. 12, P.E. 12, P.B. 12, Spd. 12

Disposition: Meticulous and neat; a perfectionist. Talks slowly but usually has interesting stories and fun facts. Tends to digress from the main subject a lot. Not introverted, but usually waits for someone else to start up a conversation. Is very patient and willing to answer even the silliest questions. Good sense of humor and resourceful and cunning in the extreme.

Experience Level: 11th

Combat Skills: Only real skills are with a sword: +4 to strike/parry.

Attacks per melee: Three.

Other bonuses: +10% on all skills.

Super Power Category: Magical Food Manipulation: Peppers (This is a Major ability and is rooted in magic. Unknown to Thomas, his powers derive from one of the African artifacts in his private collection).

Super Powers: 1. Green Peppers — The Healing Breath: Provides the eater with super-healing abilities. Taking just a few bites of a raw green pepper allows Thomas to regenerate 4D6 Hit Points and 4D6 S.D.C. per melee round until he is completely healed. The healing continues even if Thomas has less than zero points or is stunned or knocked out. He will automatically recover from a coma in 1D6 melee rounds. The powers last until Thomas is fully healed. He dies if his Hit Points ever drop below negative 100. If Thomas gives someone mouth to mouth resuscitation, then that individual will instantly receive 2D6 Hit Points and is +20% to save vs coma and death.

2. Yellow banana peppers — The Restoration Breath: Acts like a magical Restoration spell, except that it does not regenerate Hit Points and S.D.C., instead, all bruises, bones and body parts are instantly mended, repaired and work as good as new and without pain. Only completely works on Thomas, himself. However, if he breathes directly on a wound, he can stop the bleeding, super-start healing, and prevent infection. However, he cannot heal the internal injuries or broken bones of others.

Note: Abilities 1 & 2 do not give Thomas the ability to resurrect a dead person. If a person is already dead, he cannot help them.

3. Red chili peppers — The Horror Breath: Allows Thomas to expel a cloud that will engulf its victims in fear — Horror Factor of 15. Even if they save versus magic, all skills are -10% and all attacks are -3 as long as the victim is in the cloud (and 1D4 melee rounds after exiting the cloud). The cloud has a 20 foot (6 m) radius and can be moved by Thomas, magic or winds over 25 mph (40 km). In order for Thomas to move the cloud, he must focus his actions on it and can do nothing else that melee round. Thomas is unaffected by the fear. Duration: 1D6x10 minutes.

4. Jalapeno peppers: The Dragon's Breath: Allows Thomas to expel a powerful flame from his mouth. While this power is in effect, Thomas is Impervious to Fire and Heat (see the minor super ability). The flame does 1D6 per level of experience per attack and has a maximum range of 12 feet (3.6 m) +2 feet (0.6 m) per level of experience. Each fire breath attack or any breath use counts as one melee action/attack. Duration: One hour.

5. The Elixir of the Gods: Thomas can make a special hot sauce out of all four pepper types. It takes about two hours to make eight ounces. Just one tablespoon gives him the following super abilities for one hour, but it can *only* be used once every twenty four hour period:

- Invulnerability (as the major super ability),
- X-ray vision (as the minor super ability),
- Wingless flight (as the minor super ability),
- Supernatural Strength of 32.

The hot sauce should only be used for emergencies and negates the effects of any of the individual peppers, i.e. the other breath powers can not be used when the Elixir of the Gods has been taken.

Note about these super abilities: Consuming a different type of pepper while another one is active negates the one before it. Only one can be active at a time, so in the case of the Horror Cloud, it will still be in existence, but Thomas can no longer move it. The amount of raw pepper needed is just a bite or two, not much. As long as the pepper has not started to rot or develop fungus, Thomas can derive powers from it.

Education Level: Doctorate

Scholastic Bonus: +30%

Skills of Note: Anthropology 98%, archaeology 98%, botany 98%, chemistry 98%, computer operation 98%, advanced math 98%, basic math 98%, pilot automobile 98%, research 98%, photography 98%, writing 98%, business/finance 98%, law 98%, languages: French, Spanish, Dutch and Portuguese, all at 98%.

Secondary Skills: Languages: German, Latin, Chinese and Japanese at 98%, cook 98%, first aid 98%, W.P. sword, astronomy 90%, land navigation 90%, prowl 90%.

Appearance: Tweed jacket, bow-tie and walking stick/cane that contains a small sword. Nerdy looking and wears glasses. Looks like a mild wind would knock him over. In his supervillain persona, he wears an oriental mask of a dragon and padding under his black and red costume to look beefier.

Occupation: College Professor — secretly a thief of gems and ancient collectibles.

Weapons: Small cane sword (was on his college fencing team) and breath powers.

Money: Earns about \$120,00 per year from salary, investments, books, lectures and consulting. Savings worth about one million, but his secret collection of antiquities is worth at least 10 billion! Not that he would be willing to part with any of it.



THE VAUDEVILLAIN

A villain for HU2

By J.P. Ferkelberger



Lewis Greppner came from a long line of vaudeville entertainers. When he was just a small child, Lewis would sit at his grandfather's knee and listen enthralled to the old man's stories about how things were before the advent of radio, movies, and television. Back when *vaudeville* was the king of entertainment and Lewis' grandfather was the toast of New York. Little Lewis made a child's promise to his grandfather to bring back the days of vaudeville and restore the once proud Greppner name to its former glory.

Unfortunately, Lewis was sold a false bill of goods. Grandpa was already a couple of shades past senile and had pretty well forgotten that he had never been more than second-banana at best. None of this mattered to Lewis who now had a goal, a purpose in his life (psychiatrists have diagnosed this as an obsession) to bring back vaudeville.

Lewis studied all of his grandfather's old routines, including using various props and learning some incredibly corny and stale jokes. He practiced these so much that, in high school, it got to the point where his fellow students (and some teachers) would run for cover when they saw him approach.

None of this discouraged Lewis. After graduating from school, he went to New York City, ready to conquer the entertainment world. However, as Lewis made the rounds of talent agents, he noticed three things: 1) No one was hiring him, 2) All of the agents told him that vaudeville was "dead" and to let it rest in peace; and 3) most of the agents said he was the least talented person they had ever met and that he should give up show business and go into some other line of work (a critique Lewis attributed to jealousy).

Although the young man originally tried to maintain a positive attitude, rejection followed rejection until finally something within the star wannabe just snapped. That night, in his dingy apartment, Lewis made another fateful vow. If an uncaring world rejected and scorned vaudeville, he would teach them proper respect. He, Lewis Greppner, would become the living embodiment of vaudeville and woe be to any who got in his way. Thus, the villain known as **The Vaudevillain** was born.

Real Name: Lewis Greppner

Aliases: The Vaudevillain (also "that Nutcase" and several other derogatory terms).

Alignment: Miscreant.

Hit Points: 18, **S.D.C.:** 32.

Weight: 154 lbs (69.3 kg), **Height:** 6 feet, 1 inch (1.85 m).

Attributes: I.Q. 8, M.E. 6, M.A. 4, P.S. 10, P.P. 11, P.E. 14, P.B. 11, Spd. 23

Disposition: The Vaudevillain is seriously wacked out — insane. If someone fails to show him the proper respect, he will go through the roof in getting revenge. However, if anyone gives him his due respect by watching his act without fleeing, mocking him or barfing (not an easy task, mind you), he will take a protective attitude toward them. It doesn't matter if these are a trembling, captive audience, such discerning souls truly appreciate the nuances of vaudeville and are to be cherished.

Experience Level: 2nd

Super Power Category: Special Training — Vaudeville entertainer (unique) and Crazy Villain.

Combat Skills: No formal training, just whatever he picked up since his supervillain career began.

Attacks per Melee: Two!

Bonuses: +2 to parry/dodge, +2 to roll with punch/fall/impact (these bonuses were painfully acquired from “entertaining” hostile audiences), and +1 to strike and parry with cane.

Educational Level: High School (barely).

Skills of Note: Speak English 98%, Literacy 98%, Math: Basic 80%, Pilot Automobile 72%, Pilot Bicycle 63%, Cardsharp 62%, Palming 55%, Concealment 54%, Sing 50%, Dance 45%, Cook 40%, Streetwise 24%, Running, and W.P. Blunt.

Appearance: A stringbean of a man with dark hair and eyes. Wears baggy pants, a porkpie hat, and an extremely tacky and garish jacket with a flower in the lapel.

Occupation: Professional wacko and Vaudeville star wannabe.

Special Weapons/Gimmicks: Although the Vaudevillain is (surprisingly) quick to adapt everyday objects in a pinch, he generally sticks with an arsenal of just three main items.

1. **A Cane:** A wooden walking stick with a brass knob at the top. The cane is hollow and fitted with a taser. Although it is primarily used by the Vaudevillain as part of his routine (a prop for song-and-dance routines), it can also be used as a weapon. If used for combat, it may be used as a club (inflicting 1D8 or 2D4 damage) or the taser attack (4D6 electrical damage, 20 foot/6 m range). The Vaudevillain never refers to it as a cane, but as a “stick” (see notes below).

2. **A Seltzer Bottle:** This bottle can be filled with various liquids, including (but not limited to) water, different acids, whiskey, lighter fluid, and lemonade. In addition to being part of his act, this allows the Vaudevillain to both punish the disrespectful and reward the worthy. Also, it helps keep his opponents confused and off-balance, since no one knows what liquid is in the bottle (whether harmful or not). Consequently, the Vaudevillain has been able to bluff his way out of some situations with the threat of spraying someone with a harmful substance (even when the liquid in the bottle was harmless). Range: 6 feet (1.8 m).

3. **An Assortment of Pies:** Somehow the Vaudevillain is often able to stash a pie (or even a couple) somewhere about his person and around corners which he will then use to throw in someone’s face. He uses a variety of flavors, although the most frequently used are custard, lemon meringue, and coconut cream. As the Vaudevillain feels that tampering with pies would be somehow sacrilegious, these are normal pies and do not harm their targets other than blinding them for 1D4 melee rounds.

Vehicles: The Vaudevillain does not possess a vehicle and will generally use a mass transit system whenever possible in order to get an audience.

Body Armor: The Vaudevillain does not wear armor.

Money: Money does not mean that much to this lunatic, other than as a means of assisting his cause. He seldom keeps more than 1D6x\$100 for emergencies and spends the rest; much of the money goes toward pies.

Notes:

1. Although the Vaudevillain normally speaks with a thick New York (stereotypical Bronx or Brooklyn) accent, he will sometimes affect cheesy foreign accents when playing his role. Usually it will be an upper-crust English accent, but he will change to a German accent when referring to his “stick” (or, as he calls it, his “shtick”).

2. Much of his crusade is financed by thefts, both petty and large. However, the Vaudevillain will NEVER steal, con, or cheat to obtain his pies. He will always either buy them or bake them himself.

3. Despite his relatively high skill percentages, this madman is not a good entertainer or actor. In this instance, the skill levels represent his knowledge, not his entertainment ability. The Vaudevillain sings, dances, and tells jokes with a great amount of enthusiasm but a marked lack of actual talent.

Other Wacky Superbeings

THE CAT BURGLARS VILLAINS FOR HU2™

By J.P. Ferkelberger

Generally, a cat burglar refers to a thief whose “M.O.” is to either scale up a wall or down from a roof to get into an apartment or room and burglarize it. The most common targets of this type of theft are gems and jewelry. This unusual pair of *Cat Burglars*, however, truly live up to their name for a different reason. One of the pair is a young woman who steals cats and the other member of the duo actually is a *cat*.

It was not greed that originally motivated Fluffy Anderson into a life of crime but resentment against her parents. An only child, Fluffy grew up with her parents, who were avid cat lovers, and what seemed to be an infinite number of cats. Although she did not mind sharing her parents attention and affection with the pets, she really resented their naming her “Fluffy.”

Her unusual first name was to be a life-long source of embarrassment. No matter what she did or what academic or athletic accomplishments she was able to achieve, her name made her a target for ribbing and all sorts of bad jokes. The final straw came during the Olympic trials. Fluffy (who had by this time become an accomplished gymnast) was in stiff competition for a spot on the Olympic team. In an effort to break Fluffy’s concentration, one of her rivals (demonstrating incredibly poor sportsmanship) set up a cruel stunt. Having smuggled in a basket of cats, her rival waited until Fluffy was in the middle of her program and then released them. As the cats scurried across the mat, the audience was dumbfounded at first but then started to laugh. When the color commentator, who mistakenly thought he was witty, made some snide remarks at Fluffy’s expense, the crowd roared even louder. In tears, the humiliated young lady fled the auditorium, never to compete in organized sports again.

All of the previous embarrassments she had suffered paled before this final humiliation, which had occurred before a national television audience. Fluffy Anderson decided that she would use her gymnastic skills to make society pay for her humiliation. If it was a cat that society wanted her to be, it would be as a cat, and through cats, that she would get her revenge.



Fluffy began her career of crime by kidnapping cats (catnapping?) and *ransoming* them back to their owners (mostly rich people). However, she would only steal cats from owners she

felt could afford it and never from families with children. Whether purebred and worth a fortune or common alley cats and strays, the Cat Burglar will steal cats and take them to her base-ment, which she calls her "Cat-Lair." The more valuable felines are held for ransom while the alley cats are simply kept indefinitely until they either escape or the Kitty-Cat Burglar tires of them and releases them somewhere.

The police are mystified as to the "Kitty-Cat" Burglar's exact motives and unusual life of crime. They are all the more confused by reports that she has broken into animal shelters to steal cats when she could just go there and get them for free. They have come to the conclusion that the Kitty-Cat Burglar is emotionally disturbed (no kidding).

It was during a break-in at a science laboratory that Fluffy first met **Agatha**. This mutant feline had been the subject for perfume research. However, some of the different scents triggered a mutant gene within Agatha, giving her an intelligence far beyond that of a normal cat.

It was not long before Agatha made her special abilities known to Fluffy. The possibilities were not lost on her and she who soon established a means of communication between the two through sign language and then taught the cat how to read and enjoy some of life's finer pleasures (see notes below). From that point, it was just a short while before Agatha joined Fluffy on her daring raids. With her cat-like reflexes and her ability to communicate with other felines, Agatha soon proved to be an incredibly valuable ally to her human friend.

Fluffy

Real Name: Fluffy Anderson

Aliases: The Cat Burglar and "Kitty-Cat Burglar" (to make the distinction between this loose cannon and real cat burglars).

Alignment: Anarchist with leanings toward Unprincipled.

Hit Points: 45, **S.D.C.:** 20.

Weight: 113 lbs. (50.9 kg), **Height:** 5 feet, 7 inches (1.7 m).

Attributes: I.Q. 13, M.E. 16, M.A. 11, P.S. 13, P.P. 15, P.E. 17, P.B. 13, Spd. 32

Disposition: Like her feline namesake, Fluffy can be wry, vain, self-centered, and cruel. However, when she is on a raid, she is totally focused and professional.

Experience Level: 3rd

Super Power Category: Physical Training (Focus on Agility and Speed)

Combat Skills: Hand to Hand: Special (Defensive and Fast).

Attacks per Melee: Six.

Bonuses: +4 on initiative, +2 to strike, +3 to parry, +4 to dodge, +2 to disarm, +2 to body flip/throw, +5 to roll w/punch, +5 to pull punch, paired weapons, Karate style punch (2D4 damage), backward sweep kick, automatic back flip, Karate style kick (2D6 damage), arm hold and neck hold attacks, the three special combat abilities (HU2, pg. 189).

Other Bonuses: +1 vs psionics, +1 vs insanity, +1 vs magic and poison, +15% to save vs coma/death, and P.S. is treated as Extraordinary Strength.

Educational Level: 3 years of College.

Skills of Note: Speak English 98%, Literacy 98%, Math: Basic 70%, Pilot Automobile 79%, Dance 65%, Cook 60%, Sewing 55%, Escape Artist 50%, Pick Locks 50%, Concealment 38%, Streetwise 38%, Acrobatics, Athletics, Climb 80/70%, Gymnastics, Prowl 70%, Swimming 65% (back f

89%, climb rope 84%, sense of balance 79%, walk tight-rope/high wire 76%, work parallel bars/rings 76%)

Appearance: A lithe young woman with blonde hair tied back in a ponytail. Wears a black leotard and a domino mask.

Occupation: Professional thief.

Weapons: None. Fluffy has no intention of ever harming anyone and will cancel a planned heist rather than risk such an event happening. If something goes awry, she will flee and only fight as a last resort (and then only to escape).

Vehicles: As a private joke, Fluffy will only own a car with a feline name. She has driven Cougars and Lynxes and currently owns a Jaguar.

Equipment: Fluffy primarily relies on her own speed and agility but does have two pieces of gear she bought at a "Ninja Retiring and Going Back Home to Japan" sale.

1. **Kawanga:** A combination of rope and grapple used for climbing and fighting. Inflicts 1D8 (or 2D4) damage.

2. **Climbing Spikes:** Spiked claws that are attached to the soles of the feet for climbing. Add +15% to climbing skill.

Body Armor: None

Money: Money does not mean all that much to the Kitty-Cat Burglar, she does what she does for the excitement, fun and a sort of cathartic revenge. Still, she has tucked away \$60,000 in her bank account and has 3D6x\$1,000 stashed in a cookie jar of Silvester the cartoon cat.

Agatha

Real Name: Agatha

Alignment: Anarchist.

Hit Points: 8, **S.D.C.:** 4

Weight: 15 lbs. (6.8 kg),

Size: 19 inches (0.5 m) long, plus 12 inch tail (0.3 m)

Attributes: I.Q. 6, all other attributes normal for a domestic cat.

Experience Level: 2nd level thief & spy (but a real cat).

Super Power Category: Experiment — Mutant Animal.

Attacks per Melee: Three.

Damage: Claws do 1D4 points of damage, bite does 2 points of damage.

Bonuses: +2 on initiative, +3 to strike, +2 to parry, +3 to dodge, +1 vs Horror Factor.

Natural Abilities: Keen vision and sense of smell, nightvision 40 feet (12.2 m), can leap 5 feet (1.5 m) high and 6 feet (1.8 m) long.

Speed: 16, with bursts of speed 22 for 1D4 minutes.

Skills of Note: Climb 70%, Prowl 70%, Swimming 40%, Lore: Soap Opera Trivia 30%.

Appearance: A black Abyssinian cat.

Occupation: Professional thief.

Money: Agatha has no need for money per se. As long as she is kept in good supply of cat food and toys she is content.

Notes:

1. Fluffy has since regretted some of her lessons, because Agatha has become a rabid soap opera fan. Agatha will often turn on the soaps and then hide the remote, much to the chagrin and annoyance of Fluffy who prefers game shows.

2. The Cat Burglars strictly steal/liberate/commandeer cats and have no problem with holding them for ransom. If someone were to ever suggest that they eliminate the middleman and go directly to stealing cash, gems, or jewelry, Fluffy would reject the idea as being "morally wrong."

3. There are usually between 40 to 50 cats in the "Cat-Lair." It is indeed fortunate for the Cat Burglars that the building above their lair is a school for the deaf as the meowing of so many felines would soon be detected by people with normal hearing.

REALITY TWIST

By P.O.D.

What follows are descriptions of heroes and villains for use with the **Heroes Unlimited, Second Edition RPG**. While I enjoy more or less serious style role-playing, what I'm presenting here is a group of characters that are more a bit more "cartoon-like." However, the stats and other details of the characters can be changed so they can be played in a serious vein as well. Yes, rule books contain rules that should be followed, but I also wrote this for those who wish to modify aspects of the rules and bring their imaginations to life.

Big Bouncer — Villain

Bob Kirby is overweight. However, the 23 year old criminal was only concerned about replacing the Big Boss with himself. He just hadn't gotten around to it yet. While laying in bed one night, planning his big move, a bright light burst through his window. He freaked out, pulled his gun and dove to the floor. No alien was going to take him on a spaceship. Too late. A tall alien robot with big black eyes was in his room. Then he blacked out.

Aboard his ship a robot or cyborg alien, named Retten, examined the primitive bioform called "Bob." The robot was trying to find out about something the humans called *fun*. Perhaps he could add this emotion to himself. After watching some old Charlie Chaplin and Three Stooges movies, along with a plethora of cartoons, he had an idea on how to make this man *funny* — all part of an experiment in "making fun."

When Bob woke up in his bed, there was information in his head, like somebody was playing a cassette tape with words. All of his body fat had been replaced with a super-bounce material, and the Big Bouncer was born. Shortly there after he became the new Big Boss.

Bob went on a crime spree and the cops just couldn't catch him. If trapped in a tall building, Bob could escape by jumping through a window, fall 40 stories, hit the ground without harm and gleefully bounce away (giving a new meaning to the criminal term "second story-man"). If hit by bullets, they would get stuck in the super-bounce stuff that was now his body, were easily plucked out and the holes the left behind filled (with bounce stuff) in less than a minute. When he get's punched in the gut, it actually tickles and his opponent's hand bounced off as if they had just struck a giant balloon. When cornered in an alley, Bob can run into a wall and start bouncing, and somehow he just knows how to twist his body and change the angle of attack, flying full weight into his opponents, knocking them down and bouncing away. He can even scale walled by bouncing back and forth between two closely placed walls (i.e. a typical alley with closely spaced buildings, a pair of poles, etc. no more than 25 feet/7.8 m apart) and move upward using ricochet bounce ac-



tion. And speaking of ricochet action, using ricochet bounces to strike an opponent or to escape is one of his favorite tactics.

Real Name: Bob Kirby

Alignment: Miscreant

Attributes: I.Q.: 13, M.E.: 14, M.A.: 16, P.S.: 17, P.P.: 12, P.E.: 23, P.B.: 10, Spd: 12

Height: 6 feet (1.8 m).

Weight: 280 lbs (126 kg).

Experience Level: 4th.

Hit Points: 43

S.D.C.: 95

Power Category: Experiment.

Major Super Abilities: None.

Minor Super Abilities: Healing Factor, Heightened Sense of Hearing, Supervision: Advanced Sight and Supervision: Nightvision.

Natural Abilities: Bob has been programmed to know how to move and turn his body to get the most out of any bouncing attack or defense.

Disposition: He may be the *Big Boss*, but he's still a loud-mouthed bully and a jerk. The Bouncer loves to intimidate people.

Appearance: Bob dresses better than he used to, but his big belly and tough-guy haircut and tattoos would lead most people to assume he was a common street punk.

Combat: Hand to Hand: Basic.

Number of Attacks: 5

Bonuses: +5 to parry, +2 to dodge, +6 on initiative, +2 to pull punch, +10 to roll with punch/fall/impact, +2 to damage, Karate style kick does 2D4 or Snap Kick, 1D6 damage. +36% vs coma/death, +7 vs magic, poisons and toxins, +3 vs psionic attacks. Trust/intimidate 40%.

Healing Factor Summary: recovers 3 S.D.C. every 10 minutes, one hit point every 15 minutes, can instantly regenerate 4D6 Hit Points two times per day (24 hour period), does not fatigue, fire and cold does half damage; durations, penalties and symptoms of drugs, poisons and toxins are one third normal when he doesn't save against them. No scarring when healed. Bones heal at a rate that is ten times normal, i.e. multiple leg fractures heal in 8-10 days instead of 11-15 weeks.

Education Level and Skills of Note: High School dropout. Streetwise 52%, Prowl +45%, W.P.: Knife and W.P.: Auto-pistol. Literacy 75%, and Language: English 90%.

Weapons and Melee Combat: The Bouncer does an additional +8 to damage when striking a person or object in a body bounce attack. Also, the super-bounce material affects the penetration of projectiles traveling at pistol bullet speeds: one quarter normal damage, but a minimum of one point of damage. Finally, normal punches and strikes with blunt objects see their damage reduced by one quarter.

Candle Man — Villain

What happens when a great but secretive wizard dies after activating his latest creation? It continues to follow its last instructions. Why he created it only the creature knows and it either can't or won't talk. Its actions so far seem to involve random acts of violence against people who were doing nothing wrong at the time. The police have determined that all its victims were law-abiding citizens who did not know each other.

This strange being looks like a man with clear plastic skin. Underneath the skin is warm wax with a slightly yellow tint. The tips of all eight fingers are cut off and wisps of smoke issue from them. It is from these openings that Candle Man fires molten wax that comes from the core of its body, and which magically replenishes itself. A nocturnal stalker, those that have shot it have learned it is immune to bullets. Candle Man's incredible running speed have made it difficult to capture.

The police thought they had gotten lucky when the "thing" was incinerated in a burning build, but a few days later it reappeared. Nobody knows how this is possible (they have yet to discover that even if melted down in a fire, as long as one tiny fragment survives, it can magically regenerate to full size and strength in 24 hours). Now the police believe there is more than one of these things and that someone is creating them to wreak havoc upon the city. This means they will enlist the help of local heroes, not knowing what it can do to them (see its natural abilities.)

Real Name: None.

Alignment: Essentially a robot carrying out its last instructions (whatever that was) to the best of its ability. Considered Miscreant and extremely dangerous!

Attributes: I.Q.: 18, M.E.: 20, M.A.: 19, P.S.: 24, P.P.: 12, P.E.: 15, P.B.: 4, Spd.: 98 (68.6 mph/109.7 kph)

Height: 7 feet (2.1 m).

Weight: 300 lbs (135 kg).

Experience Level: Equivalent to 5th level.



A.R.: 8

S.D.C.: 210 (Hit Points are not applicable).

Power Category: Enchanted Object.

Major Super Abilities: None

Minor Super Abilities (Special, Magic): The molten wax will have ten times the same effect on superhumans as indicated under natural abilities, as it does on normal people. Also, all physical attacks leveled at it by super beings do one quarter of their normal damage!

Natural Abilities: Possesses all five senses through magical means. Can fire bursts of molten wax (range: 100 feet/30.5 m; damage: 3D6 the first melee, +1D6 the second melee round unless scraped off/removed during the first round). Automatically regenerates its own wax supply. Its body will regenerate after 24 hours if burned or exploded and any fragments of it remain. The only way to keep it from regenerating is to bury all of its remains in holy ground. Also resistant to fire (half damage), +12 to damage if it strikes a person or object while running at full speed. Immune to all mind attacks. Seals/Heals any puncture wound in one melee.

Disposition: It shows no emotions.

Appearance: Its size and inhuman appearance, combined with its inability to speak, and random, senseless attacks, gives it a high Horror Factor, 12.

Combat: Hand to Hand: Expert.

Number of Attacks: 6

Bonuses: +2 on initiative, 2 to strike, +9 to damage, +3 to roll with punch, fall or impact, +5 to parry and dodge, Karate style kick doing 2D4, snap kick doing 1D6, wheel kick doing 2D6.

Education Level and Skills: High School equivalent.

Skills of Note: Run, climb (69%), prowl (54%), box, W.P. Paired Weapons, W.P. Ax, W.P. Club, W.P. Staff.

Weapons and Melee Combat: Can magically use any ancient weapon or handy object (has a complete opposable thumb on each hand). It cannot use modern weapons.

Note: Since its creator has died, nobody knows what this magical construct sees as its "mission" or "purpose" (Game Masters, take advantage of this and introduce your own ideas and plots.) Clearly it is a magic robot-like construct that *is* a menace.

Commando Ed — Vigilante

A military Special Operations soldier, Commando Ed emerged from the ruins of a secret military base, the sole survivor. For reasons that were unclear to him at the time, Ed was carrying a strange looking rifle. Frightened but with only slight physical injuries, his goal was to reach safety and evaluate the situation. However, he soon realized he did not know exactly where he was and could not remember anything about his time at the base.

After walking for two days, Ed broke out of the light forest he was traveling through and onto ranchland. Soon he was approached by two men with rifles who asked him what he was doing on their land, but his amnesia got in the way of giving them an answer that made sense. Concerned that Ed might be crazy, they raised their rifles, and that's Ed's "programming" took over. Somewhere in the back of his mind, he remembered he couldn't allow himself to be captured. Ed had to shoot. With one pull of the trigger, he watched the two men disappear into thin air. Later, he would find out that the men had actually been shrunk to one sixteenth of an inch tall! The rifle he carries is an experimental weapon designed to shrink the opposition! Ed also learned that it didn't always fire and sometimes needs to be banged against a wall, the ground or his head to work. The only other thing he knows about the rifle is the name "SPECK 16" stamped on the butt.

He has decided his mission is to protect people, but since his rifle does not work about 20% of the time, he often has to use his martial arts skills and training to subdue his opponents.

A night-hunter, Ed works days as a magnetic crane operator in a scrap yard. Quiet and not wanting to attract attention, he suffers from a phobia regarding anyone who wears military camouflage and immediately wants to get as far away from them as possible. Another phobia kicks in when he is exposed to large explosions. In that instance, Ed drops to the ground and cowers in fear, unable to move unless someone nonthreatening pulls him away, or recovers 1D4+1 minutes after the noise dies down. His coworkers are aware that he was in the military and think he suffers from combat-induced stress (shell-shock). Since Ed won't talk about it, they make fun of him and call him "Commando Ed."

Real Name: Ed Crane is what he goes by, but his real name is Ray Edmonds (which he does not remember).

Alignment: Scrupulous and well intentioned, but tormented.

Attributes: I.Q.: 16, M.E.: 14, M.A.: 12, P.S.: 40, P.P.: 35, P.E.: 33, P.B.: 15, Spd.: 25

Height: 5 feet, 10 inches (1.7 m).

Weight: 180 lbs (81 kg).

Experience Level: 4th

Hit Points: 57

S.D.C.: 211

Power Category: Experiment (Military).

Major Super Abilities: None.

Minor Super Abilities: Energy Resistance, Extraordinary Physical Strength, Extraordinary P.P. and Extraordinary P.E.

Natural Abilities: None, other than attributes, combat training and super abilities.

Disposition: A somewhat quiet, easy going guy by day, but a tough, dedicated soldier/crimefighter at night.

Appearance: Clean cut, early thirties, and well muscled. Wears a black jumpsuit, belts and combat gear when on the prowl, and always has his "Shrink-Gun" with him.

Combat: Hand to Hand: Martial Arts.

Number of Attacks: 7

Bonuses: +3 on initiative, +3 to roll with punch, fall, impact, +25 to damage, +3 to pull punch, +6 to parry and dodge, +6 to auto-dodge, +6 to strike and disarm, Karate style kick doing 2D4, snap kick doing 1D6, roundhouse kick doing 3D6, wheel kick doing 2D6, and crescent kick doing 2D4+2. +8% to save vs magic and poison, +33% vs coma/death.

Education Level and Skills of Note: Military (+20), (+10% to all physical skills requiring dexterity). Detect Ambush (57%), Intelligence (46%), Detect Concealment (42%), Tracking (42%), Wilderness Survival (47%). W.P. Semi-Automatic Pistol, W.P. Automatic & Semi-Automatic Rifles, W.P. Heavy.

Weapons and Melee Combat: The SPECK 16 rifle does not create an audible sound when fired. Instead a white beam is emitted which causes the target to shimmer like a mirage, then the target shrinks to one sixteenth of an inch tall. The rifle's butt contains a compartment which holds a clear, four inch long capsule with a black hose on one end. The bottom half of the capsule contains a vacuum pump that pulls the criminal into the top half of the tiny container, which has micro-air holes. The criminal (or object) reverts to normal size in twenty four hours.

The player must roll under 81% to determine if the rifle fires. If it does not, it must be banged 1D4 times against a hard surface. Ed loses a melee attack for each hit. Usually, he bangs it once, and tries again. Then if nothing happens, he can use another weapon or his martial arts.

Wears light body armor (half suit): A.R. 10, S.D.C. 60.

Doctor Plastic — Hero

Albert Johnson's brother Bill was in bad shape. An incurable disease would soon take his life and the great scientist could do nothing. It was Bill who suggested Al complete an experiment that had a slight chance of transferring Bill's mind into an artificial body. The technology was untested but it worked. Doctor Bill Johnson survived. Unfortunately, his brother died in a car accident a week later, and the knowledge of how he was created was lost. With his new body came a new life that Bill wanted to use wisely, so he sought out the advice of the superheroes in town.

Bill's appearance was a shock to the hero community. He looked like a life-size, plastic action figure. Bill's body was red with white bands at the base of the neck, where the shoulders join the chest, and at the waist, wrists and ankles. Only his bald head and neck were flesh colored. In fact, Bill's entire body was made of plastic, hence the name Doctor Plastic. Bill's abilities include the following:

1. Through an electrochemical reaction, he can change the hardness of his body from 180 S.D.C. to 400, and even turn liquid!
2. Special fibers throughout Bill's body act as his nervous system connected to an optical computer brain. These fibers allow him to experience the five senses.
3. He can mentally remold his features and change colors, with an automatic chameleon ability.
4. Does not need to breathe, or eat or drink, although he does so on occasion because he misses it.
5. Doctor Plastic's body is powered by a mini-nuclear battery housed in a metal disc that is only a half inch thick, located in his chest.

One thing he cannot do is stretch any part of his body. Also, he cannot selectively liquefy a certain part of his body, i.e an arm or leg. It has to be his whole body or not at all.

Real Name: Bill Johnson

Alignment: Scrupulous

Attributes: I.Q.: 22, M.E.: 14, M.A.: 20, P.S.: 25, P.P.: 10, P.E.: 18, P.B.: 11, Spd.: 17

Height: 6 feet, 6 inches (2.1 m).

Weight: 340 lbs (153 kg).

Experience Level: 2nd.





A.R.: 5

S.D.C.: Variable: 180 to 400.

Power Category: Experiment.

Mutant Characteristics: None.

Major Super Abilities: None.

Minor Super Abilities: Impervious to Fire and Heat, Nightstalking, Radar, and Supervision: Nightvision.

Natural Abilities: Able to vary density of his "skin," and can turn his body into a liquid, mainly for escape.

Disposition: Pleasant and polite, he saves his anger for the criminals.

Appearance: Like a plastic action figure brought to life. He has decided to not allow toy manufacturers to duplicate him. Thinks it's tacky.

Combat: Hand to Hand: Expert.

Number of Attacks: 6

Bonuses: +2 to roll with punch, fall, impact, +5 to initiative, +2 to pull punch, +3 to parry and dodge, +2 to strike, +10 to damage. 60% to trust/intimidate, +2 vs magic and poison, +6% vs coma/death.

Education Level and Skills: Medical Doctor and Science Programs.

Skills of Note: Criminal Science & Forensics (48%), Computer Hacking (43%), Computer Operation (53%), Computer Programming (43%). W.P. Semi-Auto Pistol, W.P. Sub-machinegun, W.P. Shotgun.

Weapons and Melee Combat: Carries a shotgun and 9 mm pistol at all times but adds a sub-machinegun when he knows he's heading into a battle.

Nightstalking Summary: Hide motionless in shadows/darkness: 76%. Can see those cloaked in unnatural or magical dark-

ness and recognizes vampires and Shadow Beasts even when they are in shadows. Cannot be turned into the undead. +10% on tracking, land navigation and prowl. Nightvision 1000 feet (305 m). +1D6 to damage (only at night). +50 S.D.C. (only at night).

Radar Summary: Range: 500 feet (152.4 m), Interpreting Shapes: 55%, Estimating Distance: 64%, Estimating Direction: 64%, Estimating Speed: 44%, Estimating exact location: 54%, No penalties apply when blinded. **Note:** Radar does not go through wood, glass, metal or people. Also, radar is totally fouled by rain, snow, dust, sandstorms and similar, so no bonuses apply under these conditions, including no additional attack per melee. Smoke and fog also fouls radar but not as severely. All the abilities to estimate speed, direction, distance, shape and location are -30%. He is also -2 on initiative, -1 to parry and dodge, -1 to strike and loses one attack per melee.



Flying Snake — Villain

The Flying Snake is an evil alien robot that flies via a form of antigravity propulsion. Why or how he came to earth is unknown, however, he enjoys combat with what he calls "inferior earthians." The Flying Snake's body segments are unique in that they can allow his body to stretch from a normal 8 feet to twenty feet. Although an artificial creation, the snake experiences a full range of emotions.

With a body made of a light but extremely strong alloy, and a special forked tongue that can punch a hole in thin steel large enough for him to crawl through, the snake can get into and out many places inaccessible to humans. His primary source of amusement is breaking into businesses owned by criminal enterprises, absorbing computer memories and selling them to the highest bidder, always from among the competition. Highly in-

telligent, he actually works for a flesh and blood alien named Bar'ren.

Bar'ren appears to be a full grown adult human, but is actually a large, alien snake-like being with the metamorphosis power. To him, earth is a playground, and the trouble he causes is just his idea of fun. Diabolic but child-like, he cruises the world in his invisible flying saucer while eavesdropping on criminal organizations.

Real Name: None

Alignment: Diabolic

Attributes: I.Q.: 23, M.E.: 20, M.A.: 21, P.S.: 12, P.P.: 16, P.E.: 18, P.B.: 10, Spd.: 14 crawling; 320 mph (512 km) flying.

Size: 3 inches (7.62 cm) in diameter, 8 feet (2.4 m) long.

Weight: 90 lbs (40.5 kg).

Experience Level: Equivalent to 7th.

A.R.: 5

S.D.C.: 500

Power Category: Robotics.

Major Super Abilities: None.

Minor Super Abilities: Radar, Supervision: Infrared & Ultraviolet, Supervision: Nightvision, Supervision: Advanced Sight, and Supervision: X-Ray.

Natural Abilities: Antigravity flight.

Disposition: Snob and a braggart.

Appearance: A metal snake with a dull, light gray finish.

Combat: Special

Number of Attacks: 12

Bonuses: +14 to dodge and parry, +8 to auto dodge, +9 on initiative, constrict/crush/squeeze on a roll of 17-20.

Education Level and Skills of Note: Equivalent to one year of College. Computer Operation (99%), Computer Programming (79%), Computer Hacking (79%), Streetwise (63%), Prowl (74%).

Weapons and Melee Combat: Crush/squeeze does 4D6, bite does 4D10+5, flexible metal tongue does 1D6x10, flying head butt does 2D6+4.

Bar'ren

Real Name: Bar'ren

Alignment: Diabolic

Attributes: I.Q.: 28, M.E.: 22, M.A.: 15, P.S.: 29, P.P.: 20, P.E.: 29, P.B.: 11, Spd.: 22

Height: Human Form: 5 feet, 11 inches. Natural Form: 18 feet long.

Weight: Human Form: 170 lbs. Natural Form: 144 lbs

Experience Level: 10th

Hit Points: 58 (His Force Aura is A.R.: 14.)

S.D.C.: 345/540

Power Category: Alien

Mutant Characteristics: None

Major Super Abilities: Force Aura

Minor Super Abilities: Extraordinary Physical Strength, Healing Factor, and Supervision: Nightvision.

Natural Abilities: Mind control, and metamorph into any living being that is between 1 to 6 feet (.3 to 1.8 m).

Disposition: Brash, mean and easily offended. Can be nice and reasonable only if he is treated nicely.

Appearance: Slavic looking human with black hair and mustache. In snake form, he resembles a cobra. His Force Aura power causes him to glow in either form.

Combat: Hand to Hand: Martial Arts. Special in snake form.

Number of Attacks: 6

Bonuses: +7 to roll with punch, fall, impact, +3 on initiative, +3 to pull punch, +6 to parry and dodge, +5 to strike, +25 to damage, +4 to disarm, Karate style kick doing 2D4, wheel kick doing 2D6, crescent kick doing 2D4+2, backward sweep, tripping/leg hook, All jump kicks, Critical strike on unmodified roll of 18, 19 or 20, paired weapons, leap attack (critical strike), body throw/flip. In snake form, crush/squeeze does 2D6x10, bite does 3D10+5.

Education Level and Skills of Note: Alien Rogue. Computer Operation, Computer Programming and Computer Hacking, all at 98%. Concealment, Find Contraband & Illegal Weapons, Pick Locks, and Prowl, all at 98%.

Weapons and Melee Combat: In human form, he uses a laser rifle (range: 1400 feet/427 m, damage 6D6 per blast, 20 shot energy clip) and a laser pistol (range: 300 feet/91 m, damage 4D6, 15 shot energy clip). Regards most earth weapons as inferior.



Foam — Villain

From time to time, something from another dimension comes to earth, and it's not nice. The humanoid that calls itself Foam looks like a six foot (1.8 m) tall man that someone carved out of a giant sponge. It is filled with a nutrient fluid and has no internal organs. Its face and mouth is like a puppet's. Foam can be stabbed, punched, dropped, shot, run over, and can run through broken glass, with no effect (self-sealing/healing). It does not even fear fire.

Foam just runs amuck, attacking any good thing or person it sees, and then runs away. No one knows where its hiding place is or when or if it sleeps. It apparently understands and speaks all languages.

Real Name: That is its real name!

Alignment: Diabolic.

Attributes: I.Q.: 30, M.E.: 28, M.A.: 20, P.S.: 22, P.P.: 10, P.E.: 18, P.B.: 2, Spd.: 22.

Height: 6 feet (1.8 m)

Weight: 210 lbs (94.5 kg).

Experience Level: 5th.

Hit Points: 30

S.D.C.: 70

Power Category: Alien.

Major Super Abilities: None.

Minor Super Abilities: Extraordinary Physical Strength, Heightened Sense of Hearing, Heightened Sense of Smell, and Impervious to Fire and Heat.

Natural Abilities: Sense good and evil, can heal 6 S.D.C. per hour, and understands and speaks all languages.

Disposition: Mean and evil.

Appearance: A gray-green sponge man with two white circles with black dots for eyes. Mouth is a slit, no nose. Horror Factor 12.

Combat: Hand to Hand: Expert.

Number of Attacks: 5

Bonuses: +2 to roll with punch, fall, impact, +4 to parry, +6 to dodge, +2 to strike, +9 on initiative, +21 to damage, Karate style kick doing 2D4, roundhouse kick doing 3D6, and wheel kick doing 2D6. +7 vs psionics, +11 vs insanity, +6% vs coma/death, +2 vs magic and poison, 60% to intimidate.

Education Level and Skills of Note: General Studies (Alien). Prowl (66%), Streetwise (57%).

Weapons and Melee Combat: Relies on physical attacks and will use handy objects as weapons. Does not use modern weapons.

Gasser — Villain

Rob Weir worked as a chemist until an accidental exposure to some strange gases drove him mad. It was that madness which inspired him to create gas weapons to fight all the heroes or villains that challenged him, as the Gasser. Rob's arsenal consists of small cylinders of various gases that are hidden in the full length overcoat he wears and a few on his body. The gases include knockout, tear gas, smoke, hypnosis, paralysis, fear inducing, and laughing gas. Two air canisters for toxic environments and underwater, are attached to a belt.

Hoses are connected to the cylinders and run to both hands. The desired gas is shot out of a hose by pressing the appropriate button on a wristwatch style device. One shot releases a dose of the gas, and automatically shuts off the flow.

Among Rob's insanities is an obsession with body building (exposure to the gases also enhanced his strength). He has an impressive in-home gym in the basement. Rob survives through robbery, and the money he makes doing special jobs for other criminals. A thrill seeker, those special jobs usually involve breaking into high security facilities, including computer assembly plants, research labs that produce weapons or proto-

type military equipment, and even missions involving breaking out prison inmates.

Real Name: Robert Weir

Alignment: Miscreant

Attributes: I.Q.: 22, M.E.: 15, M.A.: 17, P.S.: 40, P.P.: 20, P.E.: 19, P.B.: 13, Spd.: 21

Height: 6 feet, 2 inches.

Weight: 200 lbs

Experience Level: 4th

Hit Points: 46

S.D.C.: 105

Power Category: Experiment.

Major Super Abilities: None.

Minor Super Abilities: Extraordinary Physical Strength, Healing Factor, Supervision: Nightvision, and Supervision: Ultraviolet & Infrared.

Natural Abilities: None.

Disposition: Loud and maniacal. He likes to taunt his opponents.

Appearance: Tall and muscular, he has an unremarkable face that is easily lost in a crowd.

Combat: Hand to Hand: Expert.

Number of Attacks: 4

Bonuses: +2 to roll with punch, fall, impact, +2 to pull punch, +6 to parry and dodge, +5 to strike, +2 on initiative, +25 to damage. +18% vs coma/death, +8 vs magic/poison, +3 vs psionics, 45% to trust/intimidate.



Education Level and Skills of Note: Doctorate. Computer Operation (93%), Computer Programming (83%), Computer Hacking (83%), Concealment (70%), Palming (73%), Prowl (78%), Locksmith (78%), climbing (93%), Surveillance Systems (83%). W.P. Semi-Auto Pistol, W.P. Automatic Rifles, and W.P. Shotgun.

Weapons and Melee Combat: Always carries a 9mm pistol and shotgun. All of his gas weapons have a range of 100 feet

(30.5 m). Each gas canister holds 12 shots, except for the air canisters which contain 15 minutes of breathable air each. For info on tear gas, knockout gas, and smoke, see HU2, page 341. A successful save against poison/toxin for the following gases will reduce the duration/effect by half.

Hypnosis: Up to two, simple, non-life threatening commands can be given to the victim per dose.

Paralysis: The victim is paralyzed for two minutes (eight melees) per dose.

Fear Inducing: This gas is primarily used against normal people. A failed roll to save means the victim loses initiative and one melee attack for two minutes. Superheroes and supervillains who succumb to this gas automatically suffer half the penalties.

Laughing Gas: The victim will laugh or feel like laughing for two minutes. All skills are performed at -10% and bonuses from weapon proficiencies and combat training are reduced by half.

Lights out! — Villain

Officer Paul Jeffries had the first encounter. He and his partner had been called in on a silent alarm at a jewelry store. While his partner covered the back door, Paul drew his gun and entered. His jaw dropped when he saw a piece of jewelry rise into the air and then come down and disappear, all by itself. By the time he got himself together, two more pieces of jewelry had done the same thing. Then he noticed three sales clerks huddled together, terrified. Not sure about what to do, he got another shock when a man holding a bag suddenly appeared out of nowhere, not ten feet away from him. Paul shouted, "Freeze! Don't move!" The man with the long white hair and all dressed in white, replied, "I'm sorry officer, but I've got to make a living too. Lights out!" The man disappeared before Paul's eyes.

The next encounter came when an undercover officer spotted the thief a few days later and called for back-up. Six policemen managed to trap him in an alley and approached him three on each side. They were carrying nets.

The man in white just smiled, and said, "I'm sorry to inconvenience you gentlemen." With that, he simply pointed to one officer and the man disappeared. The rest of the cops just stopped in their tracks and heard a voice, "Hey guys. What's wrong?" The commanding officer replied, "You're invisible, Charlie." Then as the cops tried to rush the man in white, their quarry said, "Lights out!" They managed to catch nothing but air when they reached the spot where he had been. The invisible officer became visible a few seconds later.

The man the press is calling "Lights out!" is actually a mystical alien being called a Jeelon, hiding from the lawmen of his home planet. His natural appearance is that of a large house cat. Sure, he could continue paying for or stealing the good things earth has to offer and stay invisible at all times, but what fun would that be? Plus he's looking forward to matching wits with some superheroes.

Recently, the police are using motion detectors (range: 100 feet/30.5 m) and paint ball guns (range: 100 feet/30.5 m) to help track him down and capture him. They've also learned that if one of their own is turned invisible, all that man has to do is pick up something he was not holding at the time, or to put on other clothing.

Real Name: Er'mana



Alignment: Anarchist.
Attributes: I.Q.: 22, M.E.: 25, M.A.: 20, P.S.: 40, P.P.: 18, P.E.: 22, P.B.: 18, Spd.: 20
Height: 5 feet, 10 inches (1.7 m).
Weight: 170 lbs (76.5 kg).
Experience Level: 6th
Hit Points: 36
S.D.C.: 65
Power Category: Alien.
Major Super Abilities: None.
Minor Super Abilities: Bend Light, Clock Manipulation, Extraordinary Physical Strength, and Mental Stun.
Natural Abilities: Metamorph, levitate self, invisibility, and turn others invisible.
Disposition: Cool and calm, even in combat. Considers himself superior to most people.
Appearance: A man with long, white hair, pale skin, and dressed all in white. His natural appearance is that of a large, smoke gray cat.
Combat: Hand to Hand: Martial Arts.
Number of Attacks: 5
Bonuses: +4 to roll with punch, fall, impact, +3 on initiative, +4 to pull punch, +5 to parry and dodge, +4 to strike and disarm, +25 to damage, Karate style kick doing 2D4, snap kick doing 1D6, roundhouse kick doing 3D6, crescent kick doing 2D4+2, backward sweep, All jump kicks, and Critical strike on an unmodified roll of 18, 19 or 20. +5 vs psionics, +8 vs insanity, +14% vs coma/death, +4 vs magic/poison, 60% to trust/intimidate.
Education Level and Skills of Note: Combat Specialist (Alien). Climbing (80%), Prowl (60%), Running, Swim (85%), Card Sharp (48%), Palming (45%), Pick Pockets (54%), Safecracking (40%), Streetwise (40%), Ventriloquism (36%).
Weapons and Melee Combat: Relies primarily on his natural abilities, but does carry a 9mm pistol. He does not fight in his cat form, but uses it for stealthy entries and escapes.

Manakin

Morris Evans was a normal child and a normal teenager. By the time he was ready to go to college he had developed an interest in business and finance. Morris completed college with a grade point average that was good enough to get him a job as a junior stock analyst. He made good money, but as time passed he started to feel bored. Then at age 28, as if in answer to his desire to do something more interesting, it happened. Day by day he became smarter, his memory improved, he felt more energetic. Morris soon found that he could read and learn anything and began to develop an interest in becoming an inventor. By his 29th birthday, he had quit his job and joined a bioengineering company, who hired him without a resume because of his obvious brilliance. In a very short time Morris showed that he could solve problems more quickly than researchers with a lot more experience, and he kept getting smarter and learning more. At the age of 30, after cashing in his stock options and funneling his patent royalties into a dummy corporation, Morris quit this job and disappeared.

Unfortunately, a desire to do evil was also manifesting itself in Morris' mind. The super genius wanted to be free to pursue

his work without outside interference, because he knew he would be considered a criminal by those who did not understand him. To that end, Morris used his genius to alter his own genes and his appearance. He changed his name and soon began making big money in the stock market to finance his dreams. His god-like dreams.

Morris decided to create an improved human being. He called his creation Manakin, a nonliving biomimic built through nanotechnology. It would be a work in progress that would improve and evolve as Morris' intellect did. And it would do his bidding without question. To Morris, it would be a worthy replacement to those annoying lesser humans that currently populate the earth. Manakin would eventually be the perfect superhuman.

Manakin is now ready to enter the world as a heartless superbeing that will do whatever his creator wants. Morris will test Manakin's perfect physique, perfect mind and super-strong body, against low level beings he considers threats to his plans. If Manakin proves successful, he will take on all comers, including good and evil superbeings.

Real Name: That is its name, but it is currently using the alias, Ray Desmond.

Alignment: Miscreant

Attributes: I.Q.: 65, M.E.: 28, M.A.: 25, P.S.: 30, P.P.: 20, P.E.: 21, P.B.: 19, Spd.: 25

Height: 6 feet (1.8 m).

Weight: 200 lbs (90 kg).

Experience Level: Equivalent to 4th.

Hit Points: 50

S.D.C.: 125



Power Category: Robotics (semi-organic).

Major Super Abilities: Natural Combat Ability.

Minor Super Abilities: Extraordinary Physical Strength, Extraordinary Physical Prowess, Extraordinary Physical Endurance, and Extraordinary Physical Beauty.

Natural Abilities: Not applicable.

Disposition: An arrogant bully.

Appearance: Tall and muscular human male. Manakin wears a metallic gold costume that reflects light, sometimes to an annoying degree.

Combat: Natural Combat

Number of Attacks: 7

Bonuses: +3 on initiative, +2 to disarm or entangle, +3 to pull punch, +3 to roll with punch, fall, impact, auto-dodge, punch for 1D6+2, power punch doing 2D6+8 (counts as two attacks), kick attack doing 2D4, Karate style kick doing 2D6+2, jump kick: automatic Critical strike (counts as two attacks), leap attack: Critical strike, head butt doing 1D6, knockout/stun on roll of 19-20, Judo style throw/flip: 2D4 damage plus victim loses initiative and one melee attack, +2 to save vs Horror Factor, +1 to save vs possession and mind control.

Education Level and Skills: Special. He has been programmed with the equivalent of a college education, and can be programmed with additional knowledge as required.

Weapons and Melee Combat: Manakin can pick up and use any type of melee weapon, as well as modern firearms and energy weapons. However, all such weapons are used with only a +2 to strike/shoot (aimed shot) and parry. Rate of fire, like for the bow and arrow, is equal to the his number of attacks per melee round, plus one.

Additional Natural Combat abilities include: Back flip 78%, paired weapons, exceptional balance 76%, can jump 10 feet (3 m) high by 15 feet (4.6 m) long (increase by 50% with a running start).

When wearing civilian clothes, Manakin carries a large duffel bag that contains add-on parts for his body. Each part attaches to its connection point and becomes functional in two melees.

Extra arms: Two arms to augment his own, usually attached just below the originals. Adds two attacks per melee.

Tentacles: Four tentacles as long as his arms, usually attached on the sides of the chest. Adds four attacks per melee, but since the tentacles have no hands, they can only use melee weapons.

Eyes: Infrared, ultraviolet, nightvision, x-ray (just pop one set of eyeballs out and put in another).

Brain enhancers: He carries four mushroom like attachments that contain information about his next opponents and/or specialized information related to his next mission. A unique form of software.

Note: His creator may be a super-genius, but he is also a super-weenie who will never engage in combat.



Razorfish — Villain

Don Fish is the owner of a little antique store who enjoys collecting the more unusual items that come in from time to time. His most recent acquisition is a small stone carving of a piranha that was sold to him by a strange looking man who said he bought it in South America. After bringing it home, Don discovered an undecipherable inscription in the bottom of the carving. He later went to bed with thoughts of contacting a museum about the piece.

After falling asleep, a gray mist began to rise from the stone piranha and entered Don's nostrils. When he awoke, his mind was controlled by the essence of an ancient evil shaman (in his native tongue, the shaman's name is "Getonwithyourlife"). And Don could now metamorph into a giant, three foot long piranha at will. He was now Razorfish.

As Razorfish, he has the power of wingless flight and hover. He can bite through steel and has been seen attacking people in their cars. Razorfish also enjoys chewing through concrete, and brick walls to get to his opponents. When hungry, he just breaks into grocery stores for whatever he wants.

Only the entity that possesses Don knows why Razorfish does what he does. In fact, Razorfish has never seriously harmed anyone, except for a few heroes. It seems his purpose is to spread fear and destruction wherever he goes.

Real Name: Don Fish

Alignment: Don is Anarchist, Razorfish is Diabolic

Attributes: Human Form: I.Q.: 12, M.E.: 11, M.A.: 14, P.S.: 17, P.P.: 18, P.E.: 11, P.B.: 9, Spd.: 12.

Razorfish: I.Q.: 20, M.E.: 23, M.A.: 22, P.S.: 18, P.P.: 10, P.E.: 10, P.B.: 2, Spd.: 22 (flying)

Height: Human Form: 5 feet, 6 inches (1.65 m). Razorfish: 3 feet (0.9 m) long.

Weight: Human Form: 220 lbs (99 kg). Razorfish: 30 lbs (13.5 kg).

Experience Level: 4th level (Razorfish).

Hit Points: 12 (Razorfish: 80 S.D.C. with an A.R. 14).

S.D.C.: 10 (430 Razorfish).

Power Category: Mystically Bestowed Abilities.

Major Super Abilities: Force Aura (Razorfish).

Minor Super Abilities: None.

Natural Abilities: Razorfish can fly, hover, swim and talk.

Disposition: Polite when dealing with customers at his shop. Outside of work, he's a grumpy loner.

Razorfish is mean and likes to put people down. He also enjoys threatening people. Note: Don is unaware of Razorfish and vice versa, thanks to the mind controlling shaman that inhabits his body.

Appearance: Don is short and round, balding and in his late forties. Razorfish is just a large, glowing piranha.

Combat: Don has no combat skills and prefers to run if confronted by something dangerous. Razorfish has only a few ways to fight.

Number of Attacks: 1 as a mere human, but 6 as Razorfish.

Bonuses: Razorfish is +8 to dodge, +2 to parry and +4 to roll with punch, fall, impact.

Education Level and Skills of Note: Don finished High School and Razorfish shares Don's education, but he has learned a few other things. Streetwise (37%), Detect Ambush (50%), Detect Concealment (45%), Intelligence (49%), Tracking (45%).

Weapons and Melee Combat: Don, none. Razorfish has the supernatural ability to bite through metal, brick and concrete, doing 1D6x10, and head butts, doing 2D4. When biting, Razorfish's force aura automatically blinks on and off so his teeth can do their work.

Rocket Dog — Hero

While conducting experiments in interdimensional teleportation, scientist Darrel Nightbulb discovered a dimension where his favorite cartoon character, Rocket Dog, is a real animal with supercanine powers! Now the two are master and crime-fighter, patrolling the streets, day and night. When Rocket Dog senses a crime in progress or a villain nearby, he uses his mental powers to unhook his leash and flies off at high speed. You can tell he's really mad when he goes "supersonic," the sonic boom striking fear into all evildoers.

Should a criminal not surrender quietly, the wire haired terrier can use his telekinetic punch and kick, telekinesis, or a special telekinetic bite, to subdue him. To bite, all Rocket Dog has to do is open his mouth and a pair of very large, white teeth and jaws appear in mid-air in front of him. When he decides to bite down, the ghostly jaws do the actual biting. Should all that fail, Rocket Dog also has limited invulnerability and his regular dog bite (1D6 damage).

Although Darrel Nightbulb has no super powers, he does carry a few gadgets that benefit both himself and his ally, Rocket Dog. One is a micro-cell phone built into his right ear-

lobe. All he has to do is think of a phone number and it is automatically dialed. The down side is if someone tries to contact Darrel, the phone rings (not too loudly) inside his ear. A mixed blessing is people getting out of Darrel's way when he's walking down the street, having a conversation with someone who is not there.

Another gadget is a glove with a cuff on Darrel's right hand. Dubbed "The Big Hand," it can be inflated to ten times the size of a normal hand by pressing a stud located in its collar. It is fully articulated and Darrel uses it to backhand (2D6+10) or punch (2D6+20) adversaries (+2 to strike when using The Big Hand).

The use of the "Super Leash" is shared by Darrel and Rocket Dog. When Rocket Dog sees Darrel in trouble, he can fly by and telekinetically reattach his leash while Darrel is holding it, whisking him out of danger. In situations where a criminal needs to be restrained, Rocket Dog can mentally command the leash to stretch up to 100 feet (3 m) long and use it to tie him up or as a rope to climb, etc.. The leash is indestructible.

Real Name: Rocket Dog

Alignment: Scrupulous.

Attributes: I.Q.: 28, M.E.: 15, M.A.: 12, P.S.: 29, P.P.: 18, P.E.: 20, P.B.: 17, Spd.: Mach one

Height: 9 inches (22.86 cm) from feet to top of head.

Weight: 10 lbs (4.5 kg).

Experience Level: 6th

Hit Points: 80

S.D.C.: 450

Power Category: Alien

Major Super Abilities: Sonic Flight.

Minor Super Abilities: Heightened Sense of Hearing, Heightened Sense of Smell, Limited Invulnerability (NEW).

Natural Abilities: Telekinesis, telekinetic punch, kick and bite.

Disposition: Mean and rough with supervillains. Otherwise friendly and knows how to tell a good joke.

Appearance: A little brown dog.

Combat: Special

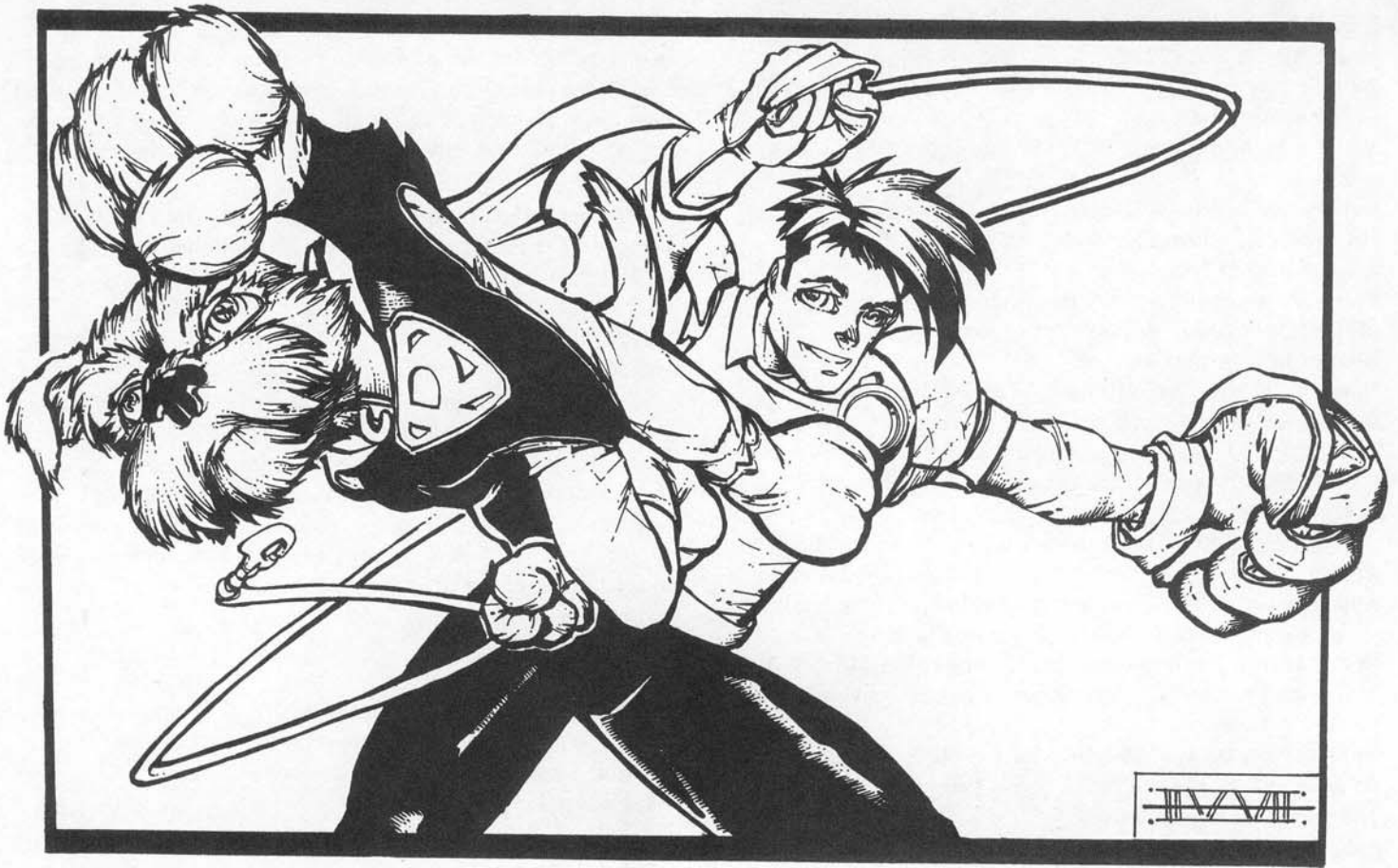
Number of Attacks: Five psionic attacks or four physical.

Bonuses: +2 to initiative, +7 to dodge, +3 to roll with punch, fall, impact, +3 vs magic/poison and +20% to save vs coma/death. While in flight, he is +1 to strike, +2 to parry, and +6 to dodge.

Education Level and Skills of Note: General Studies (Alien). Prowl (69%), Streetwise (59%).

Weapons and Melee Combat: Rocket dog relies on hit and run tactics to fight the bad guys. His Sonic Flight ability provides him with the following: Can go from zero to 700 mph (1126 kph) in four seconds, a sonic ram causing 1D4x10 damage to his opponent and 3D6 to himself (counts as two attacks), extraordinary vision that allows him to see a two foot (0.6 m) object with perfect clarity, two miles (3.2 km) away; nightvision: 1000 feet (305 m), maximum altitude: 45,000 feet (13,716 m), can hold breath for six minutes and forty seconds, and takes half damage from cold. He can stop quickly, make sharp turns and hover at will.

Telekinesis (see HU2, pg. 303), Telekinetic Punch (or Kick, see HU2, pg. 304), and a Telekinetic Bite (NEW): From up to three feet (0.9 m) away, Rocket Dog can bite with ghostly telekinetic teeth much larger than his own. 6D10x10 damage. There is no I.S.P. Cost for using these natural abilities.



Lastly, his Limited Invulnerability (NEW) provides the following: Most physical attacks do half their normal damage, as well as supernatural punches, bites and kicks. Gases, drugs, chemicals, poisons, toxins, disease and radiation also do half damage. Rocket Dog is vulnerable to psionics, spell magic, magic illusions and magic weapons, which have full effect.

A normal bite does 2 points of damage.

Note: Darrel is a normal person with no combat skills (Three actions per round) and other than his amazing I.Q. 23, all other stats are fairly average at 9 or 10. Speed attribute is 15 and he rides a jet pack or hovercycle of his own invention (both can fly 200 mph/320 km; fast and silent) to keep up with Rocket Dog. Scrupulous alignment and a sweet, caring, Boy Scout-type.

Slappy — Villain

Johnnie “Slappy” Simms was waiting in his dentist’s office and decided to pick up one of those archaeology magazines. He read about the discovery of some gold statues in Africa and when he saw they were four pounds of pure gold each, a little calculator went off in his head. At the end of the article was an ad inviting amateur archaeologists to visit the site. He was there.

At the site, Johnnie snuck into the cave where the discovery was made. There was a tunnel at the back of the cave that was roped off. He ignored the “danger” sign and crawled into a large cavern. Then he found it, a three foot tall stone column with a hole carved into the top. The hole was filled with water and just under the water was a gold statue. Johnnie pulled the statue out and rushed back to his hotel to admire his prize. Suddenly, his hands felt like they were on fire. He fainted from the pain.

Now Johnnie was cursed with hands that looked and felt like hard leather. On the plus side, before he left Africa, he sold the statue to a black market antiquities dealer for a lot more than its gold value. But during the flight back home, Johnnie decided his (slightly numbed) hands could be an asset too.

Wearing a clown mask and laughing as he works, Slappy’s mode of attack is unique. Not only does he rapidly slap faces and push ordinary people down so he can rob them of their valu-



ables, his magically cursed hands have the same effect on superbeings. But most recently, after wishing he could disappear after encountering a particularly powerful hero, Slappy discovered he could turn invisible at will!

Real Name: John Simms

Alignment: Miscreant.

Attributes: I.Q.: 17, M.E.: 13, M.A.: 12, P.S.: 14, P.P.: 17, P.E.: 14, P.B.: 12, Spd.: 15

Height: 5 feet, 9 inches (1.68 m).

Weight: 140 lbs (63 kg).

Experience Level: 2nd.

Hit Points: 26

S.D.C.: 46

Power Category: Mystically Bestowed Abilities.

Major Super Abilities: Invisibility

Minor Super Abilities: Cursed Hands (NEW)!

Natural Abilities: None.

Disposition: Usually quiet but nervous. However, when he assaults people, he loses his nervousness and laughs with glee.

Appearance: Thin, bad dresser, beady eyes.

Combat: Hand to Hand: Basic.

Number of Attacks: 4

Bonuses: +2 to roll with punch, fall, impact, +2 to pull punch, +4 to parry and dodge, +2 to strike.

Education Level and Skills of Note: High School dropout (NEW). Streetwise (27%), Concealment (27%), Palming (28%), Locksmith (33%), Prowl (33%), Climbing (48%), Surveillance Systems (38%). W.P. Semi-Auto Pistol, W.P. Automatic Rifle, W.P. Knife.

Weapons and Melee Combat: His Cursed Hands (NEW) provide the following: His trademark rapid-fire slapping attack does 1D6 damage and he gains 4 attacks per melee for this attack only. Superbeings are affected by this magical attack the same as normal people.

The hands can magically push superbeings to the ground, the same as normal people. Also, Slappy usually carries a pistol and a knife.

Slugg — Hero

A flaming extraterrestrial craft fell into the ocean two years ago. Its occupant, a three foot tall humanoid alien with an oversized head, survived only by using his armored survival and escape suit. His ship exploded in the depths. Today, Orin Stran is counted among the heroes of earth. It was his heroic friends who gave him the name Slugg.

His remarkable survival suit looks like a five foot long, slimy, elongated teardrop, not unlike a snail without a shell, except for two large, bulging eyes. The suit is psionically controlled and is usable only by Orin. To don the suit, a mental command is given that causes a molecular zipper to open it lengthwise. The interior is made of a soft, cottony fiber that can control the temperature inside the suit. Orin uses his natural psionics to guide the self-propelled suit, which can even climb vertical surfaces of any kind. The eyes are able to fire beams of energy and are charged with psychic energy before use.

He can psionically see the outside world while in the suit, and he can move in it as quickly as his normal speed attribute.

Real Name: Orin Stran

Alignment: Principled.

Attributes: I.Q.: 20, M.E.: 28, M.A.: 28, P.S.: 16, P.P.: 18, P.E.: 17, P.B.: 8, Spd.: 22



Height: 3 feet (0.9).

Weight: 65 lbs (29 kg).

Experience Level: Equivalent to 8th.

Hit Points: 62

S.D.C.: 125

I.S.P.: 225

Power Category: Alien.

Major Super Abilities: Create Force Field.

Minor Super Abilities: Impervious to Fire & Heat.

Natural Abilities: Bio-Regeneration (self), Healing Touch, Psychic Surgery, Alter Aura, Ectoplasm, Impervious to Cold, Levitation, Telekinesis, See Aura, See the Invisible (all are the same as the psionic powers in HU2, but there is no I.S.P. cost to use them), and Psychic Sight (NEW), which allows him to see the outside world the same as if his vision was not blocked. Nightvision: 1000 feet (305 m), but it is not a psychic power.

Disposition: Even tempered and kind.

Appearance: Short and slim, with an oversized, egg shaped head. Wears a white uniform that covers him from his feet to his neck.

Combat: Hand to Hand: Basic.

Number of Attacks: 5

Bonuses: +2 to roll with punch, fall, impact, +2 to pull punch, +4 to parry and dodge, Karate style kick doing 2D4 or snap kick doing 1D6, +1 to strike, +1 on initiative, Critical strike on a natural 19 or 20, +3 to damage, body throw/flip and +1 to disarm, +7 vs psionic attack, +11 vs insanity, +5% vs coma/death, +1 vs magic/poison, and 94% to trust/intimidate.

Education Level and Skills of Note: Combat Specialist (Alien). Climbing (91%), Prowl (76%), Swim (98%), Street-wise (56%). W.P. Knife.

Weapons and Melee Combat: The survival suit is psionically linked to Orin and will function for no one else. The suit has the following features:

1. Complete environmental control: A constant interior temperature. It passes air in and out, filters out poisonous gases, and contains enough air to survive for thirty minutes in airless environments. When in the water, an automatic gill system provides oxygen to the user.

2. Maximum depth: 15 miles (24 km).

3. Completely protects against radiation and the environment of outer space.

4. Impervious to heat and cold.

5. Has 500 S.D.C.

6. Can climb any vertical surface.

7. Weapon Eyes: The eyes are actually psi-energy batteries that can be discharged by mental command. Damage: 1D6+10 each; can be fired simultaneously. Payload: 20 psi blasts each before needing a recharge. 30 I.S.P. to recharge one.

8. Sleep Chamber: The suit can put the occupant in suspended animation for up to three years.

9. A self-regenerating power supply is woven into his survival suit, with an unlimited life.

Orin can fire bolts of force from one hand (2D6) or two simultaneously (4D6). See HU2, page 271 for more info. He also carries a stun pistol (range: 135 feet/41 m, causes victim to be dazed: -8 to strike, parry, dodge, no initiative, and reduce attacks per melee by half. Duration: 1D4 melee rounds. 10 shot

energy clip. An ion blaster (range: 200 feet/61 m, damage 5D6, with a 20 shot energy clip). A mini-laser (range: 100 feet/30.5 m, damage 2D6, with a 10 shot energy clip). And a microwave gun (pistol: 120 feet/36 m, damage 2D6, with a 15 shot energy clip). All of these weapons can be recharged from his suit. In an emergency, he will use one of his 14 mini-explosive grenades (size of a golf ball, throwing range: 100 feet/30.5 m, damage 1D6x10, with an effective casualty radius of 12 feet/3.7 m). Orin also carries a knife.



Squish — Hero

After she earned her degree, master chemist Julie Marsh quickly made a name for herself inventing new chemical compounds. At the age of 30, she won her state's lottery. The athletic Julie had always wanted to personally help people, plus she was ready to do something a little more exciting, so she convinced a local hero to show her the ropes. After three years of training, he felt she was ready.

Although a good fighter, Julie used her genius with chemistry to come up with a nonviolent way to deal with crime. One of the things she uses are balloons filled with a chemical that turns into a really sticky slime when it bursts, and is exposed to air. Her full body costume (with gloves, helmet and clear face shield), has a special coating that repels the sticky stuff. Julie has also invented a chemical spray, carried in a can, that she uses to make the sticky stuff decompose and stop being sticky. When Julie caught herself imitating the squish sound the balloons made during testing, she took "Squish" as the name for her hero identity.

Real Name: Julie Marsh
Alignment: Scrupulous
Attributes: I.Q.: 20, M.E.: 14, M.A.: 12, P.S.: 21, P.P.: 20, P.E.: 20, P.B.: 20, Spd.: 150 (105 mph/168 km).
Height: 5 feet, 10 inches (1.7 m).
Weight: 140 lbs (63 kg)
Experience Level: 3rd.
Hit Points: 47
S.D.C.: 78
Power Category: Physical Training.
Major Super Abilities: None
Minor Super Abilities: Extraordinary Strength.
Natural Abilities: None.
Disposition: Friendly and talkative.
Appearance: Tall, physically fit brunette.
Combat: Special (Defensive and Fast Combat).
Number of Attacks: 4
Bonuses: +4 on initiative, +4 to strike, +4 to parry, +5 to dodge, +5 to roll with punch, fall, impact, +2 to disarm, +5 to pull punch, automatic back flip, automatic kick attack, +2 to body flip/throw, body block/tackle doing 1D4, paired weapons (all), Karate style punch doing 2D4, backward sweep kick, special combat abilities (HU2, page 189), Karate style kick

doing 2D6, arm hold, and leg hold, pin/incapacitate on a roll of 18, 19 or 20, crush/squeeze doing 1D4, +6 to damage. +20% vs coma/death, +3 vs magic/poison, and 50% to charm/impress.

Education Level and Skills of Note: Bachelor's Degree. Streetwise (34%), Palming (36%), Locksmith (41%), Surveillance Systems (46%), Acrobatics, Climbing (71%), Prowl (46%), Swimming (66%), Wrestling, Detect Ambush (46%), Detect Concealment (41%), Escape Artist (46%), Tracking (41%).

Weapons and Melee Combat: Carries two knockout gas grenades, a pair of nunchuku, one smoke grenade, a pair of throwing knives, and 100 feet (30.5 m) of high-strength climbing rope. Eight goop balloons are carried in a semirigid kevlar lined backpack (S.D.C. 100). Upon impact, the balloon's contents expand to four times its beginning volume, which is enough to cover the front upper half of a normal size human. The can of degooper has enough to degoop eight balloons' worth of hits. The goop requires a strength of thirty to break out of, but it retains its stickiness, meaning using a hand to hand or thrown weapon would be difficult if not impossible.

Her body suit, helmet and face shield all have nonreflective finishes.

Defective Powers

By **Paulie Ferkelberger**

Not all heroes are like the ones we loved in the comic books. Some fall just a little short of perfection, hence they have mutant abilities that never fully formed or that have strange side effects. Some of these may almost seem like curses, but they can actually add personality and fun to the character. The following is a list of *Minor Super Abilities* that could be adjusted to add a bit of comedy or uncertainty into your campaign. All are optional rules, and not for everybody.

Defects for Minor Super Abilities

Adhesion: A strange, sticky residue is left behind by the adhesion power. Someone could actually follow the character's path by following the residue trail. The residue trail will dissipate after ten minutes. There is a 01-10% chance that the adhesion will be too powerful and act like a powerful super-glue for ten minutes, leaving the character or his followers literally hanging. Perhaps this applies only to a particular substance (brick, glass or steel, perhaps). Both the character and any followers should roll one time every 30 feet (9 m) to see if they stick or whenever they touch that one or two specific surfaces/substances that they stick to better than any other.

Alter Physical Body: There is a 01-35% chance that the character will not be able to recreate his original body! The

problem will be one or two small but possibly important features, such as fingerprints or a birthmark, or dental features. Maybe the ears are too large or small, or pointed, or part of the character still resembles the altered structure — hair like straw or that is spiked and hard like stone, or eyes or fingernails that remain icy blue. The character simply will not be able to remember for 1D6 days. A photo will allow the character to duplicate his original body. 20% chance of a wart appearing on his nose with every transformation.

Bend Light: The character has no reflection! No mirror or clear surface will show the character's reflection. Photographs and videos are always blurred to the point where the character is impossible to recognize. This may be good for the superhero's (or villain's) identity, but not for his Joe Average identity (class pictures or work photos — forget about them). In addition, some people (including other heroes) may assume the character is a spy or alien with a cloaking device, vampire or other dangerous supernatural being. This character may also like to criticize the way other people look and dress.

Clock Manipulation: 33% chance for him to drain any battery that he touches. He must touch the battery directly. It is not sufficient for him to touch the object or container holding the battery. This character hates to be late and will always show up at least 30 minutes early for any date, meeting or appointment. Often sets his clock back 30 minutes and then forgets he has done so, resulting in being early by sixty minutes! Always rushing others.

Energy Expulsion: Under moments of extreme fear or duress, the character will not be able to control the power and begins to wildly release energy in a random pattern. Duration of the random expulsion is one melee round per P.E. point of the individual. Fortunately, this scatter blast or leak of energy rarely does more than 1D4 damage to anybody or thing it strikes. After this loss of control “episode,” the character will become extremely hungry and be able to eat twice his normal meal sizes.

Extraordinary Speed: The character needs 3 feet (0.9 m) of landing space for every 20 mph (32 km) he is travelling, otherwise he crashes or slams into a wall or object. Regardless of his speed, his crashing damage is 1D6 from both Hit Points and S.D.C. This speedster can NOT stop on a dime. Flapping his arms during a landing reduces the length of space required and damage from the crash by half. This character also tends to make wide turns.

Energy Resistance: After using any of his powers, the character’s hair on his head will stand on end for 1D4 hours. During this time the character will give off annoying but not damaging shocks of static electricity.

Flying: Limited to 10 or 20 feet (3 or 6 m) above the ground. Sort of a human cruise missile. He can spin and rotate just for special effects. For some reason, members of the opposite sex are very attracted to this individual; +1D6+5 to M.A. when dealing exclusively with members of the opposite sex.

Healing Factor: Develops 1D6 common food allergies and is prone to earaches and headaches. Nothing serious like the flu or pneumonia, just annoying health problems. Each time he heals broken bones or severe injuries, he breaks out in hives for five minutes. Develops a real passion for chocolate and coconut.

In the alternative, this rugged, fast healing character is prone to nose bleeds and a slight bump or slap to the nose will send a trickle running. This makes him seem less tough than he really is.

Horror Factor: The character has no idea why people run away from him and he is always rationalizing it with excuses, such as, “It must be my deodorant.” As far as he can tell, he is perfectly normal. Or the aura is so powerful that whenever he sees his own reflection the superhuman must roll to save vs his own horrific image!

Impervious to Fire and Heat: The character will unwillingly emit heat under periods of stress or passion. The area of effect is 10 feet (3 m) and the surrounding temperature will increase two degrees per level of the character. Always or often perspiring, regardless of how much deodorant he uses or how cool it may be.

Manipulate Kinetic Energy: 01-33% chance of popping any light bulb that he directly touches or it instantly burns out. For some odd reason, dogs love him and are attracted to him. Any dog within 100 yards will run up to him and want to play.

Mental Stun: Sometimes the character’s brain short circuits and he has difficulty remembering birthdays, anniversaries, holidays, lunch and dinner dates. Usually, shows up 1D6 hours late.

Nightstalking: The character will avoid daytime activities as much as possible, spending most of the daylight hours asleep or in a basement or room only lit by light bulbs. He is not scared of the daytime and will not suffer any damage, it’s just that he loves the “electricity of the night” and is bored by the “obvious

and slow pace of daytime living.” This individual may talk to himself a lot, loud enough for others to hear.

Power Channelling: Sneaking up or startling this individual will cause the character to throw an involuntary Power Punch or Power Body Flip (double damage) at the foolish individual. This does not count as an attack against the character’s attacks per melee round. The character is always warning others not to sneak up on and touch him, particularly his hair, or else. Of course, this is usually just an empty threat from most people, but not this character. He may also be very suspicious or nervous and may wake up suddenly while asleep, thinking he is about to be attacked and flying into an attack position.

Radar: This character is color blind and has a phobia requiring him/her to wear glasses. There may be nothing wrong with his vision, but somehow does not feel complete without his/her glasses. Will try to wear glasses even if they are badly damaged.

Underwater Abilities: For some reason this individual likes to drink non-alcoholic beverages at an incredible rate. Normally consumes about one eight ounce can of soda, fruit juices, coffee, tea or other beverage every half-hour during waking hours without it causing the character any bladder problems. Where it all goes, no one knows.

Defects for Major Super Abilities

By Paulie and Percy Ferkelberger

Alter Facial Features: The character unconsciously alters his or her face to resemble that of famous models and movie stars, especially when trying to impress somebody. This would be bad enough as it is, but his or her features may slowly shift and change before the other person’s very eyes. Photos of this individual vary by 10-50%!

Alter Metabolism: When excited or upset, this character talks so fast that he sounds like a squeaky cartoon chipmunk. Those who hear him have a difficult time understanding what he is saying (-40% to language skill). May also jiggle his foot or leg or twiddle thumbs at a dizzying pace.

Alter Physical Structure: Electricity: After using any of his powers, the character’s hair on his head will stand on end for 1D4 hours and lint tends to cling to him. During this time, touching a light switch has a 01-44% chance of popping the light (burning it out). When extremely angry, electricity shoots from his eyes and strikes the nearest person, doing 1D6 damage. Fortunately, this usually shocks the character into controlling his powers.

Alter Physical Structure: Fire: When angry or frustrated the character actually does a slow burn — turning flush in the face and with steam or smoke rising from his head. When sexually aroused his hands become extremely hot, just short of burning hot, and touching them will startle and frighten people.

Optional alternative. Flatulence (a fart) actually causes a burst of smoke or fire to flash for a second from the character’s behind.

Alter Physical Structure: Ice: Instead of generating a thin coating of ice (power #7), the character generates perfectly formed ice cubes! People may still slip and fall on these cubes, but the power is not as impressive or versatile, except at parties.

Alter Physical Structure: Metal: Even in his normal human form, this character has “buns of steel!” Not just a firm, muscular behind, but literally steel-hard buttocks that is impervious to kicks, pinches and other things that might assail one’s bottom. Never farts! How is that for muscle control?

Alter Physical Structure: Plant: The character has twigs, grass and dirt mixed in with his hair and/or between his toes!

Animal Metamorphosis & Lycanthropy: This character does not have a specific animal that he turns into. Instead, the character uses the Chinese horoscope to help him determine his animal. For one year, he can only become whatever animal it is “The year of” in the Chinese horoscope. He changes upon the first day of February (for game purposes we can use February 1st, in actuality the starting date of the Chinese New Year varies from year to year).

Animal Years

Rat 1972, 1984, 1996

Buffalo 1973, 1985, 1997

Tiger 1974, 1986, 1998

Cat 1975, 1987, 1999

Dragon 1976, 1988, 2000

Snake 1977, 1989, 2001

Horse 1978, 1990, 2002

Goat 1979, 1991, 2003

Monkey 1980, 1992, 2004

Rooster 1981, 1993, 2005

Dog 1982, 1994, 2006

Pig 1983, 1995, 2007

Notice this is a twelve year cycle, starting again in 2008. The order always stays the same, just add or subtract multiples of twelve when dealing with other dates.

For shorter campaigns, rotate through the table each month. There are twelve animals and twelve months, so it works out nicely. Just use the first day of the month as the changeover date.

The Dragon will appear as an enormous lizard, about thirty feet (9 m) long, fifteen feet tall (4.6 m), weighing 2000-3000 pounds (900-1350 kg) with massive wings. The Dragon can fly at speeds of up to 300 mph (480 km). They usually eat small animals and livestock, and are strong enough to lift an adult male horse between their claws. They do not eat humans and will only attack them in self-defense. Instead, they will go on eating rampages devouring at least two thousand pounds of animals at a time. They are highly resistant to magic and psionics (saves at +10). They have all the Heightened Senses and Super-vision powers.

They have supernatural strength (add 4D6 to P.S.) and Horror Factor of 17. Once the Dragon feeds, it will sleep for 4D6 hours, healing 2D6 hit points and S.D.C. per hour. Then it awakes to feed again or transform back into human form. Hit points: 3D6x20, S.D.C.: 3D6x50. All other attributes are re-rolled each time at the end.

Bio-Ghost: Starts to become intangible and ghost-like when embarrassed, even in his civilian identity. Must constantly be on his or her guard, especially if naturally shy.

Chameleon: The character’s skin turns *red-polka-dotted* when embarrassed and *plaid* when angry. A dead giveaway when in civilian identity or disguised.

Control Insects & Arachnids. This character naturally attracts insects, particularly gnats and cockroaches.

Control Kinetic Energy. When daydreaming or feeling especially content, positive or happy, the character walks a foot off the ground! Must concentrate to stay on the ground.

Control Others. The super being has a nasty habit of accidentally controlling ordinary people just for a moment and inadvertently make them respond to the super being’s own morality, thoughts or knee-jerk reaction to something he or she witnesses. For example, a woman who is being sweet-talked by her male companion may be made to kiss him if perceived to be nice, or slapped if he’s being a creep or a cad. The manipulated individual may also be made to stick out his/her tongue, give raspberries, make an obscene gesture, guffaw, frown, stomp his foot, kick, slap or punch somebody, pocket something and so on. Such an outburst is typically not deliberate and lasts only the equivalent of one or two melee actions. This character also tends to be a busybody who regularly eavesdrops on other people’s conversations.

Control Static Electricity: Gives off sparks when excited (including when kissing). Sparks also fly when the character snaps his fingers and/or when he or she sneezes or farts. Hey, potty humor is always good for a cheap laugh.

Create Force Field: If a shy, defensive or stand-offish person, a force field may pop up between him and another character even when that person is trying to be nice, caring or giving him/her a kiss.

If mothering and overprotective, a protective force field may pop up around a teammate or loved one against that person’s will.

Divine Aura: The character has no idea why people are so drawn to him. “It must be my hair.” As far as he can tell, he is perfectly normal.

In the alternative, the character believes he or she is god’s gift to the world and expects people, especially the opposite sex, to fall all over him/her. When they don’t, it drives the character wild and he may spend weeks or even months trying to figure out why that individual doesn’t like him, and/or trying to win that person over. This character tends to believe his farts don’t stink, but boy do they ever.

Energy Absorption: This character is “self-absorbed.” He or she is the center of his little universe. Everything is me, me, me. Everybody else comes second (if at all). Tends to be overconfident.

In the alternative, the character has trouble controlling his powers, so whenever he is around, the lights dim 1D4x10%, the thermostat and ambient heat drops 10 degrees, and the volume on radios, televisions and similar electronic devices drops down a few notches.

Force Aura: Same as power channeling.

Growth: This character can grow as large as usual, only he is toothpick thin when doing so, regardless of how heavy he may be before growing. All stats are the same, just looks like a bean-pole.

Holographic Memory Projection: Oh, oh, watch out for those rude and lewd thoughts, because you’ve just unconsciously transmitted them into a holographic projection for everybody to see. Likewise, or in the alternative, the character

accidentally transmits his thoughts as projections, especially when disenchanting and in a bad mood (i.e. projects himself mooning somebody, sticking out his tongue, making an obscene gesture, or the offending individual with the head of a Jackass, and similar).

Immortality: Prone to bad habits such as smoking, drinking too much, eating fatty foods and lots of red meats, as well as taking up dangerous hobbies like sky-diving, race car driving, etc.

Intangibility: Loses control while dreaming and wakes up under the bed or in the basement. In the alternative, becomes intangible when feeling vulnerable, even in a personal relationship.

Item Reduction: The character is so involved in reducing things that he becomes a penny-pincher who is always looking for reduced prices and bargains. On the other hand, has great difficulty resisting a good bargain.

Magnetism: Often has 1D6 small metal items (paper clips, pins, bottle caps) stuck to the character's head without him realizing it.

Mimic: Sometimes forgets who he really is and acts like some other superbeing, film character, actor or ordinary person for 1D6 hours at a time.

Mechano-Link: Either feels more comfortable with machines and avoids the company of other people, or is a technophile who is always talking about the newest technological innovations.

Multiple Beings: Has a nasty habit of misplacing one of himself.

Plant Control: Tends to be a nature-lover and "Greenbean" activist chaining himself to trees in protest against logging and other environmental issues. Knows everything there is to know about plants and environmental issues. May be reasonable and caring or an overbearing zealot.

Shapechanger: Needs to carry a photograph of himself around to remember what he looks like. Has complete documentation of his or her entire body (every inch). He also has a dislike of the *Planet of the Apes* movies.

Shrink: The character is a shrinking-violet who automatically shrinks by half or more when embarrassed.

Sonic Power: Megaphone mouth. This character talks LOUD all the time, and laughs and sneezes are like mini-sonic booms (-50% to howl). Both irritating and has difficulty being stealthy unless the character shuts up completely.

Sonic Absorption & Reflection: Sometimes, especially when in a hurry, excited or angry, the character absorbs the sound of his own words — and just mouths and gestures like an angry mime.

Sonic Flight: Theme music trails behind whenever this character takes flight! Kinda cool at first, but gets a bit annoying to others after awhile. -15% to howl.

Sonic Speed: For some reason, the character sticks out and wags his tongue, and shouts "Meep, meep!" before taking off. May also make a "varoom, varoom" noise when running, and literally comes to a screeching stop every time (loves the sound).

In the alternative, his sonic speed emits a high-pitch sound that only dogs and others with keen hearing can detect. This

causes any dogs within one mile (1.6 km) of his running trail to howl as the super being zips by. Howling lasts for 1D4 minutes.

Spin at High Velocity: Loves to watch storms and chase tornados. Favorite movie: *Twister*. Favorite dance move: The Twist.

Super-Energy Expulsion: Under moments of extreme fear or duress, the character will not be able to control the power and begins to wildly release energy in a random pattern. Duration of the random expulsion is one melee round per P.E. point of the individual. This scatter blast or leak of energy can be dangerous, inflicting 2D6 damage to anybody or thing it strikes. After this loss of control "episode," the character will become extremely hungry and be able to eat twice his normal meal sizes.

Supernatural Strength: Doesn't know his own strength so handshakes can be painful and removing a lid from a jar may result in the lid being mangled, flying off like a frisbee (does 1D4 damage to whatever it hits) and the entire jar being crushed in his grip. Amazingly gentle and careful with babies and children.

UNLIKELY GODS

By J.P. Ferkelberger

Note: Although most ideal for use in *The Palladium Fantasy RPG*®, these characters are also suitable for *Rifts*®, and even *Heroes Unlimited*™, *Nightbane*® and *Beyond the Supernatural*™.

Supernatural beings known as "Gods" have been around since the dawn of the Megaverse® (and maybe even before). Generally immortal, and possessing powers and abilities beyond the imagining of mere mortals, these beings have helped shape the Megaverse® through their deeds and the influence they exert.

Whether making pacts with mortals or simply imparting wisdom from the benefit of their vast experience, these deities inspire awe, fear, hope, or dread to those who worship and follow them. Yet, it is more than merely their raw power (considerable though it may be) or the simple (yet effective) promise of reward versus the threat of punishment that causes such adulation and reverence among their worshipers.

It is the Gods' sense of grandeur that singles them out. Gods possess a dignity and majesty that impresses even the most jaded mortals. However, even among deities, there are under-achievers.

Geshbourn

The God of Lost Causes

When Geshbourn's deific powers first emerged, there was no question in his mind as to what kind of god he wanted to be. He was fairly strong, very hardy, and he loved a good fight. Thus, he decided to become a god of war.

Unfortunately, the mere desire to fight is not the same as the ability to do so. It turns out that Geshbourn was incredibly inept at combat. Blissfully ignorant of such concepts as tactics and strategy, Geshbourn has this nasty tendency to just charge for-



ward at his foes and attempt to overpower them through brute force. Although this can work against some opponents (especially a god versus mortals), when Geshbourn attempted this against other gods, the results were catastrophic.

Incapable of learning from his mistakes or experience, this feeble god of war keeps making stupid assumptions and excuses for his failures. For example, he decided the best way to establish himself as a power among his fellow gods was by challenging other war gods. Consequently, Geshbourn began by provoking a fight with the Greek god Ares, who severely trounced him. Undeterred, Geshbourn picked himself up and then went after the Celtic god Bres who pummeled him as well. Next, Geshbourn traveled to northern climes where he was beaten to a pulp by Tyr, Thor, and Magni (in that order). Still undeterred, he then travelled east and challenged the gods of India. After losing fights along the way to (among others) Athena, Ares (in a rematch), and Verethraghna, Geshbourn finally reached India where Skanda and Indra made mincemeat out of him.

Figuring that heading west might bring him better fortune, Geshbourn headed in that direction where he was, in turn, defeated by Ishtar and Huitzilopochtli and scores of others. Suffice it to say that Geshbourn has had his butt kicked across the Megaverse®.

An eternal optimist and a “the glass is half full” kind of guy, Geshbourn views each defeat as a triumph — “Oh sure, Ares beat me like a dusty old rug, but as hard as he tried, he couldn’t knock me unconscious, so I guess I showed him.” And, “You’d think after being beaten by well over 9,000 gods and 3,300 demigods, that I would give up. Not me. I just keep coming and coming. Nothing can keep me down. In fact, I’ve seen tears well up in some gods’ eyes when they see me coming.” It’s true, the endless challenges of Geshbourn were having an effect upon the gods he fought. None of these deities considered him a serious threat, but all of them considered him to be a serious nuisance.

As a fighter, Geshbourn was so incompetent that none of the gods felt any sense of accomplishment or victory in triumphing over him. What was worse, by now, Geshbourn had established a reputation as an easy mark and it was becoming difficult for any self-respecting All-Mother, let alone gods of war, to even face him in battle without a sense of regret and misery. There is no pleasure in kicking the crutches out from under the one-legged man (unless you are Loki or some demon lord). Mind you, the gods did not actually feel sorry for Geshbourn — he’s a nut and they were simply embarrassed at having to beat up this poor schmo — even the diabolic gods felt this way!!

Finally, a number of the gods got together to discuss the matter. After a lot of arguing and debate, Athena broached the sug-

gestion that would most effectively stop Geshbourn. Her solution: Give him a meaningless title and a low-ranking position as a lesser God where he could do as little harm as possible and divert his attention elsewhere. Most of the gods were opposed to this suggestion until Athena and Indra suggested that Geshbourn would be perfect as the patron god of **Lost Causes and the Underdog**. Moreover, the specific responsibility of championing hopeless causes would be both entertaining for the other gods and give them a means by which they could interfere with mortals (and each other's plots) via Geshbourn's divine intervention (i.e. championing futile crusades, keeping the embers of war and discord burning, creating false hope, etc.). Since no one had a better idea, this plan won unanimous approval.

Totally oblivious to the irony of the situation or to any insult involved, Geshbourn accepted the position as an honor and as reward for his persistence and keen combat skills. Since then, Geshbourn has stopped fighting his fellow deities and has become a patron of the defeated (but not beaten) and losers (but not the lost), and encouraging (often ill fated and desperate) struggles against overwhelming odds. He is delighted to be a shining example of dogged determination and encourages battles against impossible odds on a frequent basis. Of course he is as puzzled and disappointed by being on the losing side 95% of the time, as the mortals who foolishly take his encouragement to heart, but then, he figures that's why the gods picked him for such a difficult role-model. **Real Name:** Geshbourn

Alignment: Unprincipled.

Description: A tall, lean, but muscular young man with long blond braids reaching his waist and a blond beard with plaits, reaching his chest — something of a pretty boy.

Attributes: I.Q. 15, M.E. 15, M.A. 19, P.S. 35 (supernatural), P.P. 8, P.E. 20, P.B. 20, Spd. 25.

Size: 7 feet tall (2.1 m). **Weight:** 400 lbs (180 kg).

Hit Points & S.D.C. (on non-M.D.C. worlds): 1,101 Hit Points and 2,002 S.D.C..

M.D.C.: 3383 on Rifts Earth or other M.D. environments.

P.P.E.: 500

Horror or Awe Factor: 10

Experience Level: 5th level warrior, 6th level philosopher.

Natural Abilities: See the invisible, resistant to poison, drugs, and toxins (half as effective), nightvision 200 feet (61 m), fire and cold resistant (does half damage), regenerates 1D6x5 Hit Points/S.D.C. or M.D.C. every minute, and impervious to mind control, possession and disease.

Deific Powers: Just the basics. See **Dragons & Gods™** for descriptions of Deific Powers and other godly information.

Skills of Note: Speaks Dragonese/Elven, Atlantean, and six other languages, all at 98%.

Combat Skills: Hand to Hand: Martial Arts.

Number of Attacks: 6 hand to hand attacks per melee.

Restrained Punch: 5D6+24 S.D.C.

Full Strength Punch: 4D6 M.D.

Power Punch or Leap Kick: 1D4x10 M.D.

Kick: 2D4+24 S.D.C.

Bonuses: +3 to initiative, +3 to strike, +6 to parry, +6 to dodge, +24 to damage, +2 to disarm, +3 to roll with punch/fall/impact, +3 to pull punch, +2 to save vs psionics and insanity, +5 vs magic, +3 vs poison, +6 vs Horror Factor, and +10% vs coma.

Magical Knowledge: None; **P.P.E.:** 500

Psionic Knowledge: None

Weapons and Equipment of Note:

1. **Enchanted Chain Mail Armor:** 2,000 S.D.C. (2,000 M.D.C. on Mega-Damage worlds), impervious to fire, and continually glows bright red.

2. **Flaming Broadsword:** Inflicts 6D6 damage.

Disposition: When on a mission, Geshbourn is actually very well-intentioned, positive and genuinely encouraging. In fact, that's what makes him so dangerous, he is so sincere and positive that he *does* encourage and inspire mortals (after all, he is a god and he's on your side!). Having a "god" provide encouragement will usually get even the most skeptical mortals to "take a chance" to "be somebody," "be free," "defeat tyranny," "win the day," or "boldly go where no man has gone before" (um, forget that last one, okay), and so on. However, the god's blind faith in himself and others, combined with absolutely no sense of strategy or tactics, and his general incompetence, is more likely to spell doom than triumph for those he's trying to help. Part of Geshbourn's problem is that he works almost completely on emotion and hasn't learned over the many millennia that "faith and desire" are often not enough to get a job done — but that part eternally escapes him. Furthermore, his inflated opinion of his own abilities and entrenched belief of cliches like "good will always triumph," "justice shall prevail," etc., makes him insistent on doing things his way. Being a god, most mortals will follow with little or no protest or questions. After all, the other gods specifically handpicked him for this job, didn't they?

As a result of constant defeat, Geshbourn has become expert at making plausible sounding excuses: "They caught us by surprise or we would have won, or if only we had more time, or more men, or better weapons, or more magic, or we weren't betrayed, or ..." there's always an "or" — you get the picture. "Never give up! Never lose hope." is one of Geshbourn's favorite slogans. Another is, "... Next time ..." i.e. "We'll regroup, rebuild and *next time* we we'll strike with twice as many men and triumph for certain!" He's also fond of sayings involving the words "luck," "hope," and "dreams."

1. Although greatly outclassed by the other war gods, Geshbourn is very impressive by human standards. However, despite his personal fearlessness and eternal optimism, he is an extremely poor general. His favorite strategy (in fact, his only strategy) is to go to the head of an army, draw his sword, and lead the charge after saying something stirring to the men. He's not much on subterfuge or strategies and tactics. In fact, those with the best hope of success are those "inspired by," but not actually led by, the god.

2. It is supremely ironic that Geshbourn (who still fancies himself a god of war, or more to the point, the "spirit" of war), is the only being who was ever responsible for bringing a number of contentious war gods together and getting them to reach a unanimous decision about something.



Telthi

Goddess of Cooking

Telthi is a goddess who managed to create her own niche. There have been fertility deities such as *Tammuz* and *Freyr* who look after the growing of crops. Then, after the crops have been harvested, there are deities such as *Dionysus* and *Soma* whose sphere of influence are the festivals and celebrations to consume the food and drink (especially drink). However, until *Telthi* came along, there was no deity whose primary concern was the actual preparation of food. Telthi became the first goddess of cooking.

Once Telthi decided upon her ultimate goal, she then set about on a quest to obtain as many recipes as she could. During this period, the goddess would sometimes visit other gods and offer to cook for them. This has made her a familiar sight among the various pantheons.

Since establishing herself as **The Chef of the Gods**, Telthi has become a patron of cooks everywhere. She is still on the lookout for new recipes and encourages her followers to experiment. Anyone who comes up with a new recipe that Telthi likes is looked upon with great favor and is ultimately rewarded or blessed in some way. However, what Telthi does not know (because no one has had the heart to tell her) is that she is really not as good a cook as she thinks she is. Telthi's simpler and more traditional meals range from excellent to outstanding (particularly her French and Italian cuisine). Meanwhile, many of her

desserts are absolutely divine (no pun intended). It is her more "experimental" dishes that are often dreadful — a little too "exotic" even for the gods, with strange blends of indescribable meats and veggies, inundated with strange alien spices, slimy sauces, or grease, goo, and other ungodly concoctions. These experimental dishes are often overcooked, undercooked or permeated with grease. At one such dinner, *Vishnu* remarked to *Brahma* that he was surprised the food did not go sliding off the plates.

Despite this, Telthi is generally welcomed by her fellow deities for her kind disposition and her good intentions, if not her frighteningly eclectic tastes. Moreover, most deities accept her dinner invitations and hope for one of her delightful meals rather than an experimental one. Those who manage to discover when she is planning to "trying out a new recipe" arrange to arrive late, in order to miss the main course, and go directly to her heavenly desserts.

Real Name: Telthi-dalphiizyet

Alignment: Principled

Description: A plump, motherly woman with dark hair and pleasant features. Will generally either be wearing an apron or have one nearby.

Disposition: Kind-hearted and considerate. Telthi frequently feeds the poor and insists that no one leave her table still hungry. To her credit, she can make some kind of food out of almost anything, even soup from a potato and an old shoe. Since starving people will sometimes eat just about anything

(even Telthi's greasy experimental dishes), they make fine *test subjects* for new recipes that she wants to try out.

Attributes: I.Q. 17, M.E. 21, M.A. 21, P.S. 15, P.P. 15, P.E. 22, P.B. 16, Spd. 25

Hit Points & S.D.C. (on non-M.D.C. worlds): 5,690 Hit Points and 1,260 S.D.C.

M.D.C.: 5,800 (in Mega-Damage environments).

P.P.E.: 1,280

Size: Six feet tall (1.8 m). **Weight:** 275 lbs (123.7 kg).

Horror Factor: 8 (12 when it is known she's serving up an experimental dish).

Experience Level: 14th level mystic and 15th level chef.

Natural Abilities of Note: See the invisible, impervious to poison, drugs, toxins, and disease, nightvision 200 feet (61 m), fire and cold resistant (does half damage), understands and speaks all languages, teleport 88%, dimensional teleport 80%, recognizes poison 98%, and regenerates 1D4x10 Hit Points/S.D.C. (or M.D.C. on Mega-Damage worlds) per melee round.

Deific Powers: All the basics, plus the Prototypical Deific Power of Transmutation. See **Dragons & Gods™** for descriptions of Deific Powers and other godly information.

Skills of Note: Favorite languages are Dragonese/Elven, Atlantean, and Demongogian, knows cooking and *all* domestic skills, Identify Plants & Fruits and Preserve Food, all at 98%.

Combat Skills: Hand to Hand: Basic.

Number of Attacks: Five melee actions/attacks by hand to hand (9 melee actions when cooking!) or two attacks by magic or psionics.

Bonuses: +2 on initiative, +3 to strike, +4 to parry, +4 to dodge, +4 to damage, +4 to roll with punch/fall/impact, +4 to pull punch, +3 to save vs psionics, +4 vs insanity, +6 vs magic, +4 vs poison, +6 vs Horror Factor, +14% vs coma/death, 65% to evoke trust or intimidation, and 30% to charm/impress.

Magical Knowledge: Knows all spells from levels 1-15. **P.P.E.:** 1,281

Psionic Knowledge: All the sensitive psionic powers plus Telepathy (super), Empathic Transmission, Hypnotic Suggestion, Mind Bond, and TK Force Field. **I.S.P.:** 321

Weapons and Equipment of Note: None

Backsmack

God of wisecracking, backstabbing and teenagers

By Percy Ferkelberger

This trickster is very much a spoiled child with the powers of a god. Although sometimes mean-spirited and vengeful, Backsmack rarely encourages backstabbing that inflicts serious physical harm, death or long-term consequences. His "style" is more childish, direct and foolish. For example, this is the god who makes faces, mockingly apes his enemies and authority figures (that's pretty much everybody, including Death gods and All-Fathers), flips them the bird, sticks out his tongue and gives them raspberries, farts, flicks spitballs (or bugs, or does other disgusting things), curses, calls names and grumbles behind the

backs of those who are currently giving him grief. The consummate showman, brazen imp, and spoiled brat, Backsmack will do such things behind the backs of said individual(s) only a few feet way, feigning innocence when the target(s) of his barbs and gestures turn around to glare at him.

Very much the class-clown, Backsmack is happiest, most flamboyant and brazen in front of an audience who shares the joke. He is especially defiant and cocky in front his worshipers, those who see him as a hero, and those who, for whatever reason, follow in his footsteps — i.e. tricksters, pranksters, smart alecks and teenagers. Of course, like most clowns and troublemakers, he tends to push things too far and often gets caught, leading to more hot water.

Backsmack likes to get the last laugh and the last word. He is very childish in his words and deeds. Potty humor (and giggling about it) is high on his list of favorite things, as is writing in the snow with one's bodily fluids ("yellow snow, says hello"), sexual innuendos, spreading rumors (even when he knows they aren't true), telling white-lies, false implications (I never "said" that), using semantics, and pranks like switching sugar with salt, or adding hot spices to sauces, surprising people with joy buzzers, whoopi cushions (makes a farting noise), burps, farts, spit balls, pulling down somebody's pants, putting a bug (snake, ice cube or other icky thing) down a victim's pants or shirt, putting ants in the sugar bowl, making mud pies mixed with doggie-doodoo, food fights, shooing a mouse into a crowd of women, serving chocolate covered insects, lighting smoke bombs and shouting fire, using stink bombs, and similarly disruptive and vulgar jokes are all right up Backsmack's alley (along with some surprisingly clever and sophisticated ones). The more embarrassing (to the victim, of course) the better! The bigger the audience, the better. The more laughs he gets (at another's disposal) the more he carries on.

Such antics are Backsmack's life work, especially when leveled at one's enemies, rivals, and people who are a pain in the ... well, you get the idea. As a god, this is the type of "divine inspiration" he sends to his worshipers, dissidents, the disenfranchised and kindred spirits. This is the behavior and irreverence that he encourages in his followers — which usually gets them into trouble, and which he finds both challenging and funny. Hey, misery loves company. Backsmack lives by the credo that any punishment or trouble is okay as long as one can feel good about (or proud of) the prank, smirk, and get somebody else to say, "Hey, good one." **Note:** *The Trickster* and *Ludicrous Mage* often worship this god, as do Imps and Goblins.

Real Name: Bachtexip

Alignment: Anarchist

Description: A lean, muscular and handsome male god, with golden skin and jet black hair. Typically dressed in something expensive and stylish; looks to be about 30 years old.

Disposition: Impudent, irreverent, brazen, outspoken and annoyingly puckish, yet witty and charming. He has a sharp mind and quick joke or remark for just about everything. Loves to get revenge by showing somebody up, embarrassing them or leading them to put their foot in their mouth.

Attributes: I.Q. 21, M.E. 19, M.A. 22, P.S. 25, P.P. 28, P.E. 20, P.B. 21, Spd. 44

Hit Points & S.D.C. (on non-M.D.C. worlds): 5,700 Hit Points and 3,612 S.D.C.

M.D.C.: 6,570 (in Mega-Damage environments).

P.P.E.: 2,400

Size: Six foot, 6 inches tall (1.9 m) and 230 lbs (103.5 kg) when in human form, but can appear as large as 20 feet (6 m) tall.

Horror Factor: 10 (13 when it is known he's out for revenge).

Experience Level: 14th level Trickster Mage and 7th level Ludicrous Mage.

Natural Abilities of Note: Astral Travel, see the invisible, impervious to poison, drugs, toxins, and disease, nightvision 2000 feet (609 m), fire and cold resistant (does half damage), understands and speaks all languages, teleport 90%, dimensional teleport 90%, regenerates 1D4x10 Hit Points/S.D.C. (or M.D.C.) per melee round, metamorphosis: human, and can sense/recognize enchantment, sense the location of ley lines, and recognize possession, each at 92%.

Deific Powers: All the basics, plus the Prototypical Deific Power of Manifestation and Dispel Deific Power. See **Dragons & Gods™** for descriptions of Deific Powers and other godly information.

Skills of Note: Dance, sing, play flute, forgery, computer operation, and all rogue skills at 98%; escape artist, camouflage and intelligence at 70%.

Combat Skills: Hand to Hand: Expert.

Number of Attacks: Five physical or two attacks by magic or psionics.

Bonuses: +4 on initiative, +9 to strike, +11 parry and dodge, +10 to damage, +4 to roll with punch/fall/impact, +6 to pull punch, +2 to save vs psionics, +4 vs insanity, +5 vs magic, +3 vs poison, +5 vs Horror Factor, +10% vs coma/death, 70% to evoke trust or intimidation and 55% to charm/impress.

Magical Knowledge: Knows all Trickster and Ludicrous magic spells from levels 1-15, and wizard spells from levels 1 and 2 plus Mask of Deceit. **P.P.E.:** 2,400.

Psionic Knowledge: Mind Block, Object Read, Machine Ghost, See Aura, Mask I.S.P., Mask P.P.E., Sense Evil, Sense Magic, Sense Time, Total Recall (great for counting cards), Remote Viewing (great for cheating at cards), Telepathy, Hypnotic Suggestion, Mind Wipe, and Mentally Possess Others ("others" is limited to mortals and lesser supernatural beings, not true gods or elementals). **I.S.P.:** 440.

Weapons and Equipment of Note: Greater Rune dagger and a variety of trick cards, prank items and select magic items.



MAGIC BEST LOST?

By Percy Ferkelberger

Note: The following new O.C.C.s and types of magic are ideal in any setting where magic is commonplace. They are perfect for use in *The Palladium Fantasy RPG®* and/or *Rifts®*. Actually, both O.C.C.s also work wonderfully in *Heroes Unlimited™*, the Ludicrous Mage especially as a wisecracking “pun”-isher or crazy hero or villain, and the Trickster Mage as a swashbuckling gambler type. They can also be adapted to *Nightbane®* and *Beyond the Supernatural™*, although their power levels and silly-factor may need to be toned down. Not only can both O.C.C.s be played for laughs, but as (relatively) straight and serious characters, especially the Trickster — believe it or not.

Warning: These characters can be loads of fun to play, but players need to exercise some measure of self-control, otherwise they can disrupt the game too much and ruin the fun for everyone. So try to be clever and/or funny, not annoying.

A bit of history

On the Palladium World, during *The Time of A Thousand Magicks*, the mystic arts reached a level few worlds ever see. From the sublime to the insanely powerful (and sometimes just plain insane), magic soared to new heights. This meant specialization. Every application, use and philosophy seemed to become a new school or type of magic, sometimes to the point of splitting hairs. One might find a dozen or even a hundred different sects or brotherhoods of magic all claiming to be unique and different, but often separated by little more than a particular philosophy or approach to magic. The overwhelming majority of these mystic groups disappeared eons ago. Their names forgotten, and their special brand of magic lost to antiquity.

Some scholars and mages would argue that many of these magicks are best lost to modern men. Sometimes because the magic was too destructive, unstable or hellish in nature. Other times because of their ridiculous or frivolous nature. Such is the case of the *Trickster Mage* and *Ludicrous Mage*, both disciplines cut from the same tree, and both something of an embarrassment to the “serious” magic community.

In both cases, these mages “specialize” in their particular “lost art” of magic. This means that other than the first two or three levels of Wizard spell magic and a few higher wizard spells that involve trickery, deception, concealment or subterfuge, traditional spells are NEVER learned. There are a few reasons for this strict code of practice. One is a fear of poisoning their area of specialty and unique expertise or being lured away from their life of tradition. Another, usually stronger reason, is to buck and/or mock the establishment. The Trickster and Ludicrous Mage tend to be Unprincipled, Anarchist or evil when it comes to alignment, and both tend to be risk takers, entertainers, and definitely unorthodox and irreverent. The gambling, entertainment and “trick” aspects of these two areas of magic is what removes them from the ranks of “serious” disciplines, and are typically dismissed as a “joke” and frivolous waste of magic

knowledge and skill. Few “serious” sorcerers will give these unorthodox practitioners of magic the time of day, and often chide them as “childish fools,” “clowns,” and “misanthropes.” Only the most open-minded will, grudgingly, acknowledge the Trickster and Ludicrous Mages as highly imaginative, inventive, resourceful and clever. In turn, this contributes to why neither Mage learns much in the way of the accepted and traditional mystic arts. Besides, they enjoy the distinction of being rebels, irreverent and outcasts; it’s part of the appeal and their legacy.

Note: Both the Trickster and Ludicrous Mage (or some fundamental equivalent) can be found on the *Palladium World*, *Rifts Earth* and *Phase World*, as well as other parts of the *Megaverse™*. That being said, they are both extremely rare on *Rifts Earth*, *Phase World*, and in most places. The only exception is the *Palladium World* where they have existed since *The Time of A Thousand Magicks*. Yet even there, perhaps only one in 200 (maybe more like one in 500) follow one of these ancient mystic arts. Although comparatively uncommon even on the *Palladium World*, the Trickster and Ludicrous arts are believed to originate on the *Palladium World*, and are enjoying something of a recent comeback.

Trickster Mage O.C.C.

The specialization of the Trickster is gambling, sleight of hand, trickery and the use of playing cards as the focal point for magic. Similar trick-type and illusionary magic can also be selected, but the main focus is always playing cards.

The typical Trickster Mage is a social butterfly right out of the pages of *GQ* magazine — well dressed, suave, debonair, and charming, yet at the same time, bold, daring and a little bit dangerous. While they may be irreverent and cleverly sarcastic (able to cut rivals, cads and ruffians down with a few choice lines), most no know when to “fold up” and “shut up” before getting themselves into serious trouble. Most are playful and witty even during serious moments, high-stakes gambling or facing death. Many also have an open fondness for the opposite sex, and love nothing more than coming to the rescue of a damsel in distress (or a hunk in over his head, as the case may be). Consequently, Tricksters, whether male or female (40% are female), tend to be a combination river boat gambler of the old American Frontier and James Bond rolled into one.

Some have dismissed Card & Trickster Magick as simple, and the Trickster agrees. However, he sees this simple magical craft as the perfect union with cunning, misdirection and ingenuity. In fact, they are very proud of their clever use of this simple magic. These spell casters are also quick to point out that most of their “simple” magic requires a minimum of P.P.E., making it especially effective.

Special Abilities of the Trickster Mage

1. Entertainment Factor: The Entertainment Factor is similar to Horror Factor or Awe Factor, except it’s funny and enter-



taining. The character starts with an Entertainment Factor of $7+1D4$. This increases by +1 at level 3, 6, 7, 9, 12 and 15.

In the case of the Trickster Mage he must be performing with cards and may involve magic or sleight of hand (palming, concealment, etc.). Everybody watching must roll for *Entertainment Factor*, those who fail to save are so enthralled by the performance that they lose track of time, momentarily forget about a chore or order, and are not likely to notice things going on around them (those sneaking past or around are +15% to their prowl skill). Even after being roused by danger or combat they fight without initiative, lose one melee attack and are -1 to all

actions (-5% on skill performance, too) for one melee round (15 seconds). **Note:** Bonuses to save vs Horror Factor also apply to saves vs *Entertainment Factor*. This distraction "tactic" can only be done during a moment of calm or festivities and NOT in the middle of a crisis or combat. It is not a magical power, but a result of showmanship and charisma. No P.P.E. is expended.

2. Unnerving Calm & Confidence: Facing down an opponent (whether in a card game or combat) and staying cool and confident can make the Trickster become eerily disturbing ("Does he know something I don't?" "Does he have a trick up his sleeve?" "Why is he smiling like that?"). This inhuman calm

and defiant confidence is unnerving and challenging. The end result is making his opponent or opponents (as many as four +1 per level of experience) unsure of themselves, nervous and even frightened.

Range: 30 feet (9 meters); line of vision.

Duration: One minute (4 melee rounds) +1 melee round per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Special. Those within 30 feet (9 meters) must roll to *save vs temporary insanity* — must roll 16 or higher.

Damage/Penalties: Those who fail to save lose initiative, are -3 to all combat maneuvers (strike, parry, dodge, etc.) and -2 melee attacks per round. In addition, those who are trying to perform a skill will suffer from a -15% penalty due to nerves.

P.P.E.: 4 P.P.E. required to perform the Unnerving Calm.

Note: Anybody who can see the Trickster and his calm, confident demeanor are affected, even those who are in vehicles, power armor, or robots.

3. Spell Knowledge: Unlike other magic users, the Trickster Mage's magic knowledge is limited to Card Magic and only a handful of common Wizards spells. The mage starts with 8 +1D6 Card Magic Spells selected from levels 1-4 and 1D4 Wizard spells selected from levels 1-2. At each level of experience thereafter, the mage may select an additional three Card spells up to two levels above his current level of experience or two Wizard Spells from levels one or two.

Additional Types of Available Spell Magic: The Trickster Mage can NOT learn or perform *ritual magic*, only spell magic, and even then the types of magic he can learn is limited to Ludicrous Magic levels 1-5. Wizard spells levels 1-2 as well as Wizard spells that create illusions/deception (i.e. Mask of Deceit, Multiple Image, etc.), and stage effect type magic (i.e. Blinding Flash, Cloud of Smoke, Ignite Fire, Escape, etc.), but nothing overtly combat oriented (no Fire Balls, Befuddle, Nets, etc.).

4. Base P.P.E.: P.E. attribute x3 +3D6. The Trickster Mage will gain an additional 2D6 P.P.E. per each level of experience.

5. O.C.C. Bonuses: +1 to I.Q., +1D4+1 to M.A., +2 to M.E., +1 to P.E., and +1D4 to P.P. attribute; +4 to save vs illusion, +5 to save vs Trickster Magic, and +1 vs Horror Factor at levels 2, 4, 6, 8, and 12 (in addition to all other attribute bonuses, special abilities and R.C.C. bonuses). +1 to spell strength at levels 4, 7, 10, 13 and 15.

6. Notes: Like the Ludicrous Mage, Tricksters dislike braggarts and people who are too full of themselves, condescending and bossy. This includes many "serious" practitioners of magic (i.e. Wizards, Diabolists, Line Walkers, Mystics, etc.) and authority figures (military officers, mayors, kings, queens, etc.) who are demeaning to others and/or dismissive of those "beneath them." The Trickster finds himself compelled to embarrass and/or cut such people down to size. Consequently, they are the unlikely champions of the weak, innocent, underdogs and ordinary people, believing that everybody has worth, and no man should set himself as vastly higher or superior than any other.

The Trickster Mage O.C.C.

Alignment: Any, but typically Scrupulous, Unprincipled or Anarchist.

Attribute Requirements: An M.A. of 14 and P.P. 13 or higher.

A high I.Q., M.E. and P.E. are useful, but not required.



O.C.C. Skills:

Basic Math (+30%)
Two Languages of Choice (+20%)
Radio: Basic (+10% — Public Speaking +10% in Palladium)
Cardsharp (+20%)
Concealment (+14%)
Escape Artist (+15%)
Forgery (+10%)
Palming (+20%)
Pick Pockets (+15%)
Seduction (+10%)
Streetwise (+8%)
Dance (+20%)
Two Ancient W.P.s (three if a Fantasy character)
One Modern W.P. (none if a Fantasy character)
Hand to Hand: Basic

* Hand to Hand: Basic can be exchanged for Hand to Hand: Expert at the cost of one "other" skill, or Martial Arts (or Assassin if evil) at the cost of two "other" skills.

O.C.C. Related Skills: Select eight skills from the following categories, plus one at levels 3, 6, 9, and 12. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

Communications: Any (+10%)
Domestic: Any (+10%)
Electrical: None
Espionage: Any (+5%)
Mechanical: Basic and automotive only.
Medical: First Aid and Brewing only.
Military: Any
Physical: Any
Pilot: Any (+5%)
Pilot Related: Any
Rogue: Any (+5%)
Science: Any
Technical: Any (+10%)
W.P.: Any
Wilderness: None

Secondary Skills: The character also gets to select four secondary skills from those listed, plus one at levels 4, 8 and 12. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get the advantage of the bonus listed in parentheses. All secondary skills start at the base skill level.

Standard Equipment: Robe or cape (with or without a hood), 1D4 colorful hats, two sets of expensive clothing, light body armor (seldom wear heavy armor, because it reduces their speed and mobility by half), knapsack, backpack, 1D4 packages of 25 balloons, 2 small sacks, one large sack, make-up kit (usually 5 bright colors), canteen/water skin, flashlight (or torch with tinder box), a dozen pencils and a dozen markers (or graphite sticks, chalk and bottle of ink), sketch pad, two pair of six-sided dice, a dozen pieces of bubble gum, 1D4+6 packs of playing cards (four unopened), one Tarot deck, and 2D4 personal items. Trickster Mages love *magic items* and will use them whenever they can (on Rifts Earth that includes Techno-Wizard items).

Weapons as per W.P.s plus two small knives (1D4 damage), a scalpel or razor blade, and 1D6 extra clips of ammunition for modern weapons.

Vehicle of choice: Starts with a motorcycle or hovercycle, or horse. The vehicle is typically small, fast and maneuverable for fast getaways.

Money: *Rifts* characters start with 1D6x1,000 in credits and 3D6x100 in black market items.

Fantasy characters start with 1D6x100+500 in gold (sorry no magic items to start).

Roughly one third of all Tricksters are gambleholics who spend money on card gambling (their favorite) and other types of "betting" as freely as other men buy a cup of coffee. Another third are reasonably good with their money but enjoy the finer things in life and spend their money freely. The final third are amazingly frugal and can amass a fortune (typically ferreted away at several secret locations and/or bank accounts). All are usually ready for "fun and games" with little need for encouragement.

Cybernetics: The Trickster Mage will avoid cybernetics and bionics at all cost, but *may* consider a couple of minor Bio-Wizard augmentations.

Trickster Card Magic

Unless stated otherwise, any type of hand-sized cards or smaller may be used, from playing cards to Tarot cards or post-cards. However, the material must be stiff and no larger than 5x8 inches.

Note: Unless noted otherwise, the damage listed (1D6, 2D6, etc.) does S.D.C./Hit Point damage in S.D.C. world settings like **The Palladium Fantasy RPG®** or **Heroes Unlimited™**, but does Mega-Damage (M.D.) in **Rifts®** and other Mega-Damage settings. Likewise, magical S.D.C. becomes M.D.C. on Rifts Earth and other Mega-Damage settings. P.P.E. cost remains the same in all world settings.

Level One

Floating Card

Range: 10 feet (3 m) per level of experience from the spell caster or above or in front of his hand.

Duration: Three minutes per level of the spell caster as long as he is directing the movement, one minute if he leaves the area leaving the floating card to bob and float around on its own.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: Two

The trickster can magically make a single card float or spin in mid-air. The floating card can hover stationary or move around, no higher than eye level (3-7 feet/0.9 to 2.1 m).

This spell has a number of possible uses:

1. Good for entertaining and creating a distraction (everybody watching the card is -2 on initiative and those nearby engaged in activities like prowling, palming, picking pockets or picking locks do so with a +5% bonus).

2. Delivering a message directed to a specific individual (i.e. a note is written on the card or the face of the card has a symbolic meaning — Death's head, Hangman, rose, etc.). Said individual must be within line of sight.

3. Tricking somebody, especially those nervous or phobic about ghosts, into thinking spirits are present. The G.M. needs to gauge how effective this ruse really is and how the "spooked" individual reacts (may run away, cover his eyes/face and shout

to make it go away, have a reaction equal to Horror Factor of 14, try to communicate with it, etc.)

Pick A Card, Any Card

Range: Touch or up to 10 feet (3 m) from the spell caster.

Duration: Three minutes per level of spell caster.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: Three

The mage can magically pick any card requested from a deck, no matter how well shuffled or buried it may be. This can be done by shuffling through the deck with the card appearing on top or bottom, magically appear in the mage's hand, or magically sliding out of the deck and flopping face up to reveal itself.

Sense Marked Cards

Range: Touch or up to 10 feet (3 m) from the spell caster.

Duration: Five minutes per level of spell caster.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: Three

The mage can magically detect if a deck of cards is "marked" by a cheater, but can not tell who did it (unless it is obvious, like, "Here, let's use my deck." or is the deck used by a gambling establishment). **Note:** The character can also sense if said card(s) is magical.

Spinning Card

Range: 15 feet (4.6 m) from the spell caster.

Duration: Three minutes per level of spell caster.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: One

The trickster can magically make a single card spin and hop on a table or other flat surface like a top. The spinning can be stationary or move across a flat surface up to 15 feet (4.6 m) away. Good for entertaining and creating a distraction (everybody watching the card is -2 on initiative, and those nearby engaged in activities like prowling, palming, picking pockets or picking locks do so with a +5 bonus).

52 Cards in Your Face

Range: Six feet (1.8 m) +2 feet (0.6 m) per level of experience.

Damage: No physical damage, loses two melee actions and initiative.

Duration: Counts as one melee attack.

Saving Throw: Dodge only, but victims are -10 to do so and need a 10 or higher to save/dodge.

P.P.E.: Two

The spell caster enchants a deck of cards to fly, unerringly in the face of an opponent. Unless a successful dodge is made, the startled individual loses two melee actions, initiative, and his attacker has the advantage of taking the first/next action or attack.

Second Level

Count Cards

Range: Self only.

Duration: Five minutes per level of spell caster.

Bonus: Adds +10% to Card Sharp skill.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: Four

The Trickster is magically imbued with the ability to remember each and every card played from a new deck. This means he

unerringly knows what cards are out of play, which cards remain in play, and the odds of the card(s) he needs falling into his hands. This is especially useful in Black Jack and Poker.

Flick Cards

Range: 10 feet (3 m) +1 foot (0.3 m) per level of experience.

Duration: Three minutes per level of spell caster.

Saving Throw: Parry or Dodge.

Bonus: +2 to strike with "flicked" playing card. +1 additional at levels 3, 6, 9 and 12.

P.P.E.: Two

Note: Each "flick" of a card counts as one melee attack/action.

A single card can be "flicked" 10+ feet (3+ m) with surprising precision. This can be done for the following effects.

1. Entertainment value and/or gambling ("Nobody can make that shot!" "Oh, yeah, put your money where your mouth is.").

2. Delivering a message directed to a specific individual (i.e. a note is written on the card or the face of the card has a symbolic meaning — Death's head, Hangman, rose, etc.). Said individual must be within line of sight and within range.

3. A card flick to the face will startle the victim and cause him to move out of the way (uses up one melee action) or block/parry the flying card. If it strikes it does no damage unless it strikes the eye. To hit the eye, a called shot must be made. If it hits, the victim will lose on melee action and suffer one point of damage (and probably be angry).

Magically Mark Cards

Range: Self and the cards magically marked.

Duration: Ten minutes per level of spell caster.

Bonus: Adds +10% to Card Sharp skill.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: Four

The mage can magically "mark" the cards so that he can identify them. Most normal people and even supernatural beings can NOT see the magical markings. However, those who can *Sense Magic* will know the cards radiate with magic and are probably magically marked ("something's fishy here"). Meanwhile, those who can *See Aura* or *Detect Concealment* can actually see the markings and will know the mage is cheating (and may use this knowledge to their benefit in any number of ways).

Note: Other Tricksters who are third level or higher automatically see and recognize Magically Marked Cards.

Shuffle Deck Magically

Range: 10 feet (3 m) from the spell caster or by touch, or above or in front of his hand.

Duration: Three minutes per level of spell caster.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: Two

The mage can magically (and honestly) shuffle a deck of cards without touching them. A cool parlor trick and a good way to make certain a card deck has been shuffled honestly and not rigged.

Spinning Hypnotic Card

Range: 20 feet (6 m) from the spell caster.

Duration: Three minutes per level of spell caster.

Saving Throw: Standard.

Limitation: Only affects one character per level of experience.

P.P.E.: Four

Everybody who looks at the card spinning in mid-air is enchanted unless they save vs magic. A failed roll means they see beautiful colors swirling around the card and they can't take their eyes off of it. Time passes quickly without them realizing it and they are oblivious to everything around them. If attacked, these hypnotized folk fight as if in a daze — their number of attacks reduced by one and all combat bonuses are half.

Third Level

Change Card Face

Range: Touch.

Duration: The transformed card can remain changed for up to five minutes per level of spell caster, or the spell cancelled (returning the card to its normal self) at any time.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: Six

A wonderful way to cheat, play tricks, or send a warning, in which the spell caster can physically transform the face of one card to any image he wants. When used to cheat, card counting can come in handy to avoid creating a card already played and likely to be remembered by one or more of the other players.

Card Tossing

Range: 15 feet (4.6 m) +3 feet (0.9 m) per each level of experience.

Duration: Three minutes per level of spell caster.

Saving Throw: Parry or Dodge.

Bonus: +4 to strike with playing card. +1 additional at levels 4, 8, and 12.

P.P.E.: Four

Note: Each "toss" of a card counts as one melee attack/action.

This spell is similar to the **Flick Card** spell except it has greater range of distance and special properties. The mage can "toss" cards with amazing accuracy at a specific target/item as well as into buckets, under doors or through an open window, at a weapon or item, and even into somebody's pocket or face.

This can be done for the following effects (the first two are the same as *Flick Card*).

1. Entertainment value and/or gambling.
2. Delivering a message directed to a specific individual.
3. Pelt an opponent. Each strike by the card does one point of damage (good for getting somebody's attention and chasing away pests). A shot to the eye requires a called shot and if it strikes, will hurt, does double damage (2 S.D.C. or 2D4 if an Iron Card is used), and will cause the victim to lose two melee actions.
4. Knock over/down/away small, light items such as an empty glass, light figurine or toy, candlestick, a piece of paper, bottle of ink, spoon, key, etc. There is a 10% chance, per level of experience, that the item will fall exactly where the mage wants it to fall.
5. Snuff out a candle's flame with a tossed card!
6. Hit and press a button or move a switch. The magically charged card strikes with enough force to press a button or to

flick a switch. A light, small switch can be flicked on or off with one strike, a larger one may require two or three strikes to flip all the way, and a giant-sized or heavy switch may take a dozen tries or more (it may even be impossible to flip this way; G.M.'s discretion).

Cut Deck, Literally

Range: Touch or up to five feet (1.5 m) away; line of sight.

Duration: Instant and permanent.

Saving Throw: Not applicable.

P.P.E.: Four

The spell caster can chop/slice a deck of cards in half as if a magical, invisible axe just cleaved it in two! Typically done when angry, to emphasize a threat or accuse someone of cheating.

Magically Palm Cards

Range: Self only.

Duration: Two minutes per level of spell caster.

Bonus: Adds +5% to Pick Pocket and Card Sharp skill.

Saving Throw: Special, roll as if performing a skill. If the roll fails the mage is caught "palming." Otherwise undetectable.

P.P.E.: Six

The spell caster can magically palm cards at 79% proficiency +1% per level of experience. Fundamentally the same as the *Palming Skill*, however, this magic applies only to playing cards, small bits of paper and paper documents folded to be no larger than 5x8 inches.

Where did it go?

Range: Touch; toss up into the air.

Duration: Five minutes per level of spell caster.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: Four

The Trickster can toss an entire deck of cards or any small or comparatively light item up into the air (usually when nobody is looking) where it will remain hovering silently. Since most people don't look up, they never see it. Meanwhile, the mage can allow himself to be searched, confident that the item can not be found on his person. **Note:** The item will rise and hang an inch below the ceiling or 50 feet (15 m) high, whichever is appropriate.

Fourth Level

Endless Deck of Cards

Range: Within eye shot of the spell caster.

Duration: One hour per level of the spell caster's experience.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: 10

Great for long hours of gambling, because the deck never changes cards, makes card counting more difficult (-15%), and there is no delay in breaking open and reshuffling a new deck. The cards are randomly shuffled and can NOT be magically "stacked" or "marked."

52 Card Pick Up (Curse)

Range: 20 foot (6 m) radius/area affect.

Damage: None, enchantment.

Duration: Until all cards are picked up; typically about 1D6+3

minutes up to a maximum of 16 minutes. Half that time if three or more people are involved.

Saving Throw: -1 to save.

P.P.E.: 10 for the saving throw, above. However if the P.P.E. amount is doubled (20 points), victims are -6 to save.

Limitations: A complete deck of 52 playing cards must be used; no Jokers can be included and no card may be withheld or hidden — all are tossed out to fall where they may. Cannot be tossed on the surface of water. **Note:** If the enchanted individual is attacked or directly threatened, the enchantment is broken on him. The spell ends after 16 minutes whether all cards were found or not.

Everybody within the radius of affect is magically *compelled* by a powerful (and thankfully, temporary) obsession to retrieve, count and put into order a deck of cards that has been scattered across the floor.

A failed roll to save means all those affected scurry about gathering the cards (they will work as a team), collect them in a pile, count to make sure they are all there and put them in numerical order by type (i.e. hearts, diamonds, clubs, and spades). During this time, those affected can do nothing else and ignore all other activity around them (fighting, people going by, people ransacking the room, etc.).

A successful save means no effect.

Iron Cards

Range: Transform cards by touch or up to five feet (1.5 m) away; line of sight.

Duration: Stay iron for 5 minutes per level of the spell caster.

Damage: 1D4 per thrown card.

Saving Throw: Not applicable.

P.P.E.: 10 temporary or 150 to turn permanently into iron.

The spell caster can turn two cards per level of experience into metal. The card turns grey, but still has the appearance of a playing card complete with its suit and number, but is hard like a small, thin sheet of iron. These cards can be thrown to inflict 1D4 points of damage or used as small metal rectangles to wedge in a door (between a lock?), patch armor, etc. May be used in conjunction with the Toss Card spell (same distance).

Restore Deck of Cards

Range: Touch.

Duration: Permanent, takes about 20 minutes to do.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: Eight

The spell caster can magically restore old, worn, dog-eared, tattered, faded and marked cards to their original, like new, condition. To do so, the spell is cast and he must wipe his hand over each card individually. When all 52 are restored, the magic makes all cards as good as new and unmarked in any way.

Smear Ink

Range: Touch

Duration: Spell lasts for one minute per level of the spell caster. Ink marks last until washed off with soap and water.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: Three for a single card, 15 for an entire deck.

This spell causes the ink on a playing card or deck of cards to smear off and onto the hand(s) of the individual touching or handling them. However, there is only a 01-10% chance the

handler will notice the ink on his or her hands and will touch and leave ink on clothes, face, other items, etc. Often done as a gag (after a character handles the cards, the Trickster says something like, "Oh, there is something on your nose — or cheek.") The inky character unwittingly touches his face leaving a comical black and/or red smear). May also be used to mark a target or cause embarrassment. The ink smears all disappear at the end of the spell's duration or the instant the mage cancels the spell.

Stack Deck

Range: Touch or up to five feet (1.5 m) away; line of sight.

Duration: Instant and undetectable.

Saving Throw: Not applicable.

P.P.E.: Eight

The Card Sharp spell caster can magically stack the deck any way he desires, completely undetected and without touching it! Great for gambling (odds are 60% +2% per level of his experience in his favor!). A must for cheating scoundrels. Characters of unprincipled and good alignments will not use this while playing an "honest" game of cards.

Level Five

Create Deck of Cards

Range: In hand or a few feet away.

Duration: Varies with the amount of P.P.E. spent.

Saving Throw: -2 to save.

P.P.E.: Six P.P.E. for cards that last 30 minutes, 12 P.P.E. for cards that last one hour per level of experience and 30 to make a permanent deck.

The mage can magically create an ordinary deck of 52 playing cards with two Jokers! These cards can be used as normal.

Knots

Range: Touch or up to five feet (1.5 m) per level of experience; line of sight

Duration: Permanent.

Saving Throw: Not applicable.

P.P.E.: Six or 12 P.P.E.

The spell caster can magically and instantly make one perfect knot (of any kind) per level of his experience. All that is necessary are two pieces of untied material (shoelaces, thread, string, rope, rags, etc.). These knots will not untie or pull loose unless deliberately undone.

For double the P.P.E. amount, the mage can actually mend or fuse two pieces of rope (or similar) together as one seamless and strong piece.

Teleport Card

Range: Five miles (8 km) per level of experience.

Duration: Requires one full melee round (15 seconds) to teleport.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: Ten

The Trickster can teleport a single card or sheet of paper or cardboard to some location known to him up to five miles (8 km) away. The only requirement is that he touches the card. Success Ratio: 80% +2% per level of experience, 99% if the location is within line of sight. An unsuccessful roll means the object disappears and is never seen again. This spell is often used

in entertainment and to deliver information, a message or a warning to somebody.

Level Six

Mark of Guilt

Range: Touch

Duration: 12 hours per level of the spell caster.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: 15; double this P.P.E. amount doubles the duration of the mark.

This spell is used to mark those guilty of some wrong doing with a mark on the forehead or chest that indicates his crime. The mark is left by the Trickster pressing a deck of cards or even a single Joker card to the victim's forehead or chest. When it is removed a playing card-sized mark is left behind. Nothing other than a successful Remove Curse spell can make the mark vanish before its normal duration. Note that the magic is such that it can NOT be used to falsely mark or accuse an innocent person. If the intended victim is not guilty of his or her crime, no mark will appear.

Joker with two faces (one happy, one snarling and mean) marks a liar or a cheat.

Smiling Joker with Money/Coins falling from the eyes like tears, marks a thief.

Joker with a skull for its face and knife clenched in its teeth marks a murderer.

Joker laughing with large fangs and pointed teeth marks a rapist or child molester.

Joker with no face marks a shapechanger; often reserved specifically for Changelings.

Stairway to Heaven

Range: 100 feet (30.5 m) +10 feet (3 m) per level of experience.

Duration: One minute per level of the spell caster, can be cancelled at any time he or she desires. Duration time can be doubled by spending 30 P.P.E.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: 15

After completing this incantation (counts as one melee action), the spell caster can toss cards with unbelievable precision and get them to line up in mid-air to create a series of steps or stairway in mid-air! These magical card stairs actually create an invisible force wider than the cards (basically a short step) that allows characters to walk or run up them like they would a staircase. Each "step" can support up to 1000 pounds (450 kg) at a time and can be made to rise as high as 100 feet (30.5 m) +10 feet (3 m) per level of the spell caster's experience.

Level Seven

Buzz-Saw Cards

Range: 100 feet (30.5 m) +10 feet (3 m) per level of experience; line of sight.

Duration: One melee round per level of experience.

Damage: 1D6 points of damage per level of experience!

Saving Throw: Parry at -5 or dodge at -2.

P.P.E.: 18 P.P.E.

The Trickster fans a deck of cards into a circular shape while casting this spell. At the end of the incantation, the now spinning fan of cards launches itself at a target of the spell caster's choice and strikes like a magical buzz-saw! +4 to strike (the mage's bonuses do not apply as the buzz-saw is magically powered). After it strikes it can be made to fly and strike the same target or a different target again and again. Each buzz-saw attack counts as one of the spell caster's melee attacks.



Card Daggers

Range: Self by touch, or can be thrown 100 feet (30 m) +10 feet (3 m) per level of experience.

Damage: 1D6

Duration: One melee round per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Dodge at -1.

P.P.E.: 10

The spell caster can magically charge a deck of card to effectively turn them into hard, razor-sharp blades, although they still look like ordinary playing cards. The cards can be used like daggers to cut and slash when one or two are held between the user's fingers (1D6 damage).

The Card Daggers can also be thrown one or two at a time. Each thrown card counts as one melee attack/action. Throwing two Card Daggers simultaneously counts as one attack, does double damage (2D6 each), but is -2 to strike (no penalty applies when one is thrown). Each card thrown turns into an ordinary card moments after it hits. The Card Daggers can never be turned against their creator and never cut him.

Parrying with Card Daggers is possible only when the deck is held in a "fan" shape; +1 to parry.

Turn Object into a Playing Card

Range: 100 feet (30.5 m) +10 feet (3 m) per level of experience; line of sight.

Duration: Five minutes per level of experience.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: 22 P.P.E. or 220 to make the transformation permanent.

Limitations: Magic items can NOT be transformed. Period. Nor can items weighing more than one pound (0.45 kg).

The mage can turn one object, be it a coin, locket, dagger, comb, empty pouch, glove, or other small object weighing no more than one pound (0.45 kg), into a playing card. This can be used to entertain (always a crowd pleaser), steal ("As you can see, I do not have that woman's necklace on me), or to sneak in a weapon, tool or item. The mage can cancel the spell at will. At the end of the duration or upon being cancelled, the card turns back into the item.

Level Eight

Magic Cards of Vengeance

Range: 100 feet (30.5 m) +15 feet (4.5 m) per level of experience.

Damage: Varies with the type of card.

Duration: The deck of cards will remain in the caster's hands for 5 minutes (20 melee rounds) before having to make it reappear. All card effects are instantaneous unless noted otherwise.

Saving Throw: Dodge; some cards have secondary effects.

P.P.E.: Five P.P.E. to make the deck appear, and each type of card requires a certain amount of additional P.P.E. to create and use.

Note: Based on concepts by *Daniel Denis*.

The character creates an enchanted deck of cards in his/her hands. These cards are very powerful, with each card requiring a certain amount of P.P.E. to make them release their magical properties. Even with the little cost needed to make the Magic Cards of Vengeance appear, its creation uses up half the spell caster's attacks/actions for that first round. Each use of a particular card counts as one melee action and requires the necessary P.P.E. to use. The exact type of card desired appears with but a thought or simple verbal command ("Red Queen"). Timing can be important with this spell.

Red Cards numbers 2 to 10: A single card or as many as four may be summoned and used. When dropped or thrown, the card(s) turns into a ball of fiery plasma that inflicts burning damage when it strikes. **P.P.E.:** A single card costs 8, a burst of four cards costs 32. **Damage:** 4D6 per card; when tossing 2-4 cards it's fastest to roll 4D6 times the number of cards thrown. Beings vulnerable to fire or magic suffer double damage. **Range:** 200 feet (61 m) +30 feet (9 m) per level of experience.

Black Cards numbers 2 to 10: A single card or as many as two may be summoned and used. When dropped or thrown, the card(s) turns into a lightning bolt that inflicts blasting electrical damage when it strikes. **P.P.E.:** A single lightning card costs 12 P.P.E., a pair costs 24 **Damage:** 1D6x10 per card. **Range:** 1000 feet (305 m) +100 feet (30.5 m) per level of experience.

Face Cards, Aces & Jokers

The image on all face cards can be made to come to life and fight on behalf of the spell caster! All are humanoid in appearance and stand about six feet (1.8 m) tall unless stated otherwise. All are impervious to poison, disease, illusions and psionics. Completely vanish when duration ends or the figure is destroyed, with a face card laying at that location. None engage in conversation nor can they be swayed by the words of others; follow the orders of their creator.

The Jacks (any suit or color): Fast and furious fighters. **P.P.E.:** 60. **S.D.C. (or M.D.C.):** 70. **A.R.:** 11. **Attacks per Melee:** Four. **Bonuses:** +2 on initiative, +4 to strike and parry, +2 to dodge, paired weapons. **Attributes of Note:** P.S. 20, Spd. 20. **Damage:** Appears in light armor and armed with either a pair of axes or bastard swords that inflict 3D6 damage. **Duration:** Five minutes or until destroyed.

The Red Queens (2): A Queen appears as a beautiful and regal woman in rich, red clothing of silk and velvet with royal crown. **P.P.E.:** 70. **S.D.C. (or M.D.C.):** 80. **A.R.:** 12. **Attacks per Melee:** Three. **Bonuses:** +2 to strike and parry, +1 to dodge. **Attributes of Note:** P.S. 16, Spd. 16. **Damage:** No apparent weapons, but each Red Lady is impervious to fire (including magic fire and heat), slap attacks do 1D6 damage (a lady never punches) and she can breathe fire twice per melee round (each counts as one melee attack). Fire breath does 5D6 damage and has a range of 60 feet (18.3 m)! **Duration:** Five minutes or until destroyed. **Note:** During combat she screams, "Off with his head!"

The Black Queens (2): A Queen appears as a beautiful and regal woman in rich, black clothing of silk and velvet with royal crown. **P.P.E.:** 70. **S.D.C. (or M.D.C.):** 80. **A.R.:** 12. **Attacks per Melee:** Three. **Bonuses:** +2 to strike and parry, +1 to dodge. **Attributes of Note:** P.S. 16, Spd. 16. **Damage:** No apparent weapons, but each Black Lady is impervious to ice and cold (including magic cold), slap attacks do 1D6 damage and she can breathe forth an ice blast twice per melee round (each counts as one melee attack). Ice breath does 5D6 damage and has a range of 60 feet (18.3 m)! **Duration:** Five minutes or until destroyed. **Note:** During combat she screams, "Freeze you scoundrel!"

The Red Kings (2): **P.P.E.:** 100. **S.D.C. (or M.D.C.):** 130. **A.R.:** 15. **Attacks per Melee:** Four. **Bonuses:** +1 on initiative, +5 to strike and parry, +1 to dodge, paired weapons, impervious to fire (including magical ones). **Attributes of Note:** P.S. 22, Spd. 16. **Damage:** Appears in silver plate armor with stripes of gold, red trim and red cloak; obviously fit for a "king!" **Damage:** Punches and kicks do 2D6 damage. Armed with either a pair of flaming swords or a flaming pole arm that inflicts 1D4x10 damage. Once per melee round the Red King can unleash a fire ball that does 1D6x10 damage and fly up to 500 feet (152 m) away (counts as one of his attacks); +2 to strike. **Duration:** Five minutes or until destroyed.

The Black Kings (2): **P.P.E.:** 90. **S.D.C. (or M.D.C.):** 100. **A.R.:** 14. **Attacks per Melee:** Four. **Bonuses:** +1 on initiative, +3 to strike and parry, +2 to dodge, paired weapons, can see in pitch black darkness (even magical darkness) and is impervious to electricity (including magic lightning). **Attributes of Note:** P.S. 22, Spd. 16. **Damage:** Appears in black plate armor with stripes of silver, and black leather cape; gold crown. **Damage:** Punches and kicks do 2D6 damage. Armed with either a pair of

bluish-silver daggers or a two handed sword. Each strike of the weapon inflicts 6D6+6 damage from electricity. Once per melee round the Black King can Shadow Meld at will (no P.P.E. cost). Duration: Five minutes or until destroyed.



The Red or Colored Joker: This is the trickster and deceiver Joker who appears as a Jester in colorful clothing. P.P.E.: 60. S.D.C. (or M.D.C.): 45. A.R.: 8. Attacks/Actions per Melee: Two or one by magic. Bonuses: +1 on initiative, +4 to auto-dodge usually by somersaulting, back flipping or dancing out of harm's way (this dodge does not use up a melee action). Attributes of Note: P.P. 20, Spd. 12. Can perform the following Skills: Pick Locks, Palming, Concealment, and Detect Poison, all at 80%, Locate Secret Compartment (or Find Contraband) at 55%. Damage: 1D6 from punches, 1D6+4 from kicks. Special Attacks: Can cast any of the following spells: Blinding Flash, Climb, Chameleon, Extinguish Fire, and See the Invisible as often as once per melee round (casting a spell counts as two melee actions), but the P.P.E. is drained from the spell caster.

The Black Joker: This is the sinister Joker who appears as a white faced Jester dressed in black and silver. P.P.E.: 55. S.D.C. (or M.D.C.): 50. A.R.: 10. Attacks/Actions per Melee: Two or one by magic. Bonuses: +2 on initiative, +1 to strike, +2 to auto-dodge usually by somersaulting, back flipping or dancing out of harm's way (this dodge does not use up a melee action). Attributes of Note: P.P. 20, Spd. 12. Can perform the following Skills: Pick Pockets, Detect Forgery, Detect and Use Poison, all at 75%, and Track (humanoids) at 60%. Damage: 1D6+1 from punches, 2D6 from kicks. Special Attacks: Can cast any of the following spells: Turn Invisible (self), Befuddle, Fear and Cloak of Darkness as often as once per melee round (casting a spell counts as two melee actions), but the P.P.E. is drained from the spell caster. Or the Black Joker can *Negate Magic* with no cost to his creator, but instantly vanishes after that spell is cast.

Ace of Spades: Appears as a faceless, white figure with a large "spade" symbol on the chest and forehead. P.P.E.: 40. S.D.C. (or M.D.C.): 40. A.R.: 8. Attacks per Melee: Two. Bo-

nuses: +1 to strike and parry. Attributes of Note: P.S. 16, Spd. 12. Damage: Special Attack & Saving Throw: The Ace of Spades is a P.P.E. vampire that absorbs its victim's P.P.E. with each punch/touch. Each time an opponent is struck or grabbed, he must save versus magic (14 or higher). A successful roll means only one P.P.E. point is lost, a failed roll means 2D6 P.P.E. were stolen. The Ace of Spades is instinctively drawn to opponents with large amounts of P.P.E.

Ace of Clubs: Appears as a snarling Troll armed with a pair of cudgels. P.P.E.: 50. S.D.C. (or M.D.C.): 45. A.R.: 8. Attacks per Melee: Three. Bonuses: +3 to strike, +1 to parry, +5 to disarm. Attributes of Note: P.S. 20, Spd. 8. Damage: Each clubbing attack does 4D6 damage; half damage if trying to disarm his opponent. The Ace of Clubs is instinctively drawn to opponents who are warriors.

Ace of Diamonds: Turns into a large, diamond-shaped shield that is impervious to all forms of attack, and provides a bonus of +2 to parry. The user can hide behind it for protection. Moreover, the wielder of the shield is impervious to fire and heat. P.P.E.: 30. Damage: 2D4 S.D.C. when used to strike an opponent (or 1D4 M.D.). Duration: 5 minutes or until destroyed.

Ace of Hearts: The Ace of Hearts is also known as the pure card. The effects of the card vary. P.P.E.: 35. Damage: Varies. Special Power: 1. Healing Option: When activated by the spell caster or placed upon a character of good alignment who draws this card will be instantly healed with 6D6 H.P. and 3D6 S.D.C. (or 1D6x10 M.D.C.). Those in a coma get a +30% to save and 1D6 H.P. restored.

2. Fight Evil Option: When activated by the spell caster and held up so the face of the card may be seen, it functions as the most powerful of holy symbols and will keep animated dead, vampires, demons and other supernatural creatures affected by holy symbols at bay (10 feet/3 m away per level of the spell caster). If the activated card is tossed at and strikes an evil creature of magic or supernatural monster it will explode on impact and inflict 6D6+24 points of damage! Targets may attempt to dodge.

Spell of Legend

House of Cards

Range: A deck of cards by touch or up to 10 feet (3 m) away.

Duration: Permanent transformation.

Saving Throw: None. **P.P.E.:** 130 or 460.

The transformation spell can be used in one of two ways. By spending the smaller amount of P.P.E., an ordinary deck of 52 cards, plus two Joker cards, can be transformed in a giant set of cards that seems to be made of wood. Each card is nine feet (2.7 m) tall and four feet (1.2 m) wide, and can be used like sheet wood building materials! The two Jokers can be nailed in place and for an extra 10 P.P.E., magically turn into a pair of completely attached doors or large glass windows. This use requires the erecting of a frame and actual building.

The spell requiring 460 P.P.E. will not only turn the cards into sturdy building materials but magically build the entire house within 1D6 minutes! Transforming a second deck of cards (requiring another 460 P.P.E.) will make the building larger or taller. The shape of the structure can be anything the spell caster desires, from tower or castle keep to that of an English manor or simple house.

Ludicrous Mage O.C.C.

By Daniel Denis

with additional text by Percy Ferkelberger

“Haven’t you ever heard of the healing powers of laughter?”

— *The Palladium Joker*

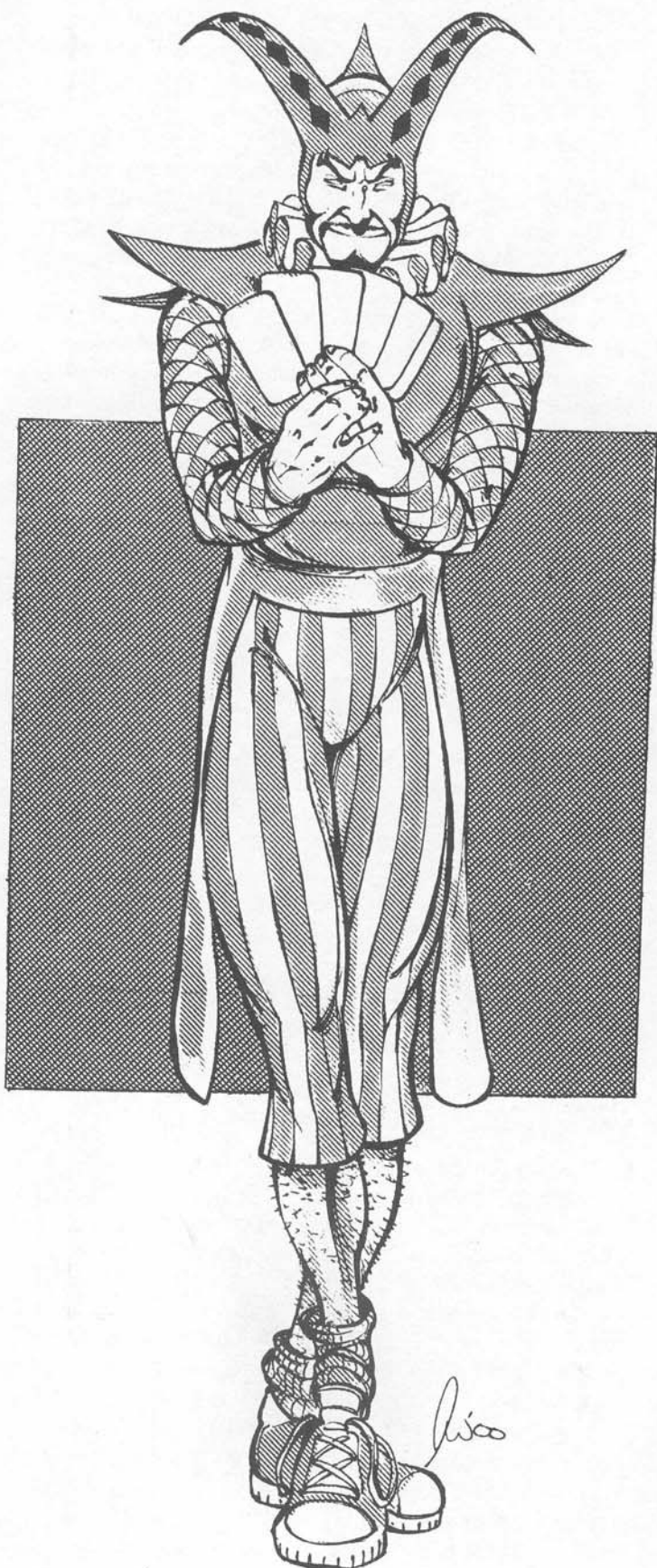
Author’s note (Daniel Denis): I personally created the Ludicrous Mage with the *Rifts*® setting in mind, but stats for both M.D.C. and S.D.C. settings are presented. My intention in creating the *Ludicrous Mage* and *Ludicrous Magic* is to add humor to an adventure, but, as you can tell, they can be rather deadly if you really want them to be.

On *Rifts* Earth, nobody knows for sure where Ludicrous Magic originated from, not even the Ludicrous Mages themselves, and this particular mystic art is quite rare. Scholars and practitioners of magic point to an old legend dating as far back as the disappearance of Atlantis from Earth that sheds some light as to the possible origin of this magic. Although this legend does not give a name to the creator of *Ludicrous Magic*, it does reveal the purpose of this odd creation: Revenge!

The legend tells a story of an alchemist who lost everything, including his family, to a selfish king (or ruler of some sort). For many years, the alchemist tried gaining support to battle the king’s forces, but nobody believed it was possible. The alchemist was laughed at, for such a task would take an army. There was no way he would have been able to raise an army of any kind, but he didn’t want the king to remain unpunished for what he had done.

He noticed that the king, like all kings, enjoyed entertainment, especially comedy. The alchemist knew that he’d get his revenge through a crafty new form of spellcraft that would literally amuse its victim *to death!* The idea was perfect. The victim would be unaware that he would be targeted for assassination until it was too late. Even more ironic was that the victim would be killed or badly harmed and nobody would suspect the “entertainment” as being responsible. They might think it was poison or some other means. And even if they figured it out, the “entertainer” would have made his escape long before they put two and two together. So it was to that end that the vengeful alchemist created his own unique branch of spell magic. His first students (a group of 10) were the original Ludicrous Mages and as payment for this rare knowledge, they eliminated the king who had wronged their mentor so long ago.

After the fall of the king, the alchemist really didn’t have any more use of his Ludicrous Mages and he dismissed them from their bond of service to him. Free to do as they pleased, the Ludicrous Mages went off into the world to test their new powers. But the world wasn’t kind. Thanks to its silly looking effects, Ludicrous Magic became the laughingstock of all spell casters, and none of the Ludicrous Mages were ever taken seriously (not even by their opponents)! Still, once word spread about their clever slaying of the king, the Ludicrous Mages became very popular with mercenary groups and assassins’ guilds who could use these eccentric specialists in jobs of “discretionary murder.” As time went by, Ludicrous Magic “evolved” and the Mages became known as both cunning pranksters and deadly agents of vengeance (if not outright assassins). It is said that a schism arose within their ranks with those preferring to use their magic



in entertaining and non-lethal forms of revenge, and the other more traditional faction who used their magic to hurt others. For the most fortunate, "hurt" came as mockery, embarrassment and character assassin. The less fortunate were made to emotionally and physically suffer, and, if need be, slain.

It is unclear whether the arts of Ludicrous Magic fell out of favor, or were never really accepted, or if the mages were hunted down to near extinction, but one thing is clear, the practice of this arcane art is rare to this day.

Even today on Rifts Earth, Ludicrous Mages are not treated the same as other magic users. They are viewed as the "joke" of magic, pranksters or as mages who just don't have the discipline or maturity to master the serious arts. Consequently, many Ludicrous Mages are distrustful of other magic users and delight in showing them up, making laughingstocks of them and getting the upper hand over them (the rivalry among the Ludicrous Mages and most serious and accepted practitioners of magic is fierce). Because so many people underestimate them, they have learned to use this to their advantage. After all, in a dangerous world, overconfidence can be a deadly mistake.

One of the most notable downsides of these mages is their obsession with humor, practical jokes, puns, and silliness. A Ludicrous Mage seems to laugh and giggle at everything, especially when they cause mischief themselves. They love to instigate disagreements, brawls, and disputes, as well as embarrassment and anger others with their magical pranks and jokes (typically those they dislike or disrespect). The most evil and undisciplined use mocking humor like a rapier to cut down their opponent and slash him to ribbons with barbed wit and cruel intentions. They have been known to tease their victims mercilessly, to the point of bringing on rage, tears of sorrow (not laughter) and even nervous breakdowns and heart failure. Depending on the disposition and alignment of the individual, these mages can be extremely annoying and cruel, or pleasant, compassionate and caring — using their humor and magic to be uplifting and kind rather than hurtful. But meanspirited or nice, humor, for them, is their way of life. They need to entertain someone (even themselves), love a large audience, and thrive on making people laugh.

Despite their more nefarious reputation, many Ludicrous Mages, especially those on Rifts Earth, have forsaken life and work as assassins and have become adventurers, bodyguards, and even heroic protectors of small communities and champions of freedom of speech. This has made them popular among Rogue Scholars, Scientists, City Rats, Mercenaries, wilderness folk and fellow adventurers who also value personal freedom. Others have become spies, bounty hunters, and Saddle Tramps, while still others make a living as honest to goodness entertainers out to make a credit by making people laugh. Because of their ability to use humor as a defensive and offensive weapon, they can be deadly foes or fun-loving companions. In the latter case, some Warlords and military leaders hire Ludicrous Mages to join their forces and entertain the troops, believing "a happy soldier fights better than a depressed or worried one."

Special Abilities of the Ludicrous Mage:

1. Humor Factor: The Humor Factor is like Horror Factor or Awe Factor, except it's funny. The mage starts with a Humor Factor of 8+1D4. This increases by +1 at level 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12 and 15.

The Humor Factor functions very much like the *Horror Factor*, except that the victims (those who fail to roll to save) are laughing so hard that they lose initiative, one melee attack and are -2 to all actions (-10% on skill performance, too) for one melee round (15 second). **Note:** Bonuses to save vs Horror Factor also apply to saves vs *Humor Factor*.

2. Monologue: A monologue is a humorous story or a stand-up comedy skit capable of amusing up to thousands of people. It may be used to pass time, send a moral message or as pure entertainment. A successful skill roll means that the Ludicrous Mage has captured the crowd with his entertainment and all are having a jolly good time. **Base Skill:** 35% +5% per level of experience (+10% bonus if the Mage has an M.A. of 21 or higher; +5% if P.B. is 18 or more).

A failed roll means the timing is off and the jokes are bad, old, offensive, or the crowd simply doesn't get the mage's sense of humor. When this occurs, there is also a chance that the crowd will start a brawl because the mage picked the wrong subject to joke about, such as a monologue that stereotypes D-Bees, Dwarves, or whomever, when the crowd is primarily composed of those people and/or their supporters. An offended crowd could put the mage in grave danger, therefore, the G.M. should decide on the gravity of the situation and how they may respond. Roll on the following table.

01-20 An angry crowd hisses, boos, heckles and shouts serious threats. If the Mage does not get off stage within the next 1D4+1 minutes, they will start throwing rocks, sticks and even knives, along with mud, rotten fruit and vegetables. The Mage will suffer 3D6+6 points of damage (M.D.C. or S.D.C. as is appropriate).

21-40 A brawl breaks out between 2D6 people in the crowd. Every few minutes an additional 1D6 people join the conflict. Everybody is now fixed on the fighting and don't even hear the Ludicrous Mage anymore. Time for the Mage to exit, stage left, before he gets blamed for the trouble or is hurt in the brawl.

41-60 Offended listeners attack. That's right, 1D4+1 people from the audience climb the stage and attack the Mage. These can be two-bit hoodlums or peasant farmers to mercenary fighters, soldiers or just about anybody. Thankfully they are not out to kill, only to extract their own brutal pound of justice, so the Ludicrous Mage may only suffer a beating or tar and feathering. Of course the Mage may try to defend himself or flee, but the former is likely to encourage 1D6 friends or sympathizing members of the audience to join the first group in "getting the Mage" and a serious fight could ensue (perhaps involving the other player characters). Fleeing will get a big laugh from the audience and the 1D4+1 ruffians will give up pursuit after only two melee rounds (30 seconds); they made their point and are satisfied with themselves.

61-70 "Lynch the Mage!" is shouted from the audience and 1D6+6 people from the crowd (typically aggressive nonhuman or warrior types) leap on the stage to do just that. The Mage is in a fight for his life! If he is smart, he (and the members of the player group) will try to make a hasty escape and run for it. The lynch mob will give pursuit for 2D6 minutes before giving up. However, if they see the Mage later (or any of his "friends" they may recognize) they will renew their attack with deadly intent. It's best to leave town, and we mean NOW! Exit stage right and through the back alleys.

71-80 Riot! No kidding!! The Mage sparks a riot that sweeps through 1D4x10% of the town, causing people to be injured, property damage and looting. The Mage will suffer 2D4x10 points of damage (M.D.C. or S.D.C. as is appropriate) in the ensuing carnage. Furthermore, the authorities *may* hold him personally liable for the damages (get outta town fast before the Mage finds himself imprisoned, stripped of all possessions or worse)!

81-00 No violence, but a disappointed crowd quickly disperses amid boos and cat-calls. Within 1D4 minutes the Mage is telling jokes to himself. Boy, can this stinker of a routine empty a place. If this has caused all or most of the patrons in a tavern or similar place of business to leave, the owner of the establishment will be none too happy. Not only will he refuse to pay the entertainer, but is likely to charge him for the loss of business (at least 1D4x100 credits or gold) and may have him physically tossed out on his ear by bouncers or burly cousin Ned. Best to cut one's losses and be glad nobody got hurt (other than the Mage's pride).

3. Unnerving Laugh: While in combat, the Ludicrous Mage can use an extremely annoying and/or menacing and unnerving laugh that has the potential of debilitating anyone who hears it. This slightly high-pitched and seemingly endless laughter has an audible radius of 500 feet (152 m), but only those within a 30 foot (9 m) radius suffer any penalties.

Range: 30 feet (9 meters); affects all who hear it.

Duration: One minute (4 melee rounds) +1 melee round per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Special. Those within 30 feet (9 meters) must roll to *save vs temporary insanity* — roll 16 or higher.

Damage/Penalties: Those who fail to save are -3 to all combat maneuvers (initiative, strike, parry, dodge, etc.) and reduce the number of attacks per melee by half. In addition, those who are trying to perform a skill will suffer from a -20% penalty.

P.P.E.: 8 P.P.E. required to perform the Laugh of Annoyance.

Note: Those who are in vehicles, power armor, or have anything that can prevent them from hearing the annoying laugh are not affected.

4. Make Balloon Animals & Monsters: With balloons, the Ludicrous Mage can bind a few together to resemble an animal or a monster. A failed roll means that the balloon popped. It requires one melee round (15 seconds) to make a balloon animal/monster. This skill is used mostly to captivate an audience momentarily. **Base Skill:** 60% +2% per level of experience (characters with a P.P. of 19 or higher are +10%). **Note:** The spell "Create Balloon Animals/Monsters" magically creates balloons and molds them into specific shapes, while this is a "skill" that uses actual balloons.

5. Clowning (special): This is the act of making a joke, hilarious gestures, pratfalls, funny faces, or stupid comments. A successful roll means that those who are "entertained" must *save vs Humor Factor*. A failed roll means that the mage didn't nail the punchline or the clowning gesture wasn't all that funny. **Base Skill:** 20%+5% per level of experience (+15% if the Mage has an M.A. Of 20 or higher and +5% if the P.O. Is 20 or higher).

6. Spell Knowledge: Unlike other magic users, the Ludicrous Mage's magic knowledge is limited to Ludicrous Magic

and only a handful of common Wizard spells. The mage starts with 8+1D6 Ludicrous Spells selected from levels 1-4 and 1D4 Wizards spells selected from levels 1-2. At each level of experience thereafter, the mage may select an additional three Ludicrous spells up to one level above his current level of experience or two Wizard Spells from levels 1-3.

Additional Types of Available Spell Magic: The Ludicrous Mage can NOT learn or perform *ritual magic*, only spell magic, and even then the types of magic he can learn are limited to Ludicrous Magic (all levels) and Wizard spells levels 1-3 as well as Wizard spells of any level that cause a transformation of something else (like Fool's Gold and Spoil Food), any metamorphosis and curses. They never studies or uses Card Magic.

7. Base P.P.E.: M.E. attribute x3 +3D6. The Ludicrous Mage will gain an additional 3D6 P.P.E. per each level of experience.

8. O.C.C. Bonuses: +2 to M.A., +2 to M.E., +1 to P.P., +1D6 to Spd attribute, +2 to save vs illusions, +3 to save vs Ludicrous Magic, and +1 vs Horror Factor at levels 2, 5, 8, and 12 (in addition to all other attribute bonuses, special abilities and R.C.C. bonuses). +1 to spell strength at levels 4, 7, 10, 13 and 15.

9. Limitations: The Ludicrous Mage is obsessed with humor. He will tell jokes, pull pranks, act dumb, or tease. Not being able to "entertain" someone (or even themselves) will seriously discourage them. If a Ludicrous Mage is alone for a period of 60 days, there is a chance of developing a new personality (01-10%) or phobia (11-25%; 26-00% means no new insanity). If he gets a new personality, the Mage will be content because he will have someone to entertain. For determining this new personality, refer to the Multiple Personality description on page 59 of the **Rifts® RPG** (skip step one). Roll one for every 60 days of loneliness.

Ludicrous Mages are not loners, therefore, they accept the company of anyone, humans and nonhumans alike. The only people the Ludicrous Mage has trouble associating with are "serious" practitioners of magic (i.e. Ley Line Walkers, Wizards, Mystics, etc.) and authority figures (military officers, mayors, kings, queens, etc.). Most other practitioners of magic see them as jokes and not true magic users, only on a rare occasion will one see another sorcerer associating with a Ludicrous Mage. The Trickster is an exception to this; these two usually get along very well.

The Ludicrous Mage O.C.C.

Alignment: Any selfish or evil alignment. Because of their typically obnoxious sense of humor and their tendency to work as assassins or chaotic free-spirits, Ludicrous Mages are almost never of good alignment. The best of the best are typically Unprincipled. Some of the most evil find it humorous to take on the visage of the creepy and formidable "evil clown."

Attribute Requirements: An M.E. of 12 and P.P. of 12 or higher. A strong I.Q., M.A. and P.E. are also useful, but not required.

O.C.C. Skills:

Basic Math (+25%)
Two Languages of Choice (+20%)
Radio: Basic (+10%)
Acrobatics (+5%)
Gymnastics (+10%)

Cardsharp (+10%)
Ventriloquism (+15%)
Escape Artist (+10%)
Play Musical Instrument (choose three instruments) (+15%)
Dance (+25%)
Sing (+15%)
W.P. Paired Weapons & Targeting.
One Ancient W.P. (three if a Fantasy character)
Two Modern W.P. (none if a Fantasy character)
Hand to Hand: Expert*

* Hand to Hand: Expert can be exchanged for Hand to Hand: Martial Arts (or Assassin if evil) at the cost of one "other" skill.

O.C.C. Related Skills: Select six skills from the following categories, plus two at level 3, and one at levels 6, 9, and 12. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

Communications: Any (+5%)
Domestic: Any (+10%)
Electrical: None
Espionage: Any (+5%)
Mechanical: None
Medical: First Aid and Brewing only.
Military: None
Physical: Any
Pilot: Any (+5%)
Pilot Related: Any
Rogue: Any (+5%)
Science: Any
Technical: Any (+5%, but all lore skills get a +10%)
W.P.: Any
Wilderness: Any (+2%)

Secondary Skills: The character also gets to select four secondary skills from those listed, plus one at levels 4, 8 and 12. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get the advantage of the bonus listed in parentheses. All secondary skills start at the base skill level.

Standard Equipment: Robe or cape (with or without a hood), 1D4 colorful hats, two sets of colorful clothing, light body armor (seldom wear heavy armor, because it reduces their speed and mobility by half), knapsack, backpack, 1D4 packages of 25 balloons, 2 small sacks, one large sack, make-up kit (usually 5 bright colors), 1D4 dozen peices of bubble gum, canteen/waterskin, flashlight (or torch with tinder box), pen or pencils (or graphite sticks and chalk), coloring crayons (box of 3D6+20 different colors), note or sketch pad. Ludicrous Mages like *magic items* and will use them whenever they can (on Rifts Earth that includes Techno-Wizard items).

Weapons will include a club or blackjack, a knife, hand axe, one S.D.C. pistol or rifle (1D4+1 throwing knives or staff if a Fantasy character), one energy rifle (short bow or cross bow if a Fantasy character), 1D6 extra clips of ammunition, and 2D4 personal items (like a frying pan).

Vehicle of choice: Starts with motorcycle or hovercycle, or horse. The vehicle is typically small, fast and maneuverable, as well as relatively inexpensive and easily replaced in case it is destroyed by a monster, bandits or an angry audience. Those who use a horse may include it in his "act."

Money: *Rifts characters* start with 1D4x1,000 in credits and 4D6x100 in black market items.

Fantasy characters start with 2D4x10 gold but also have two minor magic items selected from the following list: 40 foot (12 m) length of Cherubot Rope, six magic powders (of choice), two expensive fumes (of choice), three Roman Candles or six Smoke Bombs, three doses of Magic Make-Up Paint, one dose of Vanishing Cream, three Firewicks, a bottle of Mystic Ink, two Screech Bottles, eight feet (2.4 m) of Magic Bandages or one Marble of Transformation.

Ludicrous Mage spendthrifts are common, so these characters always find themselves spending money like drunken sailors. This explains why they often are on the lookout for new work.

Cybernetics: The Ludicrous Mage will avoid cybernetics and bionics at all costs, and will make fun of those who have them. ("Hey, ironbutt! That a torque wrench in your pocket or are you just happy to see me?")

Note: Ludicrous Mages are friendly, but may be rude at times. They have trouble associating with other magic users, but will be found among them if the other mages tolerate the humor. They always have a joke to tell, even when it might be inappropriate to do so (like when a teammate has just died). They love to entertain people and enjoy solving riddles. They often speak in rhymes or broken sentences or take on some other kind of vocal affectation to sound amusing. The worst thing for a Ludicrous Mage to be is boring.

Ludicrous Magic

Ludicrous Magic uses humor in a defensive or offensive fashion. Originally used for the purpose of assassination, many Ludicrous Mages found it satisfying to use these powers for good by either keeping morale high, or defending the innocent. For whatever the reason the character selects to use this form of magic, the primary purpose is basically to get laughs. *Ludicrous Mages* and *Tricksters* are the only ones who know the secrets of Ludicrous Magic, because other magic practitioners refuse to acknowledge this form of magic as anything but a waste of time. **Note:** Unless noted otherwise, the "Damage" is S.D.C./Hit Point damage on S.D.C. worlds, and Mega-Damage (M.D.) on Rifts and other M.D.C. world settings.

Level One

Cloud of Laughter

Range: 100 feet (30.5 meters).

Duration: 4 melee rounds +1 melee round per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: Four.

This spell affects a 30x30x30 foot (9x9x9 m) area with laughing gas. The gas is invisible but has a sweet odor. Those affected will start to laugh uncontrollably until they leave the affected area. The laughing causes the victims to lose their concentration, thus inflicting a -4 penalty to all combat actions (strike, parry, dodge, etc.), loss of initiative and -10% to perform a skill. Note the laughing can get pretty loud, especially if several people are affected, and it will attract the attention of others (great for creating distractions).



Alter Physical Features

Range: Touch; self or other.

Duration: Four minutes (20 melee rounds) per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: Four points per altered feature.

This spell permits the caster to alter any physical features he wishes, from enlarging or shrinking the nose or ears, to lengthening the beard or even giving a character buck teeth. This spell alters only physical features, it doesn't shrink any body parts nor does it add parts or weight. Moreover, it is typically used for comic effect. Adds +5% to Disguise and Impersonation skills.

Funny Bone

Range: 30 feet (9 m).

Duration: One minute (4 melee rounds).

Saving Throw: -1 to save.

P.P.E.: Three

The affected character will feel a tingle at the joint of the arm or leg that tickles as if a feather is being gently stroked across it. This is distracting, causing the following penalties: -1 on initiative, -1 to strike, parry and dodge and -5% to skill performance per each affected limb with cumulative effect. This spell may even affect additional appendages (arms, tentacles, tails, etc.). One spell affects one limb.

Hand Buzzer

Range: Touch.

Duration: One melee round.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: Three

When the spell caster touches a person, a small buzzing sound is heard, and the victim starts to shake uncontrollably for one melee round, suffering a penalty of -4 to all combat rolls

(strike, parry, dodge, etc.) and loses one melee action. No penalties if the character saves vs magic.

Neverending Handkerchief

Range: Self only.

Duration: Five minutes per level of the spell caster or until destroyed or magically dismissed (vanishes in a poof).

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: Two

The spell caster reveals a handkerchief from his pocket, only to find another attached onto it. The length of the handkerchief is 30 feet (9 m) +5 feet (1.5 m) per level of experience. What makes the handkerchief "neverending" is that the mage can cast the spell again to add to the length. Each handkerchief has five S.D.C. and can be used as a rope, but can only support a total weight of 600 lbs (270 kg).

Scents Evil

Range: 80 foot area (24 m area).

Duration: Two melee rounds per level of experience.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: Two

Basically the same spell as Sense Evil (*Rifts® RPG*, page 168), but a big nose appears on the spell caster to permit him to "sense" or "smell" evil — to detect its "scent" and presence.

Scents Magic

Range: 120 foot (36 m) area.

Duration: Two minutes per level of experience.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: Two

Basically the same spell as Sense Magic (*Rifts® RPG*, page 168), but a big nose appears on the caster to permit him to "sense" or "smell" magic — to detect its "scent" and presence.

Fart Blossom

Range: 120 foot (36 m) area.

Duration: Two minutes per level of experience.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: Two

Basically the same spell as Cloud of Smoke (*Rifts® RPG*, page 168), except that the smoke cloud seems to billow forth from the character's ... um ... derriere ... behind, and has a bit of a burnt smell to it.

Level Two

Alter Physical Color

Range: Touch.

Duration: Five minutes (20 melee rounds) per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: Five

The spell caster can change the physical color of a person, creature or thing. The colors are usually very bright, varying from white, bright red, pink, yellow, orange, and green to fluorescent colors. Designs may be added, such as polka-dots, stripes, large flowers, argyles and plaids. Coalition soldiers in particular hate getting nailed by this one. There just is nothing more silly looking than a Dead Boy in pastel pink armor.

Aura of Feebleness

Range: Self or one other by touch.

Duration: One minute per level of experience.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: Six

The target of this spell is surrounded by a greenish glowing aura that makes them seem less powerful than they really are. This makes the character seem to be three experience levels lower, and 50% less stronger than he or she really is. It also temporarily "masks" supernatural strength, any superhuman powers, or psionics, rendering it virtually undetectable by magical or psychic means (such as See Aura). The prime purposes of this spell are disguise and to launch surprise attacks. ("I was just fighting this powerful wizard ... where did he go?" Or, "You don't look so tough to me!").

Candy Smell

Range: 30 feet (9 m).

Duration: Five minutes per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: Four

The caster imbues his target with the sweet aroma of candy. As pleasant as that may be, it attracts flies, bugs, and maybe even a few uninvited animals (such as skunks or bears) in droves. The sweet odor also gives those tracking the scented character a +20% to tracking by smell and follow him easily.

Cotton Candy

Range: 60 feet (18 meters).

Duration: Two melee rounds per level of experience or until destroyed.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: Six

The victim of this spell is suddenly wrapped with cotton candy that otherwise behaves as a *Carpet of Adhesion!* The candy magically holds together, but dissolves when in contact with water (will disappear in one melee round if made wet). Note that a character can also *eat* himself free within 1D6+1 melee rounds, or may break free with a strength of 21 or greater (burns up 2 melee actions).

Create Candy

Range: Touch

Duration: Instantaneous.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: Five

When the caster touches a surface (table, ground, the palm of a hand, etc.), several pieces of candy appear (+1D6 per level of experience) when he lifts it back up. This candy may be wrapped or not. Anybody who eats more than 10 has a 01-40% chance of getting a craving to eat more (+5% per each additional 10 pieces of candy eaten), and will eat candy without stopping and bug the spell caster for more until he or she gets sick (P.E. attribute x10 is the amount of candy one must eat).

If a character is sick, he or she gets the following penalties due to stomachaches: -2 to strike, parry and dodge, loss of one melee action (-1 attack) and will feel sick in the stomach (-10% to physical skills) for a duration of 1D4 hours. Once a character becomes sick, he or she loses the craving.

Water Flower

Range: 15 feet (4.6 m) +1 foot (0.3 m) per level of experience.

Damage: Water none, acid 6D6 S.D.C. or 1D6 M.D.

Duration: Instantaneous, one shot, counts as one melee action.

Saving Throw: Dodge.

P.P.E.: Varies; 2, 3, 4 or 10.

Once cast, a flower magically appears on the right or left side of the caster's chest. The flower will squirt water (2 P.P.E.), a yellow liquid with a slightly foul odor to it (3 P.P.E. and yes it looks like what you are thinking, but it is a harmless prank liquid), or acid (4 P.P.E. for S.D.C. acid, 10 for M.D.).

It squirts towards the desired target with a bonus of +2 to strike. Water or yellow solution will cause no damage but if the caster makes a "called shot," the water will soak his eyes, blinding him for one melee action/lose one melee action. The water will cause 3D6 damage to a vampire's Hit Points and does not require a called shot. The yellow liquid is a harmless, dyed water that leaves a slight stain on clothing that washes out with ordinary soap. Acid inflicts 4D6 S.D.C. or 1D6 M.D., but M.D. is possible only when in a Mega-Damage environment and does not require a called shot unless a specific item or area is targeted.

Level Three

Animal Characteristics (physical)

Range: Self or other by touch.

Duration: Five minutes (20 melee rounds) per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: Six P.P.E. per each animal characteristic.

The spell caster can alter certain physical features to resemble those of an animal, such as bestowing donkey's ears, a pig's nose, a rabbit's teeth, etc., to make a funny face. These animal characteristics are purely aesthetic and are designed to make the recipient look goofy (-4 to P.B.). While it is designed for entertainment purposes, it can also be used to embarrass an unwitting victim or distinctively mark a living target. **Note:** This spell does not add limbs nor can it bestow extra S.D.C. or M.D.C. upon the recipient of this magic. The victim does not gain any special animal abilities. Each animal feature counts as one magical Animal Characteristic and costs six P.P.E.

Bouncy Balls

Range: Contained in a 50x50x50 foot area (15x15x15 m).

Damage: 1D6 S.D.C./H.P. per each strike of the ball.

Duration: One minute per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Dodge only.

P.P.E.: Five per set of five balls.

The spell caster creates five bouncing balls which the mage can juggle without dropping. If one is purposely dropped or thrown, the ball will bounce around without stopping. They are magically contained in a 50x50x50 foot area (15x15x15 m) with the caster in the middle. Once they start to bounce, the balls continue to accelerate at speeds in excess of 200 mph (320 km) and causes 1D6 S.D.C. damage to anyone struck in the contained area (only the spell caster remains untouched).

An individual in the area will get struck once per melee round per set of bouncy balls (5 balls = 1 hit, 10 balls = 2 hits,

15 balls = 3 hits and so on). Furthermore, with 10 or more bouncing balls the characters are distracted and -1 on all combat maneuvers; double if there are 30 or more. **Note:** The area containing the bouncing balls remains fixed in place. Once this spell is cast, the area of effect can not be moved or adjusted. **M.D.C.** **Note:** On Mega-Damage worlds, for an additional expenditure of five P.P.E. per each set of five, the balls will inflict 1 M.D. each time they strike!

Pies

Range: 100 feet (30.5 m) +10 feet (3 m) per level of experience.

Damage: Varies with the type of pie.

Duration: Until thrown.

Saving Throw: Special

P.P.E.: Varies with the type of pie.

The spell caster creates a pie that he can throw at his target with a bonus of +4 to strike. For each type of pie, the mage requires a different amount of P.P.E. All pies have the same shape, size and color (unless otherwise noted), but they all have a different effect.

Cream Pie: P.P.E.: 2. **Damage:** None. **Saving Throw:** Dodge only. This is a normal cream pie with a whipped cream topping. They are edible and can be of any flavor. A called shot with one of these can hit the target in the face, partially blinding him (-4 to strike, parry and dodge) for one melee round. Great for laughs.

Banana Cream Pie: P.P.E.: 4. **Damage:** None. **Duration of Effect:** 1D4+2 melee rounds. **Saving Throw:** Standard. Those hit by this pie will find themselves covered by whipped cream. This cream is very slippery and those struck have a 01-20% chance of losing their grip on one of their weapons (or other object in the hands) and a 01-30% chance of slipping and falling to the ground (lose initiative, two melee actions and suffer 1D6 S.D.C. damage from the fall). Roll at the beginning of each melee round. Great for laughs and combat.

Blueberry Pie: P.P.E.: 4. **Damage:** 1D4 S.D.C. (one M.D. on Mega-Damage worlds) and explodes in a blue spray upon impact, turning the character or item (no larger than a sports car) blue! **Duration:** The blue color lasts 1D6 minutes per level of the spell caster. **Saving Throw:** Dodge.

Cement Pie: P.P.E.: 6. **Damage:** 2D6 S.D.C. (or, on Mega-Damage worlds, 1D6 M.D.); it's like getting hit by a brick with whipped cream on top. **Saving Throw:** Dodge.

Cherry Pie: P.P.E.: 6. **Damage:** 1D6 S.D.C. (1D4 M.D. on Mega-Damage worlds) and explodes in a red spray upon impact, turning the character or item (no larger than a sports car) red! The victim will definitely stand out in a crowd and also have a yummy cherry pie smell on him. (+20% to track him). **Duration:** The color lasts 1D6+4 minutes per level of the spell caster. **Saving Throw:** Dodge.

Exploding Pie: P.P.E.: 12. **Damage:** 1D6 S.D.C. damage (1D6 M.D. on Mega-Damage worlds) per level of experience. **Range:** The blast pretty much affects only what the pie hits. These black pies blow up on contact, just like a hand grenade. **Saving Throw:** Dodge.

Gas Pie: P.P.E.: 8. **Damage:** These pies release a thick white gas cloud of 30x30x30 feet (9x9x9 m). Those inside will cough, eyes tear up and suffer a -4 to all combat maneuvers while in the cloud. Moreover, visibility is bad, those in the cloud can't see

outside of it, and those outside can't see in the cloud. The gas also has a sweet sugar smell and taste to it. **Duration:** One minute per level of experience. **Saving Throw:** Standard, but even those who save and suffer no penalty cannot see what is outside of the cloud.

Homing Pie: P.P.E.: 10. **Duration:** Special. **Saving Throw:** Dodge at -6. This is actually an enchantment that can be placed on any of the magical pies, *except* the Nuclear Bomb pie. The magical effect adds 200 feet (61 m) to the throwing range and it cannot miss unless the intended target makes a spectacular dodge (at -6 to do so). Pies that do less than 1D4 damage always hit living beings in the face.

Lemon Meringue Pie: P.P.E.: 20. **Damage:** 4D6 S.D.C. damage (4D6 M.D. on Mega-Damage worlds) +2 points per level of experience from *acid* that will burn through anything. Upon impact, this pie splatters its target with a mega-acid. **Duration:** Two melee rounds. When thrown on body armor of any kind, the first melee round damage is done to the armor, the second round to the character underneath, unless the area of armor affected can be removed in 15 seconds. Typically the chest area is targeted, because it's the biggest target. **Saving Throw:** Dodge.

Nuclear Bomb Pie: P.P.E.: 120. **Damage:** 1D4x100+20 S.D.C. or 3D4x10 M.D. to a 10 foot (3 m) diameter; explodes on impact. **Saving Throw:** Leaping dodge (counts as two melee actions). This is the most dangerous pie. It glows with an intense green light strong enough to light up a room and unleashes a green mini-mushroom cloud upon impact.

Red Nose

Range: Glow: 15x15x15 foot area (4.6 x 4.6 x 4.6 meter area); 60 feet (18.3 m) when removed and thrown.

Damage: Special: 3D6 when thrown like a grenade.

Duration: 10 minutes or until removed.

Saving Throw: Dodge

P.P.E.: Five.

A large, round, bright red clown's nose the size of a plum appears on the nose of the spell caster or another by touch. The nose is so full of energy that it radiates the equivalent light of a lantern or torch. It can be worn and used like a lantern that radiates red light and/or be removed and put in one place for light or as a marker, or removed and thrown. Upon impact it will explode doing 3D6 damage to whatever it hits. Vanishes after 10 minutes.

Uncontrollable Laughter

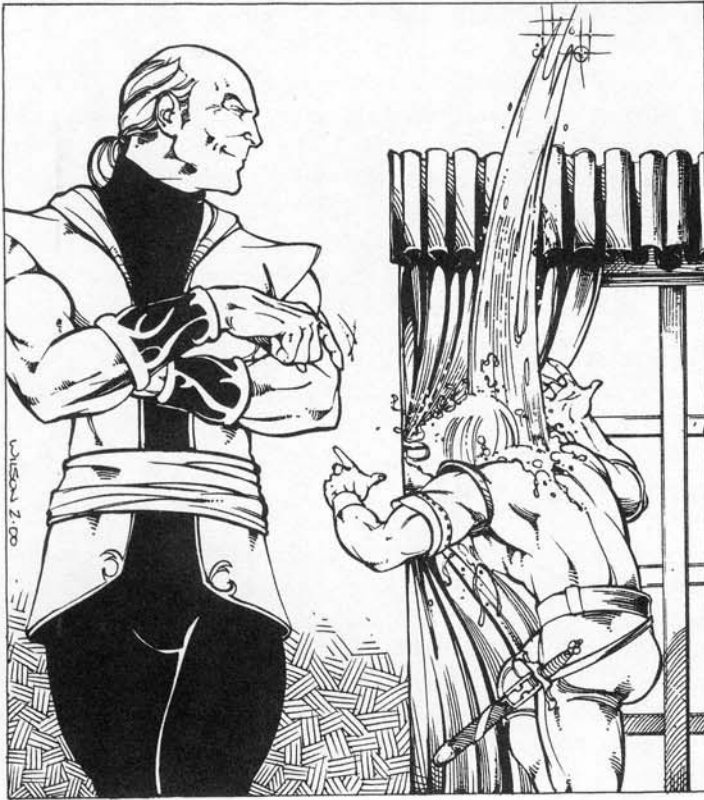
Range: Touch.

Duration: One melee round per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: Eight

The affected person can not stop laughing hysterically. The eyes water and the character can barely catch his breath. Therefore, he or she will have the following penalties: reduce the number of attacks per melee to one plus a -5 to all physical actions (strike, parry and dodge), no initiative, and -25% penalty to skill performance.



Water Dump

Range: 60 feet (18 meters).

Duration: Instantaneous.

Saving Throw: Dodge at -8. Vampires get a standard save.

P.P.E.: Eight

The spell caster creates five gallons (19 liters) of water to fall from directly above the head of his target. The target *may* attempt to dodge the water, but does so at -8 (it happens so quick and magically that it is very difficult to dodge). The victim of this prank suffers no damage, but gets soaked and loses initiative from surprise.

Vampires hit by this spell take 1D6x10 damage; if they save vs magic, they take only half damage. Those in power armor or otherwise protected (force field, etc.) are not affected, but those protected by a normal helmet and armor that is not airtight will take full damage.

Level Four

Blissful Confusion

Range: 60 feet (18.3 m).

Duration: One melee round.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: Seven

This spell will cause the mage's target(s) to giggle a bit, feel blissful, but be totally confused. The victim(s) forgets who he is or what he was doing for just a brief moment. This means he will not attack a known enemy or take any action unless attacked first or provoked to do something (otherwise just stands there trying to remember what to do). If attacked, these confused individuals lose initiative and one melee attack/action and

are -2 to strike and -1 to parry and dodge; -15% to perform skills. The spell caster may affect one person per level of his experience.

Bubble Gum Rope

Range: Self and carry up to 200 additional pounds (90 kg).

Duration: Five minutes per level of the spell caster's experience, after which the material falls apart and vanishes.

Saving Throw: Not applicable.

S.D.C./M.D.C. of Bubble: Five points per level of experience.

P.P.E.: Eight

The spell caster can chew ordinary bubble gum, remove it from his mouth and via this spell, stretch it into a long super-strong, but lightweight length of cord; 12 feet (3.6 m) per level of experience. Has a tensile strength of 400 pounds (180 kg) +200 lbs (90 kg) per level of the spell caster's experience.

Bubble Gum Stick-Um

Range: 90 feet (27.4 m).

Duration: Two minutes per level of the spell caster's experience, after which the material falls apart and vanishes.

Saving Throw: Dodge when applicable, but at -4 to do so.

P.P.E.: 10

This spell has a few applications.

1: The spell caster either spits or throws a piece of gum from his mouth towards the feet or wheels of his target. If the target is hit, the gum will glue his feet or wheels to the ground, holding him in place! A combined P.S. of 40 is required to pull free (vehicles can't get traction; beings with superhuman or supernatural P.S. only need a strength of 22 to pull out).

2. The bubble gum stick-um can be taken out of the mouth and pulled and stretched by the spell caster up to the size of a large pizza pie or kept small and compact. In any case, it can be used like a powerful double-stick glue to stick any material to virtually any surface — including a humanoid to the butt of a giant robot or dragon.

Create & Animate Balloons

Range: Touch.

Duration: 10 minutes (40 melee rounds) per level of experience or until destroyed. If one mile (1.6 km) from a ley line, the balloon creature will be "alive" until destroyed.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: 10 for small, 15 for medium, 20 for large.

Limitation: This spell can make two small or one medium or large balloon animal.

This spell enables the spell caster to make an ordinary balloon animal or ordinary balloon and bring it to life! Although still just an ordinary balloon, the creature can be ridden or made to perform simple tasks such as guarding or carrying supplies, but can not communicate, use weapons or make intelligent decisions — these balloons are animated by P.P.E. and don't have any signs of intelligence whatsoever. The caster may replenish the balloon animal's S.D.C. or simply to keep them longer by adding another 10, 15 or 20 P.P.E. depending on size.

If one mile (1.6 km) from a ley line, the balloon animal may exist indefinitely by absorbing P.P.E. from the Ley Line (no, balloon animals can NOT absorb P.P.E. from other characters).

All balloon animals have three attacks per melee round and a bonus of +2 to dodge. They are magically charged, which explains why they have greater S.D.C. than normal. They also perform all the following skills at 80% proficiency: Dance, run, climbing, prowl, and swimming. They can understand simple commands from their creator and run/float/fly at about 20 mph/32 km (those that have wings can move at 30 mph/48 km); maximum altitude is 2000 feet (610 m).

Small: 7 S.D.C. Size: about 1 to 3 feet (0.3 to 0.9 m). Damage they can inflict: 1 point. Has a P.S. of 5.

Medium: 15 S.D.C. Size: Dog-size to four feet maximum (1.2 m), Damage they can inflict: 1D4 by hit/punch, ram, or bite. Has a P.S. of 9.

Large: 50 S.D.C. Size: as big as a horse to an eight foot maximum (2.4 m)! Damage they can inflict: 2D4 S.D.C. Has a P.S. of 14.

Funny Glasses

Range: 100 feet (30.5 m).

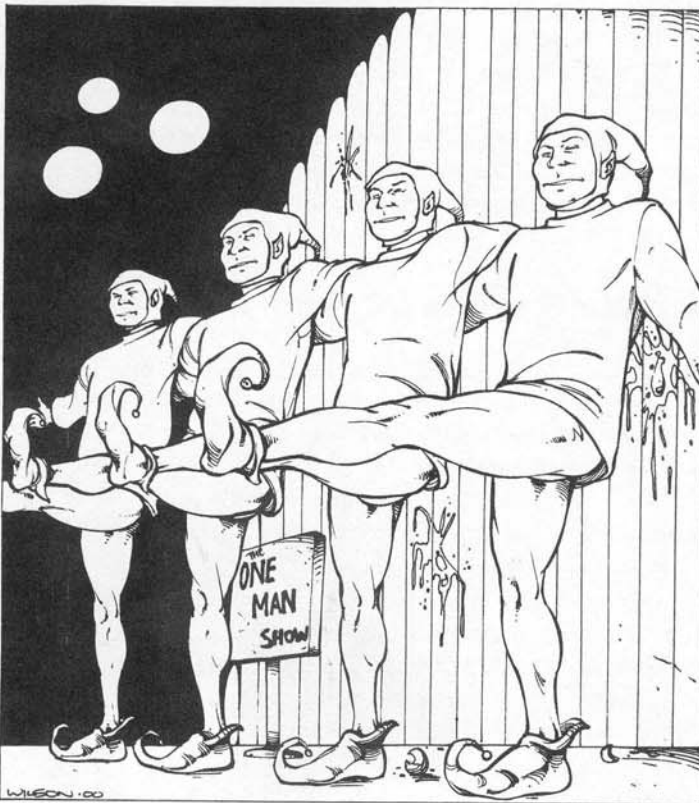
Duration: One minute per level of experience, but the ability to

See Aura will only last for the first minute.

Saving Throw: Instantaneous.

P.P.E.: 10

A pair of oversized glasses will appear on the caster's face. The glasses will permit the caster to see another person's aura and the invisible just like the See Aura and See the Invisible spells in the *Rifts® RPG*, page 168. It also enable him to see in total darkness (nightvision 500 feet/152 m) and 15 feet (4.6 m) in magical darkness.



Imaginary Quartet

Range: Self only.

Duration: One minute (four melee rounds) per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Special penalty of -5 to save.

P.P.E.: Nine

Basically the same as the *Multiple Image* spell in the *Rifts® RPG*, page 173, except that the Ludicrous Mage can create four identical images of himself, each of which mimics his every movement. It provides the following bonuses to the Mage, whom attackers can not discern from the four false images: The Mage is +3 on initiative, +3 to dodge, +1 to strike. Some Ludicrous Mages are known to create entire chorus lines of themselves and perform can-can dances in the middle of combat!

Moron I.Q.

Range: Touch with seltzer bottle spray; 5 foot (1.5 m) max. range.

Duration: One melee round per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: 10.

A magical seltzer or perfume bottle appears and sprays the intended victim. The affected character becomes an idiot because his I.Q. is temporarily reduced to 3. The character does not possess an animal intelligence, he just becomes extremely dumb! He has a hard time understanding what is going on and behaves like a complete imbecile, prone to saying mindless things for no apparent reason. ("Duh, which way did he go, George? Which way did he go?") However, he can not reveal secrets or important information because he can't remember them nor understand big words like "remember." The character performs any skill at the base level -20%. He or she loses initiative (does not understand what is going on), has no combat bonuses and only two melee actions per round. Likely to wander off or get into trouble (wander into a combat zone, etc.).

Rail Thin

Range: Self, others by touch or up to three feet (0.9 m) away.

Duration: One minute (four melee rounds) per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: 10

The victim of this spell will suddenly find him/herself to be extremely thin (to the bone almost). Reduce weight by two thirds! Side effects from being so thin are: The victim fatigues twice as quickly and his clothes/armor will be so baggy as to fall off his body or impair body movement. Reduce P.S., P.E., P.P. and Spd by 30%, attacks/actions per melee also by one third. However, this magic may help in effecting an escape by making an individual thin enough to slip his chains, handcuffs or even squeeze through the space between bars. It is also excellent for causing somebody's pants to fall down.

Trampoline

Range: Self or other; up to 60 feet (18.3 m) away.

Duration: Instantaneous (lasts approximately two seconds).

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: Six

The spell caster creates a trampoline underneath himself or another character. In a single leap the magical trampoline will propel a character up to 20 feet (6 m) +3 feet (0.9 m) per level of experience into the air or half that height and distance lengthwise. The spell automatically adjusts to the size of the target, therefore, a bigger trampoline will appear for a giant (or power armored character) and a smaller one for a Dwarf.

Water Balloon

Range: Throwing: 40 feet (12 m) +5 feet (1.5 m) per level of experience.

Duration: Until thrown.

Damage: Varies with the type of water balloon.

Saving Throw: Dodge at -3; some water balloons also have a special saving throw.

P.P.E.: Varies with the type of water balloon.

The spell caster creates a water balloon in his hand which he can throw at a target. Because of the non-aerodynamic form and its the awkwardness, the range of the balloons are limited, but when they burst, they make an awful mess.

Balloons have different powers depending on their color, but they all have 2 S.D.C., affect a 6x6 foot area (1.8x1.8 meter area) when it bursts, and each are magically thrown, making them more difficult to dodge.

The spell caster may create one water balloon at level one, two at level four, three at level eight, and four at level twelve. Each type of water balloon requires a specific amount of P.P.E.

Black: P.P.E.: 8. Damage: None. Duration: Two melee rounds per level of experience. These water balloons are actually oil balloons. When they burst, they will cover the affected area with nonflammable (but very slippery) oil. Those in the area affected will suffer from -3 to strike, parry and dodge, a 01-15% chance of having their weapon slip out of their hand (roll before each attack) and a 01-40% chance of falling down (lose initiative and one melee action) if they make a sudden movement (including swinging a weapon) or try to run, leap or dodge.

Blue: P.P.E.: 5. Damage: None, although a "called shot" to somebody's head will momentarily distract them and cause the victim to lose one melee action and initiative (4D6 H.P. damage to vampires). Duration: Instantaneous. These are normal water balloons filled with water. Fun at parties and effective against vampires.

Red: P.P.E.: 15. Damage: 5D6 to everything in area of effect. Duration: Instantaneous. The red colored water balloons are filled with liquid plasma (no, not the blood component, that stuff that burns!) that immediately bursts into flame when the balloon pops and it is exposed to air. Need I say more?

Yellow: P.P.E.: 8. Damage: None. Duration: One minute per level of experience. Special Saving Throw: As a standard spell. The yellow colored water balloon is the key to make someone "stand out". When these puppies burst, they cover all in their range with a magical yellow solution. This solution will stay on a person, thing or object for the duration of the spell (a successful save means the solution completely drips off a character after one full melee round). Those covered by the solution will find themselves shining or illuminated by yellow light (which is why they stand out). The yellow light can be seen as far as the eye can see. Those tracking the character will have a +10% to their tracking skill (+25% at night). If the affected character goes into battle, because he or she is so noticeable, they are likely to be targeted first even when in a crowd.

White: P.P.E.: 12. Damage: 3D6 plus everybody is "goosed" and loses initiative and one melee attack unless they save vs magic. Duration: Instantaneous. Save: Standard. The white colored water balloon mystically contains a burst of magic energy

that, when released, will inflict damage to all those in its area and then goose them. To vampires, this acts like sunlight and therefore, they take half of the damage directly to their Hit Points.

Level Five

Bubble Gum Bubble Flight

Range: Self and carry up to 200 additional pounds (90 kg).

Duration: Eight minutes per level of the spell caster's experience, after which the material falls apart and vanishes.

Saving Throw: Not applicable.

S.D.C./M.D.C. of Bubble: 15 points per level of experience.

P.P.E.: 12

The spell caster can chew ordinary bubble gum and through the magic of this spell, blow a giant bubble from his mouth (roughly the size of his own body). Either still in his mouth or pinched off and held by one hand, the bubble will magically float up into the air and fly away in whatever direction the spell caster desires. Maximum speed without a slight wind or going against the wind is 30 mph (48 km) or as fast as the wind is blowing, but in the latter case the flyer must go in the direction the wind is blowing. Maximum altitude is 8,000 feet (2438 m). **Note:** The Mage can create such a bubble gum balloon for other people, as long as he has enough bubble gum and he is the last to get one himself. All go in the same direction, but the spell caster can go in a different direction if he chooses. The magic makes holding the bubble by the mouth or hand easy and without pain or stiffness. The balloon lands when it reaches the destination desired by the Mage or when the spell caster desires to land. Likewise, the caster has complete control over the altitude, direction and speed.

Enhance Humor Factor

Range: Self or others by touch or 10 feet (3 m) away.

Duration: Four minutes (16 melee rounds) per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: 10

This spell enhances one's own Humor Factor or another's by adding 1D4 to the existing Humor Factor. All must roll versus Humor Factor from the fresh new look of the comedian. **Note:** This does not change a Horror Factor into a Humor Factor, nor does it give a Humor Factor to a character. It is used to enhance an already existing Humor Factor.

Feeble Voice

Range: Self or other by touch or cast up to 60 feet (18 m) away.

Duration: Five minutes per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: Eight

This spell makes the voice of an individual person, animal or the scariest monster sound weak and feeble, and barely as loud as a whisper. This is good for disguises (+5%) and to prevent a victim from screaming for help, barking out commands to others or revealing a secret. Practitioners of magic can still cast spells.

Trick Rings

Range: 200 feet (61 m) +100 feet (30.5 m) per level of experience.

Duration: One melee round per level of experience, with a new set of rings appearing (if so desired) at the start of every new round.

Damage: 3D6+2 per ring.

Saving Throw: Dodge or parry (but parries are made at -3).

P.P.E.: Eight

The caster creates three golden or silver rings that he can spin around his arms, legs, neck or waist. He may create an extra ring every third level of experience (three at level one, four at level three, five at level six, and so on).

Combat & Throwing Use: Each ring can be thrown with amazing accuracy. If thrown to fall around an object or inside an opening, the mage is +6 to strike; no damage, good for gambling.

If thrown at a target like a frisbee with the intention of inflicting damage, they are +2 to strike and inflict 3D6 damage, +2 per level of experience (M.D. in Mega-Damage settings). Silver rings do double damage to supernatural creatures and those beings vulnerable to the metal. **Note:** The size of the rings can be manipulated to be as small as a CD or as large as a dinner plate. All do the same amount of damage regardless of size.

Linking Rings: The spell caster can also perform the trick of making the rings link together by clinking them together quickly. Only he can hook and unhook the rings. The mage can do another trick: Link two rings, have somebody put their hands in the two hoops (usually up to the wrist) and cause them to shrink, effectively turning them into snug handcuffs. A P.S. of 30 or higher is required to pull free or 20 points of damage must be inflicted to break them. The rings can also be used to help in climbing and hooking on to outcroppings.

Voice of Fear

Range: Other (never self) within 30 feet (9 meters).

Duration: One minute (four melee rounds) per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: 12

This spell causes a normal character to have an extremely frightening voice. He will gain a +3 to his own Horror Factor or (if it doesn't have one) a 2D6+2 as a Horror Factor. Everyone must roll vs. H.F. The affected character also gains a +1 to strike.

Level Six

Animate Balloon Monster

Range: Touch.

Duration: 10 minutes or until destroyed; if one mile/1.6 km from a ley line, the balloon creature will be "alive" until destroyed.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: 30 for small, 45 for a medium, 60 for large.

This spell permits the caster to make a monster out of balloons, animate them and turn them into a genuine, damage-inflicting balloon monster! Although still just an ordinary, albeit enchanted, balloons, the creature can perform simple tasks (same as the Animate Balloon Animal spell), but is far more powerful. Each Balloon Monster is animated by P.P.E. and it must be given additional P.P.E. for it to exist longer than each

10 minute period (the same amount as needed to animate them). But, if within one mile/1.6 km from a ley line, the balloon creature can feed upon that P.P.E. and exist until destroyed.

All Balloon Monsters radiate a supernatural and magical aura. In combat, they have 4 attacks per melee round and +3 to strike, parry and dodge. Doubling the amount of P.P.E. at the moment of creation doubles the amount of damage they can sustain before being "popped," and double the number of attacks per melee round. They can also perform the following skills at 80% proficiency: Dance, run, leap, climb, prowl and swim. They can understand any language, but are limited to moans, snarls and grunts themselves. They can run/float/fly at about 50 mph (80 km) and those that have wings can fly at 70 mph (112 km); maximum altitude is 5000 feet (1524 m).

Small-Sized Balloon Animals/Monsters: Size: Cat to Dog size up to a maximum of four feet (1.2 m). Damage Capacity: 30+5 S.D.C. per level of the spell caster (M.D.C. in Mega-Damage worlds). Combat: Supernatural P.S. of 14. Only inflicts 1D6 S.D.C. on a restrained punch, 4D6 S.D.C. on a full strength punch and 1D4 M.D. on a power punch (counts as two attacks).

Medium-Sized Balloon Animals/Monsters: Size: Human to 12 feet (up to 3.6 m tall or long). Damage Capacity: 60+10 S.D.C. per level of the spell caster (M.D.C. in Mega-Damage worlds). Combat: Supernatural P.S. of 20. Inflicts 3D6+5 S.D.C. on a restrained punch, 1D6 M.D. on a full strength punch, 2D6 M.D. on a power punch (counts as two melee attacks). Kicks do 1D6 M.D. and leap kicks 2D6 M.D.

Large-Sized Balloon Animals/Monsters: Size: As big as a house, typically 20-60 feet (6 to 18.3 m tall and/or long). Damage Capacity: 120+20 S.D.C. per level of the spell caster (M.D.C. in Mega-Damage worlds). Combat: Supernatural P.S. of 30. Inflicts 5D6 S.D.C. on a restrained punch, 3D6 M.D. on a full strength punch, 6D6 M.D. on a power punch (counts as two melee attacks). Kicks do 1D6 M.D. and leap kicks 2D6 M.D.

Candy Cane of Doom

Range: Hand to hand combat.

Duration: Two minutes (eight melee rounds) per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Parry or dodge.

P.P.E.: 22

Limitations: If the spell caster loses his grip or no longer holds the cane, it will disappear after one melee round (15 seconds).

The caster temporarily creates a narrow, seven foot (2.1 m) tall, white candy cane with a red swirling stripe (like the old barber poles). It provides the following powers to the mage who summons it:

Melee Weapon: Used as an indestructible magic staff that does 3D6 damage (M.D. in a Mega-Damage setting) and is +1 to strike and parry. Also +3 to entangle/trip and disarm but these apply only when the hooked end is used).

Rapid-Fire Deadly Candy Canes: By holding the Candy Cane like a rifle with the hooked end under the arm, the spell caster may fire small candy canes from the pointed end. Bonuses: +3 on an aimed shot firing one candy cane or a "burst" shot of four at a rate equal to his or her number of attacks per melee round. Damage: A single candy cane does 1D6 damage, a

burst of four does 2D6. **Range:** 200 feet (61 m) +10 feet (3 m) per level of experience.

Giant Circus Ball

Range: Up to 15 feet (4.6 m) away.

Duration: Four melee rounds +1 melee round per level of experience.

Damage: 1D4x10 M.D. if hit or ran over; projected ball does 4D6 M.D. +1 M.D. per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Dodge only.

P.P.E.: 15

A giant colorful ball of about 10 feet (3 m) in diameter appears underneath the spell caster. The ball has 80 damage points (S.D.C. or M.D.C. depending on the setting) +10 per level of the caster's experience. The Mage can run on top of it to make it go and direct and control it with perfection. Running on the ball quadruples (increase x4) the spell caster's Spd attribute and enables him to safely travel over almost any type of surface and terrain — i.e. roll effortlessly across a swamp, river, rocks, debris field, fallen trees, etc. Going up steep inclines greater than a 45 degree angle is impossible and only the spell caster can ride the crazy thing. To navigate walls and giant boulders, the rider can slow the ball down by half and just before hitting the wall, make the Circus Ball *bounce* as high as 10 feet (3 m) per level of experience and up to 30 feet (9 m; total) lengthwise!

The mage can also run over people and animals, as long as they aren't giant-sized compared to humans. Thankfully the Giant Circus Ball is soft and light so damage is limited to 3D6 S.D.C. (in any setting), but double damage if "bounced" on, and in addition to damage, the victim is knocked flat and loses initiative and two melee actions! **Note:** Anybody other than the spell caster who tries to jump onto the ball will be thrown 2D4 yards/meters, lose one melee action, lose initiative and suffer from 2D6 S.D.C. damage from the fall. **Combat Note:** The rider of the giant ball is +2 to strike, +1 to dodge by weaving out of the way or +6 to dodge when using a bounce (but counts as two melee actions).

Keel Over

Range: Touch.

Damage: 1D6 +1 per level of experience.

Duration: One melee round per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Standard

P.P.E.: 20

This is one of the more frightening spells as it first causes hysterical laughter for one melee round (no actions are possible). It then shocks the victim's system, inflicting damage and causing him to "keel over," seemingly dead! Any character with paramedic, healer or doctor level of skill will immediately know the character is still alive, but in a coma (those with first aid aren't sure if he's dead or not). This condition can last for up to one melee round per level of the spell caster (or whatever length in-between that the Mage desires). Repeated Keel Over touches inflict additional laughter and damage, but don't extend the coma's length unless it is done at the end of each duration. When used to lethal effect, this spell is sometimes referred to as the "gut buster." **Note:** Supernatural beings and creatures of magic suffer from the laughter for one minute and the damage, but do NOT keel over.



Giant Protective Bubble

Range: Self or others.

Duration: Five minutes per level of experience or until destroyed.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: 20

The caster can create a giant soap bubble that will surround himself and up to three other characters or he can cast it around someone else up to 30 feet (9 m) away. The maximum size of the bubble is 15 feet (4.6 m). The bubble works as a shield with 44 damage points (S.D.C. or M.D.C. depending on setting) +5 per level of experience. It serves as a protective force field that enables those from within to fire weapons or throw objects to strike those outside its circumference but can block incoming attacks until the bubble is destroyed. Anything can go out, but nothing comes in.

Laughter of Weakness

Range: Other by touch or up to three feet (0.9 m) away; victim must be clearly visible. Only one victim is affected per spell.

Duration: 1D6 melee rounds.

Saving Throw: Standard -1 to save.

P.P.E.: 17

The character will not be able to stop laughing for one melee round, during and after which time (for 1D6 melee rounds) he finds himself continuing to chuckle off and on and is too weak to do much of anything. Reduce P.S., P.P. and Spd by half! Also reduce all corresponding attribute bonuses, plus reduce all combat bonuses, saving throws and skill performance by half!

Magical Boxing Gloves

Range: 15 feet (4.6 m).

Duration: Two melee rounds per level of experience.

Damage: 2D6 M.D. per punch and possible stun penalties.



Saving Throw: Parry or dodge at -3.

P.P.E.: 20

Two red boxing gloves appear on the hands of the spell caster. When simulating a punch, a spring launches the glove at the intended target, then returns into place, ready for another strike. Each punch does 2D6 damage (M.D. on Mega-Damage worlds) and provides a bonus of +2 on initiative and +1 to strike. Meanwhile, defenders are -1 on initiative and -3 to parry and dodge because the gloves strike so quickly.

Any critical strikes rolled by the spell caster while using the magic gloves will knock the opponent literally out of his shoes! Such a devastating punch does double damage, and the victim is knocked senseless! He loses his next 1D4+2 melee actions/attacks and all combat bonuses and Spd are half (leaving the victim vulnerable to further attack); performance of any skills other than instinctive combat is impossible while seeing stars. The senseless character does not regain his wits for 1D4 melee rounds (stunned). For the first melee round after a knockout, small stars, ringed planets, or twittering birds will circle the victim's head like a cartoon.

Mystic Juggling

Range: 100 feet (30.5 m) +10 feet (3 m) per level of experience.

Duration: One melee round per level of the spell caster.

Damage: Varies.

Saving Throw: Dodge.

P.P.E.: 16

The caster can magically juggle objects with or *without* using his hands! Up to 30 small objects (no bigger than a dinner plate or basketball, and no heavier than 10 lbs./4.5 kg) may be juggled at one time. The mage can use the juggled items to block attacks by having the swirling jumble in front of him or moving it from side to side or up and down with a simple hand gesture; +6 to parry hand to hand attacks, +1 to parry throwing items, in-

cluding spears and arrows! Any small items thrown at the juggling mage are added to the objects already being juggled (and can be propelled at other targets if so desired). Any punch or kick type attack blocked by the magically juggled menagerie will also inflict 4D6 damage to the attacker whether the parry was successful or not, because to hit the spell caster, the attacker gets clobbered by at least a half dozen to a dozen spinning objects in just a couple of seconds. Amazingly, although they hit the attacker, they are not knocked out of motion.

The juggled items may be propelled at intense speed towards an opponent with just a thought and hand gesture by the mage. They strike with a bonus of +3 to strike. Damage varies from single shots to bursts. One object does 1D6 S.D.C. damage, a burst of three objects does 2D6 S.D.C., a burst of 10 objects does 5D6 S.D.C., a burst of 20 does 1D6x10 S.D.C. and 30 or more does 2D4x10 damage (on M.D.C. worlds the damage is half these amounts but does Mega-Damage). All items hurled in this fashion are destroyed upon impact. Those that miss their target typically break apart when hitting something in the background.

Slip n' Slide

Range: 60 feet (18 m).

Duration: One minute (4 melee rounds) per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: 18

The spell caster creates a slippery substance to cover the surface of the ground. All those on the surface will have a 01-50% chance of falling each time they try to move; 01-90% for those attempting to run, leap, dodge or make sudden moves. Vehicles will spin and power armor walking on the icy coating will have a 01-30% chance of falling. Anybody arriving on this surface with a running start will slide from one end to the other. The affected surface covers a 30x30 feet (9x9 meters) area +5 feet (1.5 meter) per level of experience.

Level Seven

Animal Behavior

Range: Other by touch or cast up to 3 feet (0.9 m).

Duration: One minute per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: 20

The affected character will lose his humanity and will start behaving like an animal of the caster's choice. The equivalent animal I.Q. is equal to half of the character's current I.Q. If a predator, the character will be aggressive and quick to attack anybody, even friends, whom it/he feels threatened or startled by. See Palladium's **Monsters and Animals** sourcebook for specifics on basic animal behavior or one's own experience and knowledge. This spell does not affect other animals, primates, mutant animals, creatures of magic or supernatural beings, only mortal, "civilized" humans and D-Bees.

Animate Clothing

Range: Up to 10 feet away (3 meters).

Duration: 5 minutes per level of experience.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: Five P.P.E. points per article of clothing.



The spell caster can give life to two pieces of clothing per level of experience. Once alive, they can join together to form a larger creature or do what the mage desires. Once a piece of clothing is magically charged, it CAN NOT be worn as normal clothing ("it's alive") until the duration of the spell ends. They function very much like Animated Balloon Animals or Monsters able to follow simple commands and tasks (requiring gloves or socks for hands and feet, a couple of balled up shirts or a cloak for the head, etc.). If the mage wishes, he may control the clothes by meditating and effectively directing their every move as if he were the pile of Animated Clothing, but he leaves his flesh and blood body open to attacks. When the caster is in meditation, he can control one creature of clothing, but can animate as many as he or she wants (all others are played by the G.M.).

When the damage capacity of the animated clothes is reduced to zero, the tattered clothes are reduced to rags and fall "dead" on the ground. This spell does not affect armor or power armor, only normal clothes. **Note:** In Mega-Damage environments, the P.P.E. used on the clothing gives it M.D.C. and a magical aura.

Glove: Combat: 3 attacks per melee round. Damage: 1D6 points of damage (M.D.C. or S.D.C. depending on the environment), and can also drag heavy items or carry light ones like a pencil, coin, or dagger. Damage Capacity: 1D6+6 (S.D.C. or M.D.C. depending on the environment); 1D6+10 if leather. P.S.: 7. Speed: Can crawl at a speed of 6.

Sock, Mitten or Knit Cap: Combat: 2 attacks per melee round. Damage: 1D6 points of damage (M.D.C. or S.D.C. depending on the environment). Damage Capacity: 1D4+2 (S.D.C. or M.D.C. depending on the environment). P.S.: 7. Speed: Can hop at a speed of 8.

Shirt or Light Jacket: Combat: 4 attacks per melee round. Damage: 1D4 points of damage (M.D.C. or S.D.C. depending on the environment), but can entangle and pin, or cause other forms of mischief. Damage Capacity: 1D6+6 (S.D.C. or M.D.C.

depending on the environment). P.S.: 9. Speed: Can crawl at a speed of 6.

Heavy Jacket or Long Coat: Combat: 3 attacks per melee round. Damage: 2D4 points of damage (M.D.C. or S.D.C. depending on the environment), but can entangle and pin, or cause other forms of mischief. Damage Capacity: 1D6+22 (S.D.C. or M.D.C. depending on the environment). P.S.: 12. Speed: Can crawl at a speed of 6.

Pants/Trousers: Combat: 2 attacks per melee round. Damage: 2D6 points of damage (M.D.C. or S.D.C. depending on the environment), from kick attacks. Damage Capacity: 1D6+12 (S.D.C. or M.D.C. depending on the environment). P.S.: 14. Speed: 12; can walk, jump and run.

Cape, Cloak or Dress: Combat: One attack per melee round. Damage: 1D6 points of damage (M.D.C. or S.D.C. depending on the environment), but can entangle, pin, and smother (i.e. cover a head and wrap it tight, etc.). Damage Capacity: 1D6+12 (S.D.C. or M.D.C. depending on the environment). P.S.: 12. Speed: Can crawl at a speed of 4, but can leap up to seven feet (2.1 m) high.

Full Animated Body Made of Clothing:

Requires a minimum of eight articles of clothing. Typically two socks, two gloves, pants, shirt, and two balled up shirts for the head, for the following combined stats: Combat: Five attacks per melee round. Damage: 2D6 from punches and kicks (M.D.C. or S.D.C. depending on the environment), Damage Capacity: 1D6x10+11 per level of the spell caster (S.D.C. or M.D.C. depending on the environment). P.S.: 16. Speed: 16.

Full Body Augmentation: All bonuses are cumulative; layering and accessories are good.

Hat or Cap: +6 to Damage Capacity.

Shoes/Boots: +2D6 to speed.

Light Jacket or Sweater: +1 to P.S., +10 to Damage Capacity.

Heavy Coat or Long Coat: +3 to P.S., +20 to Damage Capacity, +1 attack per melee round.

Cape or Cloak: +1 to P.S., +24 to Damage Capacity.

Extra Pair of Gloves or Mittens: Worn over the first pair; +1 to P.S. and +8 to Damage Capacity.

Scarf: +2 to Damage Capacity.

Healing Power of Laughter

Range: Self or others by touch.

Duration: One melee round.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: 25

This spell causes the character to laugh uncontrollably for one full melee round (15 seconds), capable of doing nothing but guffawing loudly. Usually this is accompanied by rolling on the floor, holding one's sides, slapping one's knee or a table top, and producing copious amounts of tears. During that time, the character's body rejuvenates and recovers from injury and wounds. Gains back 1D6 Hit Points/S.D.C. (or M.D.C.) for every level of experience of the spell caster (i.e. 1D6 at level one, 2D6 at level two, 3D6 at level three, and so on). Furthermore, while the character's stomach will hurt from laughing, he feels positive and in high spirits — raring to go despite any remaining aches and pains.

Potato Head

Range: Self or other by touch.

Duration: One melee round per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: 8 for small appendages like the ears and nose, 12 per each alteration larger than the hands, 15 to transform the head.

The spell caster can transform any limb or appendage, including the head, into a vegetable or vegetable-like appearance! Great for making fun of others and creating humorous effects (a squash for a nose, cauliflower or tulip ears, vines for fingers and hands, tree limbs for arms or legs, etc.). On the positive side, large plant appendages increase S.D.C. (or natural M.D.C.) by 10% per each limb (40% maximum for the arms and legs combined) and enjoy a damage bonus of +4.

The penalties should be obvious, hands without fingers can not hold or use a weapon or tool, nor climb or perform skills requiring human hands (vines will work fine), but can still punch. Vegetable feet or legs will see speed reduced by 20% and -20% to any acrobatic or gymnastic skills (another -20% for transformed arms unless the limbs are vines)!

Tied with Rope

Range: 30 feet (9 m).

Duration: Until destroyed or the character is untied.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: 25

The victim of this magic attack is suddenly tied with 50 feet (15 m) of rope, from the feet to the neck. A P.S. of 44 or greater is needed to break through, and there are so many knots and weaves that it will take 2D6+10 minutes to *untie*. Cutting the tight weave of rope is comparatively quick, taking 1D4+3 minutes. Half that time if cutting recklessly, but 2D6 points of damage will be inflicted upon the tied up victim from 2D4 small cuts. Those with the Escape Artist skill can wriggle free, but at -20% and it will take at least 1D4 minutes.

Level Eight

Funny Monster

Range: By touch or cast up to 60 feet (18 m) away.

Duration: Five minutes per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: 25

This spell makes even the most horrible monster or dangerous nonhuman adversary seem NOT SCARY. The creature's Horror Factor is completely nullified and anybody attacking the vile thing will see it as a Funny Monster so they feel unafraid, bold and confident in battling it ("Defeating that silly thing will be easy!"). Those attacking the Funny Monster automatically get initiative and are +1 to strike, +3 to parry and dodge and +1 to save from the monster's magic and other forms of special attack. Such is the power of confidence and mind over matter.

On the downside, the characters may not realize the danger they are really in, and may take foolish risks or fight when they should be retreating to regroup or fight another day.

Curse: Forget About It

Range: Touch.

Duration: 24 hours per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: 25

The character remembers everything, but when asked a question or when he has to perform a skill, he forgets the appropriate response. This can really anger a person because the character remembers how to do a task or a certain piece of information, and can do it reacting to a situation, but when asked to explain, describe or perform it (show me please), he just can't remember how to do it or find the words to explain it or even say what it was. Furthermore, when under scrutiny or a high stress situation, the cursed character will no longer be able to perform ANY skills except to speak his native language and fight (not that he could explain or describe his actions). He will lose all information about himself — name, place of birth, goals, reasons for his actions, etc. — and will simply stutter, and hem and haw. "Um ... uh ... well ... um ... you see ... I ... uh, don't know." **Note:** Even magic spells, psionic powers and other uses of natural abilities will be forgotten.

Obsess Much?

Range: Touch or 10 feet away (3 m).

Duration: 5 minutes per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: 32

This spell causes a person to become obsessed with a particular person or thing (for example: a tree, a rock, an enemy, etc.). While the character is obsessed, he or she will do everything in his or her power to please, protect, or even just to be with the person or object of his obsession. Even if it costs the character his life! While this can be very funny to watch, it can also be tragic.

Quick Teleportation

Range: 25 feet (7.5 meters) per level of experience; touch.

Duration: Almost instantaneous (3 seconds).

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: 50

Basically the same as the *Teleport: Lesser* spell found in the **Rifts® RPG** on page 177, but is much faster. The caster can escape tight situations or quickly hide objects. However, since it takes a short amount of time to cast this spell, the range is limited and the spell caster can only teleport himself and any objects up to 50 pounds (22 kg). Because of the short time required, it is easy to confuse the mage and send things to the wrong place. **Success Ratio:** 70% +2% per level of experience and the location of where he is teleporting (or sending the objects) must be known by him. A failed roll means he teleports safely to someplace embarrassing, like a lady's bedroom, the middle of a wedding or funeral, a pig's trough, fountain, nearby rooftop or flag pole, and similar.

Shrink Body Parts

Range: Touch or three feet (0.9 m) away.

Duration: One minutes per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: Eight for small appendages like the nose and ears, 15 per each limb or large body part (hands, feet and bigger).

This spell permits the caster to shrink a body part till it's well out of proportion. He may shrink the nose, ears, lips, hands, arms, feet, legs, or other appendages (tail, wing, etc.). This is often used for humorous effect, to create a disguise or to ridicule somebody, including an opponent. The penalties should be obvious, tiny hands the size of squirrel's are too small to hold or use a weapon or tool, nor can the character throw punches, climb or perform skills requiring human-sized hands. Tiny feet or legs (with big feet) will reduce speed to a crawl (Spd reduced by 60%), while a tiny nose looks funny or odd (reduce P.B. by 40%) and similar. Having both of one's arms or feet or legs shrunk to action figure size causes the victim to be unnerved and unbalanced and therefore suffer from clumsiness and an additional -10% lost to speed and -70% to any acrobatic or gymnastic skills! On the other hand, tiny hands and arms might be able to operate tiny, action-figure sized weapons or devices (yeah, like that would happen very often).

Tied with Chains

Range: 10 feet (3 m).

Duration: One melee round per level of experience.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: 35

The victim of this magic attack is suddenly wrapped up in 50 feet (15 m) of chain, from the feet to the neck, and weighs about 500 pounds (225 kg). Movement, other than a little squirming, is impossible. A supernatural P.S. of 45 or greater is needed to break out, and it will take 1D6+12 minutes to *untie*. Cutting the chain will take forever (the spell will end long before then). Those with the escape artist skill can wriggle free, but at -30% and it will take at least 1D4+1 melee rounds to escape. Shrinking and slipping out is an option, but the character will suffer 2D6 S.D.C. damage from the heavy chains.

Level Nine

Blubber Boy

Range: Touch or 10 feet away (3 meters).

Duration: Four minutes per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: 32

This spell causes the character to become extremely fat. Not just overweight, I mean impossibly FAT! Double the character's current weight and add 50 lbs (22.5 kg) per experience level of the caster. Because of this new weight, the character will gain 50 S.D.C. (15 M.D.C. in a Mega-Damage setting) per extra 100 lbs (45 kg) of the new weight. **Penalties:** Reduced Spd attribute to 1D4 and lose half of his attacks per melee with a -5 to strike, parry and dodge. Flying and riding a horse are impossible. Those in body armor (or power armor) will have to shed it or literally pop at the seams and take 3D6 damage themselves while the armor loses 1D4x10% of its S.D.C. (or M.D.C.) as a result. Those inside a vehicle (stagecoach, wagon, car, etc.) are likely to get stuck inside, and possibly pin fellow occupants within as well. Likewise, the character will not be able to fit through normal doorways (better pray for double doors).

Clacking Teeth

Range: Up to three feet (0.9 m).

Duration: Until destroyed.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: 45

After casting this spell, 1D6 small creatures per level of experience will appear either by coming out of the spell caster's pockets or by digging their way out of the ground. These little creatures resemble a pair of mechanical clacking teeth with tiny legs to make them move. These teeth are extremely aggressive and can cause serious damage (M.D. in Mega-Damage settings).

Clacking Teeth Stats: **Size:** 8 inches. **Weight:** 5 lbs (2.3 kg) **M.D.C.:** 10/**S.D.C.:** 15. **Attacks per melee:** 3. **Damage:** 1D6 S.D.C. from a nip or restrained bite or 4D6 from a full strength bite. (On M.D.C worlds: 4D6 S.D.C. from a restrained bite, 1D6 M.D. from a normal bite, 2D6+2 M.D. from a crunching chomp (counts as 2 attacks), and 3D6 M.D. per melee round by a rapid bite attack (the clacking teeth chew thorough material like a clattering buzz saw; the teeth use up all melee attacks that round). If three clacking teeth do a rapid bite attack on a character in body armor, the armor will take 3D6 M.D.x3 per melee round! **Bonuses:** +1 to strike and +4 to dodge. **Speed:** 20 by clattering along. **Abilities:** Can leap 5 feet (1.5 meters) high; can drag 30 lbs (13 kg). **Limitation:** Can't speak, but can clack its teeth to simulate Morse Code or by clicking once for yes, two for no.

Curse of Laughter

Range: Touch or within 10 feet (3 meters).

Duration: 24 hours per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: 30

The spell caster inflicts a curse of laughter onto any living being. The affected character will seem overwhelmed with joy and want to laugh at everything. This may cause problems, especially when one is hunted or part of an ambush. The character will giggle on and off without reason or control (reduce prowl by -20%), giving away his position and alerting those nearby that he is coming. Even worse, the cursed character's laughter is likely to get him into trouble by making him laugh at the most inopportune moments. The character is likely to laugh at threats, strong, aggressive and/or authoritative statements, clothing, drunks, accidents (especially slips and falls), embarrassing situations, beautiful women, and other inappropriate times. All times and actions will get people's attention, make them angry or offended and is likely to provoke harsh words, challenges, threats, brawls, duels (to defend one's honor or that of a woman, king, country, god or belief), get the character (and friends) attacked, thrown into jail, cheated, tarred and feathered and all kinds of trouble. Statements like, "What are you laughing at?" "Do you think I'm funny?" "Are you laughing at Lord So-and-so?" "Be silent or suffer my wrath (or prepare to defend yourself or die)" are all *guaranteed* to get a huge laugh by somebody afflicted by this curse.

Penalties: Since everything strikes the character as funny, he or she is less focused (-20% on skill performance), less alert (-1 to strike, parry and dodge) and slow to react (-3 on initiative, -1 melee attack/action and reduce speed by 10%). **Note:** Part of the curse is that the victim will not admit he has been cursed with laughter, denies it, and can not speak about the curse or how he got it.

Laugh Attack: Once every few hours, the affected character will have a "laugh attack." Something, often for no apparent reason, tickles one's funny bone to the point of complete loss of control and riotous laughter with all of one's might (lasting

1D4+1 melee rounds). During this time, the character normally can't act, but if he must, he can defend himself, and even force himself to make a maximum of two melee actions. However, he has no initiative, is -8 to strike, -5 to parry and dodge, damage is half (can't muster the strength because he's laughing so hard) and skill performance is -70% (too funny to concentrate). Roll for another attack 1D6 hours after the last one (roll for the first attack 1D6 hours after getting the curse).

Metamorphosis: Doll/Puppet

Range: Self, or other by touch (must touch bare flesh).

Duration: 30 minutes per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Unwilling victims are +2 to save.

P.P.E.: 60

The spell caster temporarily transforms into a doll or puppet of about one or two feet (0.3 to 0.6 m) tall and weighs about 10 lbs (4.5 kg). The doll's appearance will be an exact replica of the original character as a toy. The doll will have a magical aura making it seem to be a magic item even though no signs of life can be found in it. While in doll form, the character still retains his full amount of physical Hit Points and S.D.C. (or M.D.C.), as well as those from any armor he was wearing and which was turned into "doll clothes."

The doll can attack others, but damage is reduced due to the creature's diminutive size. Divide the damage caused by the doll by 10. For example, if a character would normally inflict 22 S.D.C. damage (or M.D.C.), in doll form he will only do 2 S.D.C. (or M.D.C. as the case may be). In case of fractions, round down the damage; attacks causing 1 to 9 points of damage will cause *none* in doll form, 10-19 will do one. The character in doll form may still interact with its surroundings, but is greatly limited (he's/she's only one or two feet/0.3-0.6 m tall, after all); reduce Spd. by 50%, use of normal-sized weapons is -3 to strike, and skill performance is -10% (-30% if operating a machine/device or vehicle, all of which will be oversized for the doll-like character).

When the spell time elapses, the mage may revert to his normal self, or stay in doll form for an additional 30 minutes per each of his P.E. attribute points in hours (others automatically return to normal at the spell's end). After that time, the character reverts to his proper form. This spell will not affect those completely clad in body armor, power armor or inside a protective force field or vehicle. The mage must touch the bare skin of a potential victim to transform another character.

Metamorphosis: Opposite Sex

Range: Self, or other by touch.

Duration: 25 minutes per level of experience.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: 45

The character can transform himself or another by touching bare skin, into the opposite sex.

If the character was a male: He will lose 20% of his original weight and S.D.C., but enjoys the following bonuses: +3 P.B., +1 I.Q., +2 P.E., and +1 P.P. His physical appearance will now resemble a female version of himself (including genitalia).

If the character was a female: Increase her weight by 20% (mostly muscle and bulk), and is +3 P.S., +2 P.E., +1D4+1 to Spd. and +12 S.D.C. (M.D.C. if a Mega-Damage creature).

Limitations: This spell does not affect creatures with no gender, or asexual beings. This spell will not grant special powers to the races which the gender determines what powers they have (i.e. Simvan Monster Riders); all skill knowledge and original natural abilities remain intact. **Note:** Those who get their gender changed CAN NOT impregnate another nor can they get impregnated. Nor are males likely to find men attractive, or females find ladies attractive, unless they were predisposed to such in the first place.

This spell will not affect those completely clad in body armor, power armor or inside a protective force field or vehicle. The mage must touch the bare skin of a potential victim to transform another character.

Metamorphosis: Pig/Boar

Range: Self, or others by touch.

Duration: 25 minutes per level of experience.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: 50

The caster can turn himself, or another person, into a huge pig or boar. The pig or boar is a magical creature which is larger than the normal pig or boar. While the character is in this form, he/she retains the ability to speak, cast spells (but at twice the normal P.P.E. Cost) and use psionic attacks, but can also squeal and grunt (loudly) like a pig and usually runs around and attacks squealing like a maniac. The character is unable to use any weapons, pilot a vehicle or use skills that require hands.

Mystic Pig/Boar Stats: **Size:** 3 feet (0.9 m) tall at the shoulders, 4-5 feet (1.2 to 1.5 m) long. **Weight:** 300 to 450 lbs (135 to 203 kg). **Hit Points:** 60 +5 per level of experience of the mage (or 40 M.D.C. +5 per level of experience). **Attacks per Melee:** Five. **Damage:** Boar Tusks do 2D6+4 damage (S.D.C. or M.D. as the case may be); Pig or Boar: Head butt does 1D6 damage, bite does 1D6, and trample does 3D6 (M.D. or S.D.C. depending on setting). **Bonuses:** +2 on initiative, +3 to strike, and +2 to dodge. **Speed:** 24, but can reach speeds of 44 (30 mph/48 km) in bursts lasting 3D6 minutes. **Abilities of Note:** Nightvision 40 feet (12 m), prowl 45%, track by smell 50%, swim 50%. **Limitations:** Can still speak, but its speech is corrupted by grunts and oinks. Language and communication skills are reduced by -20%, and other skills, weapons, tools and devices requiring the dexterity of fingers and hands are impossible to do/use.

Level Ten

Laughter That Can Cure Phobias

Range: Touch

Duration: Varies.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: 70

Limitation: The caster can only attempt this spell on the same person for the same phobia once a year.

The Ludicrous Mage casts a spell on the suffering character and then does an hour long routine that makes the enchanted individual laugh riotously at everything he says and does. At some point in the act, the cause of the phobia (may be a facsimile) is introduced and humorously beaten up or destroyed. At the end of the hour, the phobia *may*, with any luck, be gone. **Note:** Spectators can also watch the show, but are not likely to find it

as side-splitting funny as the enchanted individual. This spell can be used to attempt to cure Phobia Curses and the actual insanity.

Roll percentile dice for the result:

1-10%: Nothing happened. The character still has the insanity, but enjoyed the show.

11-30%: Poor result. The character will be freed from the phobia for 1D4 weeks only.

31-50%: Not so bad. The character feels better, but will only be free from the phobia for 1D6+2 months. However, further treatment has an excellent chance for a successful cure (+20%).

51-70%: Practically healed. The character is a bit nervous about, and dislikes the subject/source of his phobia but can now control the fear and not run away or become a whimpering wreck (**Note:** -1 on initiative when forced to deal with the phobia, and would prefer to avoid the frightening thing when he can). Most would still consider this a successful cure!

71-100%: Good-bye, phobia! The character is completely cured!

Metamorphosis: Clown

Range: Self or other by touch.

Duration: 25 minutes per level of experience.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: 70

The character will instantly transform into your typical circus clown with white face, big red nose, funny make-up, the big feet, the oversized clothes, etc. He will have the same basic skill abilities and O.C.C. skills as those of the Ludicrous Mage with the exception of other skills or spell casting abilities to use Ludicrous Magic. Furthermore, he will be compelled to act silly, make jokes and puns, and perform like a clown for others, especially children. The character may still have his or her own agenda, skills and memories, but suffers from this uncontrollable urge to "clown around" and make people laugh. This may lead him to pause to do a 1D4 melee round long skit or trick for a child or group of people rather than make good on an escape or the opportunity to strike at his target. Likewise the character skips rather than runs (-10% on Spd.), likes to do a somersault/roll when prowling or rushing to attack, dance when making an exit, and similar clown behavior. Obviously, unlike most metamorphosis spells, this one can be used against one's enemies to great effect by slowing them down, causing delays and creating confusion and discord among his teammates' group.

Level Eleven

Metamorphosis: Toad/Frog

Range: Self or others by touch.

Duration: One hour per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: 60

The caster can turn him/herself, or another person, into a large toad or frog (about the size of a small toaster). Any clothing and possessions fall away from the amphibian.

In faerie tales, these "enchanted" toads and frogs are known to return to their normal human form (or a princess as the faerie tale goes) if a person kisses it smack on the lips. If a character is turned into the mystic toad or frog, only a kiss from a person of

the opposite sex or a loved one (including either parent, sibling and even a friend of the same sex) will immediately cancel the spell before its normal duration. The only difference between the two is that the toad is brown with dry lumpy skin (the so-called "warts" on its back) and a frog is a nice green color but with a slimy feeling. **G.M. Note:** Stats of a toad/frog are as found in the **Monsters and Animals™** sourcebook.

Multiplicity

Range: Up to 40 feet (12 m) +5 feet (1.5 meters per level of experience.

Duration: Two melee rounds per level of experience.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: 150

The spell caster creates one replica of himself for every three levels of experience (thus, one at 3rd level, two at 6th level, three at 9th level, etc.) These replicas work like an extension or an essence fragment of the spell caster. Because of this, they will have the same stats, skills, abilities, magic, and powers as the original, but all at three levels lower. However, any P.P.E. used by the duplicate will use up the P.P.E. of the original. They will all talk at the same time, or each will say a part of a sentence. ("Why did the?" "Chicken cross?" "The road?" "To throw a pie!" "At Emperor Prosek!") All try to work together and will obey the real mage.

Limitation: The spell caster controls every one of his multiples, but they can only be a certain distance away. If the mage is stunned or becomes unconscious, all multiples of himself vanish. In addition, the multiples can be recognized by their eyes, which appear black and lifeless.

Level Twelve

Create Clown Golem

Range: Touch.

Duration: One year per level of the spell caster.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: 500

The spell caster can create a Clown Golem that will obey his/her every command. The mage must first draw a pentagram in fish guts. Second, he/she sculpts the golem's humanoid shape from hay, weeds, branches, and mud. Third, he/she must place two acorns for eyes, and a large red gem for a nose (the gem must have a value of 1,500 credits or more). Fourth, the caster must cover the golem with white face, clown makeup and with colorful clothing. Fifth, he must place the heart into the "body." The heart is a small brass horn with a rubber hand pump like those used on a bicycle. Finally, the mage pins a fake flower on the chest or lapel and casts the spell to bring the monstrosity to life. **Note:** Technically this is not a ritual, but a spell that requires components, which is why the Clown Golem has a limited life span rather than living until destroyed and why it only costs 500 P.P.E.

Clown Golem Stats:

Horror Factor: 14

Height: 10 feet to 18 feet (3 to 5 m).

Weight: 800 to 2000 pounds (360 to 900 kg).

Attributes: I.Q.: 7, P.S.: 25, P.P.: 17, Spd: 15 (30 if rolling); all others are standard.

S.D.C.: 100 +1D6 per level of its maker (or 50 M.D.C. +1D6 per).

P.P.E.: 80

Skills: Imitation (gestures), gymnastics, play musical instruments (saxophone, piano, trumpet and violin), and pilot car, truck and boat. All are at 80%.

Special abilities: The Clown Golem communicates with "honks" which only the creator can understand. Can completely regenerate within 24 hours, unless its heart is removed, and is impervious to most psionic and magic attacks other than those that inflict physical damage.

Combat: Four attacks per melee round. Punch attacks do 2D6 damage, head butt, elbow and stomp attacks do 1D6 damage, while kick attacks will cause 2D6 damage (S.D.C. or M.D. depending on setting); +10 for P.S. attribute bonus. Has no bonus to parry or dodge, or on initiative.

Magical Abilities: The Clown Golem can cast each of the following Ludicrous Magic spells at half the spell strength level of his creator (i.e. if the mage was 6th level, the Golem's magic is 3rd level): Hand Buzzer, Water Flower and Giant Clown Ball.

Vulnerability: Magic Pies do double damage!

Spells of Legend

Create Carnies

Range: 10 feet away, but the carnies must stay within one mile (1.6 km) of the spell caster.

Duration: Exists for 24 hours per level of experience, or until destroyed.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: 150 per .

The caster can create carnival minions called carnies. These are bizarre creatures of magic that appear like common (or abnormal) circus people. To create them, the Ludicrous Mage requires one hour of intense meditation and concentration. After that time, the carnies will begin to form by themselves. It takes about an additional 20 minutes for them to form. Once formed, they will obey the creator to the letter. A mage can control one carny per level of experience, but may only create up to three of one kind at any time. The carnies will cease to exist when the duration of the spell expires, out of the range of their master, or when they are destroyed. In either case, the carny will disintegrate.

Common Features: All carnies have a limited vocabulary. They can say simple phrases and sentences, but anything complex will confuse and anger them. They are all creatures of magic; therefore, depending on the type of carny, they will radiate a high level of P.P.E. or a supernatural aura. Without the presence or the "leadership" of their creator, it will result in their death. Types of Carnies: The Ludicrous Mage can select from a variety of carnie types, including *Animal Tamers*, *Krazy Klowns*, the *Fat Lady*, the *Genius*, the *Idiot*, the *Jack in the Box*, and the *Muscle Man*.

Animal Tamers

Attributes: M.A. 18, all others average.

S.D.C.: 40 (or M.D.C.: 20).

Size: Human size, typically 6 feet (1.8 m) tall.

Appearance: Looks like a wild man clad in a little, furry leopard skin loin cloth or shorts; cape optional.

Abilities and Powers: Animal Tamers can summon and control animals at will. They can call any animal of choice within a 3 mile (4.8 km) radius. They can call 50 small rodents or birds, 25 dogs or dog-sized animals, and 10 buffalo or deer-sized animals. The animals will obey all simple commands without objections.

Combat: 3 attacks per melee round; punches and kicks do normal human damage.

Bonuses: Takes no damage from fire or cold.

Krazy Klowns

Attributes: P.P. 18, all others average.

S.D.C.: 30+1D6 (or M.D.C.: 20+1D6).

Size: 5 feet (1.5 m)

Horror Factor: 12

Appearance: "Look, a clown!" Size varies from fat to skinny, from having big shoes to a large nose. Basically, your typical clown. The only feature that's strange is that they don't look happy and have pointed teeth. These are used as your grunt or infantry soldiers. They are actually combat clowns.

Abilities and Powers: Combat oriented with W.P. Sword, W.P. Knife, W.P. Staff, W.P. Energy Pistol and W.P. Blunt, each at 3rd level proficiency, gymnastics and climbing.

Combat: Five attacks per melee round and possess all normal human fighting abilities equal to 3rd level Expert Hand to Hand.

Bonuses: +3 to strike, +1 to parry and dodge; takes double damage from silver and silver covered weapons; impervious to Ludicrous Magic!

The Fat Lady

Attributes: P.S. 21, P.E. 18, Spd. 5, all others average.

S.D.C.: 75 (or M.D.C.: 50).

Size: 6 feet (1.8 m) tall, and about 5 feet (1.5 m) wide. ("You're not fat! You're just a whole lot of woman.")

Horror Factor: 12; look means and is violent, rude and crude.

Appearance: This monstrosity resembles something like a walking basketball with pudgy arms and legs protruding from mounds of undulating fat.

Abilities and Powers:

Normal Physical Attacks do Half Damage: Including punches, falls, sword swipes, bullets, rail gun rounds and energy blasts.

Roll attack: Can roll up to a speed of 40, but must stop after 4D6 minutes or it will get too dizzy and become sick.

Toxic fumes: Once per minute, this thing can cause a toxic gas that will impair anyone without environmental body armor. The gas causes -3 penalty to all attacks. Duration: 4 minutes. The gas affects an area of 30 cubic feet (10 cubic meters).

Combat: Three attacks per melee round. Roll attack does 6D6 damage and will knock opponents off their feet (lose initiative and one melee action), punch or body bump does 2D6+6 damage (S.D.C. or M.D. depending on setting). The Fat Lady can hurl herself up into the air and fall onto a character, but this may only be attempted once per minute, counts as three melee attacks and does 1D6x10 damage.

Bonuses: +2 to strike.

Note: When the Fat Lady is killed (Damage Capacity reduced to zero or less), she begins to sing, and then vanishes.

Genius

Attributes: I.Q. 21, Spd. 7, all others average.

S.D.C.: 25 (or M.D.C.: 15).

Size: 4 feet (1.2 m) tall.

Appearance: A midget with an oversized head (twice the normal size). They act very unsociable and lack people skills.

Abilities and Powers: Knows all skills in one skill category at 80% (G.M.'s choice), except the Physical category.

Combat Two attacks per melee; normal human damage.

Bonuses: +4 to save vs psionic attacks.

Idiot

Attributes: I.Q. 2, all others average.

S.D.C.: 20+1D6 (or M.D.C.: 10+1D6)

Size: 7 feet tall (2 m) and slim.

Appearance: Looks like a tall peasant that hasn't got a clue.

They wear trousers or work pants and are useless except for biting the heads off of chickens and plucking them."

Abilities and Powers: None, they are complete idiots!

Combat: Two attacks per melee round, but only attack when attacked, threatened, or called a *moron*, *retard* or *geek*. Uses one of the following magic weapons: rake does 2D6 damage, shovel does 3D6, and pitch fork does 3D6 (S.D.C. or M.D. depending on the setting).

Bonuses: +6 vs psionic and magical attacks (they are too dumb to know what's going on), and +3 to parry. Can drink an unlimited amount of alcohol and not suffer any obvious penalties.

Jack in the Box

Attributes: I.Q. 10, Spd. 10, all others average.

M.D.C.: 50

Size: A giant box 6x6x6 feet (1.8x1.8x1.8 m). Total height is 12 feet (3.6 m) when the head pops out.

Appearance: A giant colorful box with a knob on the side. When the knob turns, a Joker's head pops out, attached to a spring.

Abilities and Powers: Movement is done by hopping. The Jack in the Box can move at a speed of 10. It can also hop at a height of 20 ft/6 m up and 15 ft/4.6 m across.

Combat: 3 attacks per melee round: Bite does 2D4 damage, body check does 3D6, head butt does 2D6, spring loaded head butt does 5D6 (counts as two attacks; S.D.C. or M.D. depending on setting).

Bonuses: Takes half damage from normal attacks, impervious to mind control, but full damage from magic.

Muscle Man

Attributes: P.S. 32 (supernatural), P.E. 18, all others average.

S.D.C.: 90 (or M.D.C.: 50)

Size: 8 feet (2.4 m) tall, about 4 feet (1.2 m) wide.

Appearance: A tall humanoid with an unbelievable amount of muscles. Picture Arnold Schwarzenegger cubed.

Abilities and Powers: Supernatural strength of 32; will take half damage from non-magical attacks, but twice from magic attacks.

Combat: 4 attacks per melee round; club does 3D6 M.D.; a restrained punch does 5D6+17 S.D.C.; a full strength punch does 4D6 M.D.; a power punch does 1D4x10 M.D. (Counts as two attacks).

Bonuses: +2 to strike, +4 to save against poison and toxins.

Laugh of Resurrection

Range: Touch.

Duration: Permanent.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: 500

The spell caster can bring the dead back to life. The process consists of putting the dead in a circus ring with a radius of 7 feet (2.1 m). The mage will then tickle the corpse until it is brought back to life. The ritual takes 15 minutes to awaken the dead. The only limitations are that the character may only have died no longer than 32 hours ago, the body must be intact and only ONE attempt may be done on ONE specific character. If successful, the deceased comes to life with 2D6 Hit Points (or 1D4 M.D. if a Mega-Damage being) and all other wounds/injuries are healed. If the mage does not succeed, a different mage may try but never the same one (ever). **Success Ratio:** 40% +1% per level of experience.

CRAZY ACCOLOTH'S

DISCOUNT ALCHEMY SUMMER CATALOG

Rare and Inspired Magic Items and Spells for the Distinguished Adventurer? Priced to Own!?

by Priscilla Ferkelberger

Come one, come all, to the greatest showcase of magic items in the Western Empire! Here, at **Crazy Accoloth's Discount Alchemy**, we offer you only the finest exotic items of magery and mayhem ... er, mystery!

Please feel free to browse our wares and ask us if you have any questions.

Q: What forms of payment do you accept?

A: We will gladly accept cash.

Q: Anything else?

A: Um? Oh, yes, I nearly forgot. We also accept cash.

Q: What about refunds? You give those?

A: We generally do not give refunds unless it is to customers who possess the power to destroy the building. Then we will make an exception, but will require a receipt.

Q: Well, how do I get one of those?

A: You'll have to ask some other shopkeeper. We don't issue those here.

Q: What if one of your items gets me hurt? Will you accept responsibility?

A: Let's put it this way. If the Imperial Courts couldn't pin last month's inferno in *Caer Itom* on us, what makes you think you can do any better? Buyer beware, pal.

Q: Do you have any payment plans?

A: Just one. If you want something from here, plan on paying for it (maybe in more ways than one).

Runic Bikini Armor

At last, ladies, we have found the perfect garment for your adventuring wardrobe. This dainty little two-piece armor set is

perfect for almost any occasion, be it one-on-one combat with fire-breathing dragons (the damsel in distress look is soooo yesterday), rescuing entire villages from pillaging hordes of ogres, apocalyptic battles with legions of the undead, or just hanging out with the boys at the local Grinning Goblin.

The high-cut bikini line will show off your fantastically muscled and well-shaped legs like never before. And the bust-boosting Wonder-Brassiere top will lift and sculpt your heaving bosom, keeping things in tight even at your most active moments. Not only will the Runic Bikini Armor make you look good, but the artfully crafted runic decorations also provide magics to keep you safe in combat, helping prevent those unsightly scars which we all try so hard to avoid.

A.R.: 18 (this applies to the entire body, much like Armor of Ithan).

S.D.C.: 150

Hummina-Hummina Factor: 16. This works like Horror Factor:

Upon seeing a beautiful woman wearing a Runic Bikini, the opposite sex must roll to save vs hormone-overload. A failed roll means the opponent cannot attack you for 4D6 hours (unless you attack them first, but you get first strike and initiative), with a 01-50% chance they will attempt to pick you up. Only applicable to hot mamas with a P.B. of 12 or higher.

Horror Factor: 15 — Horror Factor only applies when the Bikini is worn by an orc, ogre, troll, or anyone with a P.B. below 6.

Colors: Available in silver, platinum, gold, brass, copper, matte black, and ecru.

Special Abilities: Add 50% to Charm/Impress when charming males (-75% when charming women, unless they are lesbian, in which case the bonus to males will apply).

Magic: Resist Cold, Resist Heat, and Impervious to Fire.

Cost: 65,000 gold (+20,000 gold per additional 50 S.D.C. for a possible maximum of 250 S.D.C.).

These Boots Were Made for Fighting

Doesn't it burn your biscuits to finally get that pair of gorgeous high-heeled boots you've been eyeing, only to find that they're perfectly worthless in the wilderness or a dungeon? And forget about combat, sister. One misplaced roundhouse kick and you're flat on your back with a twisted ankle. Well, fret no more! Jaecrue Pietersyn has the answer? **These Boots Were Made for Fighting?!**

Designed to complement your runic bikini armor, these fantastic thigh-highs are so much more than they seem. Crafted from the finest leather and fur, these beauties will put a lift in your step, not to mention your rear!

But not only do they look good, these boots have function, too. We've employed some of the craftiest mages this side of the *Great Rift* to infuse these boots with a plethora of useful magics. No longer will high heels leave you teetering, helplessly unable to outrun your foes.

A.R.: 14 to legs and feet only. Even though your Runic Bikini Armor provides you with all the protection you need, these *do* make the perfect accessory, don't you think?

S.D.C.: 200

Colors: Available to match your bikini armor. 20% off on glossy black leather or fur-lined deerskin (for all you ranger girls out there)!

Special Abilities: Provides the wearer with perfect balance (off-

setting the six-inch heels these babies provide), doubles the wearer's natural speed, adds +1D6 damage to all kick attacks, leaves no footprints (great for those getaways), adds +10% to prowling, and reduces the user's weight by 20 lbs (9.1 kg).

Magic: Allows the wearer to cast the following spells at 5th level: Levitation (once daily), Weightlessness (thrice daily), Superhuman Speed (twice daily), Walk the Waves (thrice daily).

Cost: 75,000 gold and worth every bit. 45,000 gold for economy versions without the magic spells.

Thumblers

According to legend, these items stem from an interesting incident on the birthday eve of a Timiro lord named *Duke Grondelshire*. On this evening, the handsome and wealthy nobleman was expected to name his choice of bride, a position heavily contested by many of the fine ladies of the realm. After most of the candidates were weeded out, Duke Grondelshire had come down to his two favorites: Gloriana Devoe, rumored to be the most graceful creature ever born, and Ariad Cladrán, said to be the most beautiful in his kingdom. Though both women always appeared stately and regal while in the Duke's presence, it was no big secret that hatred and competition now replaced the friendship they had once shared.

As Gloriana was dressing herself for the big ball, a package, finely wrapped with a big fluffy bow, arrived in her room. A note was attached to the front:

Dearest Gloriana, it pains me so that our once strong friendship has been torn asunder, and all in pursuit of a man. They say tonight he will choose between us, and so it may be. But before that moment arrives, I wished to send you this gift as a token of the friendship we once shared, and in the hopes that regardless of tonight's events we may begin to heal the pain between us. I have had these beautiful gloves specially commissioned for you to wear tonight. Do not be put off by the plain color — they will magically change to match whatever color you have chosen for this evening.

With love, Ariad.

Touched by the last remaining embers of friendship with her rival, Gloriana pulled the finely crafted silk gloves from the box. The light reflected off the smooth silk in a strange way, and she could not help but marvel at the beauty of the fabric. At once she pulled them on, only to discover that the darned things were cursed! In an instant, each of her beautiful, graceful fingers were transformed into a thumb. Try as she might, the gloves would not come off.

That night was a big disaster for poor Gloriana who spilled her wine on the Duke's mother, dropped forkfuls of gravy onto her dress, and nearly broke the hands of the men brave enough to dance with her. When she decried that Ariad had caused her sudden lack of grace, the assembled nobles laughed at her. Who had ever heard of such a thing? The Duke, needless to say, married Ariad.

After decades of silence, the young mage who crafted those wonderfully evil gloves has come out of hiding and begun to produce them for retail sale. These "Thumblers" have been a hot seller among the nobility and can now be yours as a gag gift or for a practical joke.

Once donned, these gloves will transform the fingers of the wearer into thumbs, unless the wearer successfully saves vs Magic (16 or higher). The gloves, and their curse, are easily enough negated by a simple *Remove Curse spell*. A scroll with that enchantment is shipped with each pair of Thumblers, courtesy of the manufacturer.

Note: Do be careful to have your Remove Curse scroll open and ready before donning these gloves yourself, if you so choose. We have had a few unfortunate incidents with customers who have worn their Thumblers and as a result, were unable to open their Remove Curse scroll to lift the enchantment.

A.R.: 12

S.D.C.: 600

Special Abilities: The gloves' magical silk fabric changes color to complement any outfit, but that is the extent of their good features. When wearing the gloves, the user is at -8 to strike, parry, dodge and disarm. They also have a 01-80% chance of dropping anything in hand. And, the wearer will be at -80% on all skills requiring hand-eye coordination, even mundane tasks such as opening a door or eating a sandwich.

Cost: 20,000 gold

The Ugly Stick

— A Lesser Rune Weapon

Hobart Halfcalf limped into the Grinning Goblin tavern, ordered himself a drink known as the "Hairy Eyeball," and sat back to wait for his contact. Hobart got his drink and slurped it with a drooling, toothless mouth that smelled of rotting fish and soft wax. As rivulets of Eyeball dribbled down his stubbly, misshapen chin, he picked at one of the green, festering pustules dotting his lumpy forehead.

Arno Armstrong came into the bar and spotted Hobart. How could he not? The guy looked like ... what did he look like? Like a guy who uses acid for aftershave. It looked like his face caught fire and somebody put it out with a rake.

"Arno," Hobart slurred. His cleft lips made pronouncing difficult.

Arno cautiously slid onto the stool next to Hobart, making sure not to get too close to him, as if the guy's physical appearance could scrape off. His skin did resemble month-old cottage cheese.

Hobart belched and patted the cloth-wrapped bundle resting against the bar, beneath his stool. "I got what you wanted. It wasn't easy, though. And this Elf expects to be paid well for his trouble."

This guy's an elf?!? thought Arno. Then indeed, he must have retrieved what he was sent for — the famed Ugly Stick.

"It looks like the former owner gave you quite a fight," Arno said.

Hobart grinned, and as he did, his forehead wrinkled, squeezing open one of the pustules there. He didn't bother to wipe it away. "Hee, hee," he wheezed. "You shoulda seen the other guy!"

The maker of this thing is unknown, but many believe it to originate from the Time of A Thousand Magicks. Others think the mad Troll alchemist *Boraska Skod* created this to destroy all

things beautiful. Or maybe the equally mad troglodyte alchemist *Fshethth Thinskin* came up with it as a weird sort of revenge on the world (it was well known that Fshethth considered it unfair that his people looked as they did). Whoever made it, the **Ugly Stick** has been around for a while.

Basically, it's a cudgel that inflicts 4D6 S.D.C. per hit. For every 10 points of damage the Ugly Stick inflicts, the victim loses one point of P.B. permanently. No save. Good luck on reconstructing your appearance.

Otherwise, the Ugly Stick has only basic runic powers. It is Anarchist, and exists only to make things look nasty. Being sentient, the Stick particularly enjoys disfiguring Titans, Elves, Gnomes, and nice-looking humans and Dwarves. The Ugly Stick's "de-beautifying" powers seem to have no effect on Orcs or characters with a P.B. of 6 or less. Go figure.

Cost: 300,000 (non-refundable)

Wizard Spells

The following uncommon incantations are available as scrolls, learnable spell magic, or can be installed upon a piece of jewelry, allowing the user to cast the spell thrice (3x) daily.

Except for *You're It*, which is considered a 10th level spell, all other spells are considered Level 6.

Cost (Scroll): 4,000

Cost (Jewelry): 10,000

Cost (Spell Magic): 35,000 (no refunds)

You're It

Range: Touch, though must be accompanied by the words "You're It!"

Area: Any in sight of "It."

Duration: Five minutes per level of experience, or for the full extent of recess (a pre-designated play time).

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: 60 for standard, but can be permanent for 5,000 P.P.E. (permanent version not available as scroll or jewelry).

At a touch, this spell allows the spell caster to designate the victim as "It." Its status is transferred by touch, so when It touches someone else, that person now becomes It. There is only one It, so once status is transferred, the original victim ceases to be It. All others who can see It will flee It, trying any means necessary to avoid becoming It. Any other action being performed prior to the spell is forgotten in the attempt to flee It. Anyone who kills It then becomes It. If It dies of natural causes, It is transferred to the fool who touches the body. The victim currently It will chase all others in a desperate attempt to rid Itself of Its status.

Do not underestimate the impact of this simple-sounding spell. The spell has been used effectively in several battles, where brave soldiers allow a mage to enchant them as It and charge enemy lines, which break and flee in utter chaos. "It" is feared as much as a legion of dragons. After all, how else could the Gnomish Bard *Finklestein the Blue* have defeated the entire Orcish Army almost single-handedly 500 years ago? This spell is also sometime used by surly Gods to punish priests or followers who have incited their wrath.

Rumor has it that this spell has been cast permanently only twice, and that these two permanent It effects are forever wan-

dering around the Palladium World, transferred from victim to victim for all eternity.

Base

Range: 5 feet (1.52 m) per level of experience.

Area: Objects by touch.

Duration: Same as the spell, You're It.

Saving Throw: None.

P.P.E.: 12

This spell allows the mage to designate any inanimate object as "base." Anyone in physical contact with the enchanted object will be immune to the effects of the spell You're It for as long as contact is maintained with base.

Banana Peel

Range: 15 feet (4.57 m) per level of experience

Area of Effect: Special — see below; secondary area effect in 10 foot (3 m) radius per level of experience.

Duration: Instant

Saving Throw: 18 for main target; standard for those in area of effect.

P.P.E.: 15

This spell allows the mage to cause one person to slip and fall in a fantastically comical manner, causing the victim to drop their weapon and lose initiative for 1D4 attacks (not melee rounds). This fall is extremely hysterical and nearly defies the laws of physics — victims often hang perpendicular to the ground for a second before falling, just long enough for them to get an "Oh, no!" look on their face before the plummet. If the main victim fails their saving roll, the initial effect is followed immediately by an *area effect* — all those within the affected area who fail their saving throws will find the fall so funny and laugh so hard that they themselves will lose initiative for one melee round.

Speaking in Tongues

Range: 20 feet (6.1 m) per level of experience.

Duration: 10 minutes per level of experience; or permanent.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: 15 for standard; 150 for permanent.

This spell allows the mage to scramble one person's ability to speak. The victim thinks he/she is speaking normally (they are unaware of the spell), but in fact their attempts at verbal communication are meaningless jumbles of sound and/or a mixture of several different languages and nonsense words. If cast at the lower level, the spell will wear off at the end of its duration, but if cast at the higher level (150 P.P.E.), the effect will remain until a successful *Remove Curse* is performed.

This spell is useful in keeping a person from spilling the beans for a short period of time (often long enough for a party to sneak by the remaining guards who are too busy trying to decipher what their friend is babbling about). For example:

Guard 1: "Here comes Ed, and he's really worked up about something."

Ed: "Fala balloolla! Mecca flecca Joojoo ha!"

Guard 2: "Whoa there, Ed. Calm down, bud. You're not making any sense."

Ed: (breathing deeply and calming down). "Falla balloolla. (Pointing back behind him.) Mecca flecca, joojoo ha. Now."

Guards 1 & 2: "What?"

Ed: "FALLA BALLOOLLA!!!! (gesticulating wildly) MECCA FLECCA JOOJOO HA!"

Meanwhile, the guards do not notice an entire party of adventurers slipping in behind them.

Of course, this spell is also great when cutting off a pompous wind bag in mid-spiel, or for punishing someone who talks much but says little (this is the faeries' favorite way of using the spell.

Hadrian Blackstone, Pompous Western Noble: "I, Hadrian, most handsome and gallant of knights, as you can see, will endeavor to carry the day forthwith, and heretofore, shall pontificate further.

— Unbeknownst to Hadrian, a fed-up Wizardess hits him with *Speaking in Tongues*. —

Hadrian Continues: "Faz it were, we woot set sabba meeka galooma. Geema labo fa fleckin boogim, ooglie-booglie, hesky tesky."

The Deviator

Range: 20 feet (6.1 m) per level of experience, within line of sight.

Duration: One minute per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: 35

This spell, which affects only one person at a time, allows the mage to temporarily change the victim's alignment. The mage may specify a new alignment, or, if no alignment is specified when the spell is cast, the victim will behave opposite of his alignment (a principled character becomes diabolic, etc.).

This spell may be used to help persuade a person from doing something that is not within their alignment (such as convincing a scrupulous character to allow a prisoner to be threatened, beaten or tortured), or to make an evil character find his current plan of action morally repugnant (such as stopping a diabolic character in the act of slaughtering the innocent), or just for laughs (such as getting a selfish character to temporarily put aside their plans for world domination to rush to the aid of an injured puppy or give alms to the poor).

Shout

Range: 10 feet (3 m) per level of experience, within line of sight.

Duration: Five minutes per level of experience, or permanent.

Saving Throw: Standard

P.P.E.: 15 or 200 for permanent.

This spell causes the victim to shout everything they say without realizing that they are speaking at an exaggerated volume. This is a major nuisance to stealthy sorts like thieves and assassins.

Ears of the Bat

Range: 15 feet (4.57 m) per level of experience, within line of sight.

Duration: Five minutes per level of experience.

Saving Throw: Standard.

P.P.E.: 18

This spell gives remarkably acute hearing to the recipient, in effect turning the volume up on all sounds. Even the slightest whisper is heard with perfect clarity if within range.

Of course, loud noises are also amplified, and any sound louder than a normal speaking sound will hurt the recipient's ears. Very loud or constant noise will cause the sensitive character to lose initiative and fight at -3 to strike, parry and dodge, and perform skills at half speed and -20% for the duration of the

noise. Those locked in combat will suffer these penalties as well as lose half their melee actions/attacks. This spell is particularly painful when cast in conjunction with Shout and during battles. The mage can cancel the spell at any time, but if cast upon others to impair them, he is not likely to do so.

THE TOURIST O.C.C.

By Philippe Ferkelberger

The Tourist is a strange creature, they can be of any race, are extremely troublesome to the locals, but are easy to extract money from.

Tourist equipment: Several cameras, hundreds of rolls of film, video tape etc, Hawaiian shirts (you know the horrid floral patterns), Bermuda shorts, suitcases and the like.

Special Abilities: Amazing Luck: No matter how bad the situation is The Tourist never gets seriously harmed, but the unfortunate tour guide (and sometimes those around The Tourist) ... well, that's another story entirely.

Plot Lines: The characters are in the wilderness and they are approached by two "things" with cameras strapped around their necks. The first thing they do is snap some pictures of Earth natives, then they will hire the player characters for a month at a ridiculously expensive rate (like all tourists they pay through the nose) to guide them around *Rifts Earth* (or whatever setting one chooses) so they can get great snapshots for the folks back at home. You know, photos of them standing next to *Emperor Prosek* on the balcony of the presidential palace in Chi-Town (you did notice these Tourists are green scaled with their eyeballs on stalks), or photos of them in other dangerous situations and with other "famous" people and places. ("Hey Grundsens this is where I insulted the Ancient Great Horned Dragon" at a slide night after The Tourist's return home. "What does this do?" pressing the activate button for a 30 second countdown on a fusion block. "Where does this lead to?" sticking his head through a Rift. "I wanted to meet a Splugorth and ...") These adventures are endless).

After all this, the player characters will be delighted when The Tourists remark that they are leaving. But then dismay sets in when the visitors say, "This was wonderful! We thoroughly enjoyed everything, I am going to tell all my friends what a wonderful planet this is, and we will definitely recommend your tour service, it was magnificent!"

The Tourist O.C.C.

The Tourist can come from any sort of life, race, or world (from our own to alien planets). At some point within their life span, the creature spontaneously evolves into the being known as **The Tourist** and sets off on a journey of discovery and exploration, leaving their homelands behind. Now this isn't just any tourist, but "The" Ultimate Pain in the Butt Tourist — a strange, whimsical and chaotic monster (even if they look normal) whose life is dedicated to frequent vacation style travel and adventure. While The Tourist can be nerve-wracking for all around them, they seem both oblivious and invulnerable to any danger nearby. The Tourist will casually walk through a firefight to get a photo, walk up to absolute strangers (including

warriors, demons and monsters) and ask them to take a picture of them (or a picture with them), and are always getting into trouble and displaying their ignorance of local customs, beliefs, culture and law.

The Tourist comes in several different flavors, each of them with their own problems. This O.C.C. is designed to be used as a *Non-Player Character (NPC)* only, however, they can be hilarious and fun to play in an off-the-wall night of unconventional gaming (i.e. a special game session, not your regular campaign).

Creating a Tourist NPC

Step 1: Creation

Create a normal character by selecting a race, skills, alignment and O.C.C./R.C.C./P.C.C. etc., and roll up as usual.

This character is generally mid-level when they become a Tourist, so they will range between levels 5-8 (1D4+4).

Step 2: Tourist Types

Select or roll to determine the type of Tourist.

- 01-15 Drunken Yobo
- 16-30 Loud Mouth Tourist
- 31-45 Camera Clicking Tourist
- 46-60 Swedish Chef
- 61-75 Whining Pom
- 76-90 Penny-Pinching Cheap-Skate
- 91-00 The Backpacker

The Drunken Yobo

The Drunken Yobo type of The Tourist is relatively normal when sober, but likes to visit bars, and all sorts of other establishments. Plus, when inebriated, will have a tendency to get into lots of trouble with the local law.

This Tourist is a fun-loving type who loves thrills and spills, and with a few drinks is willing to up the ante. They are also very sports mad.

Powers and Abilities: The Drunken Yobo can drink enormous amounts of alcohol, and never black out from too much. When drunk they are impervious to Horror Factor.

The Loud Mouth Tourist

The Loud Mouth Tourist always speaks in a near shout and with a bizarre accent even if they are speaking the same language as everyone else in the area. They can never surprise anyone, and they themselves are very hard to surprise.

Powers and Abilities: They can do a booming yell as often as once per minute (as per the Thunderclap Spell). They also have a -4 to M.E.



language, pantomime, and the written word (if both parties are literate).

Powers and Abilities: The Swedish Chef can do an excellent mime and also has sign language at 80%. However, anyone listening to their speech will be affected as if the Befuddle spell

was cast on them! They also cook at a near-pro level (90% skill), but tend to be highly critical of the cooking and presentation of foods by others. **Note:** The Swedish Chef Tourist does not actually have to be Swedish; they can be from anywhere.

The Whining Pom

The Whining Pom is a complainer. No matter what they see, or what they do, no matter how interesting or exciting, they will complain about something! The way the food is cooked (or smells, or is served), people driving on the wrong side of the road, the way local people and other Tourists speak, local customs, the way people dress or behave, the roads being too narrow, a location being too far (even if close by), it being too hot, or too cold; they will find something to complain about. Of course all this is while they are in the middle of vacationing and usually in front of the very people they are talking about or who are serving or helping them as if they weren't there at all or shared their views. Ironically, back home they only voice 10% of their complaints and give wonderful reports on the rest.

Powers and Abilities: The Whining Pom can deliver a paralysis attack on their victims, forcing them to stay and listen to them.

Penny-Pinching Cheap-Skate

It is said nothing is cheaper than a Cheap-Skate, well there is one thing, a Penny-Pincher on holiday. They refuse to pay for anything and are always looking for a free ride and hand-outs. When they pay, they always try to get it for as little as possible.

Powers and Abilities: The Penny-Pinching Cheap-Skate can never have the *No Money Sense Vulnerability*, and has the ability to water down any bottle of alcohol they touch so they never get drunk. The character can do a befuddle attack on anyone they are bargaining, drinking, or playing golf with.

The Backpacker

The Backpacker Tourist class is a minimalist, carrying everything in one bag. These Tourists generally travel on a tight budget, really like to experience life, and are quite happy to wash dishes or chop wood for a bunk for the night or a hot meal. This means they generally like taking day trips, or short journeys to maintain their budget and are willing to try almost anything in the way of experience, eating and drinking.

Powers and Abilities: The backpacker can always find work, and a steady supply of income while on their holidays, but this means they can only do the tourist "thing" 4-5 days per week. +6 to save vs disease and poison/toxin/food poisoning.

Camera Clicking Tourist

This sort of Tourist never goes anywhere without a camera, and is forever taking pictures, and just in case their camera is destroyed, they generally carry 1D4+3 more cameras on their person. This sort of person is always polite, and is always after pictures of themselves in exotic settings and with "the natives," passing cameras to complete strangers (including monsters), asking them to take their photograph.

Powers and Abilities: They always possess a Camera Power Object which cannot be removed from their person except by them, and it will always teleport back around their neck when they want their camera back! They are also +2 to save vs Horror Factor.

The Swedish Chef

This Tourist has no understandable language, and even though they may be able to understand other languages, they themselves cannot be understood. Even magical translators like the Tongues spell and Psionic communication will fail. Communication with the Chef Tourists can only be done through sign

Step 3:

Basic Tourist Bonuses & Abilities

In addition to the powers granted by their Tourist "Type," all Tourists receive the following bonuses.

- +4 vs all saving throws, +6 vs Horror Factor and illusions in addition to their normal Race and O.C.C. bonuses.
- Impervious to possession, mind control and vampire conversion.
- Automatic Sixth Sense (does not cost I.S.P. to use)
- Charismatic Aura 3x per day.
- Instinctive Photography/TV/Video skill 50%
- Partial Invulnerability: Any attack directed against them will inflict minimal damage to them (if the weapon does 3D6 MD, they will take 3 points damage).
- Automatic Horror Factor of 12 to natives (zero to fellow Tourists), or +1 if they already have a H.F. 12 or better.
- Unbelievable Luck. The Tourist will never get seriously hurt even in dangerous parts of town, monster-filled regions and war zones! Likewise, if captured, they will somehow avoid brutal interrogation, are treated better than most others, and will somehow escape after a short while. However, those traveling with them, or who happen to be nearby, have a high chance of getting attacked, fired upon, hurt, treated badly, interrogated and/or tortured, cheated, and so on.

Tourist Penalties/Weaknesses

All Tourists suffer from the following.

- No sense of Direction! All tourists have "zero" sense of direction and tend to get lost very easily. They can make out large maps, but soon forget those directions. As a result, any navigation/sense of direction skills or powers are lost, but eventually they will reach their intended destination, probably taking the "scenic route." This even affects natural dimensional teleporting and teleport/transportation powers, reducing the chance of a successful teleport without tickets to a mere 10%. **Note:** For this reason Tourists tend to gather in groups called "tours," or hire guides for their stay.
- Apart from this, they have other flaws. Select 1D4+3 from the following list.

Bad Accent: No matter where they are, the moment they open their mouth people realize that they are from "out of town."

Curiosity. Some tourists have the curiosity bug and insist on going to places and seeing and doing things they really have no business doing. So, if presented with a strange control panel they will push a few buttons to see what happens! And with a Tourist's luck, something will always occur, but to one or more innocent bystanders, workers or natives, not to the Tourist!

Drive on the wrong side of the road. If let behind the wheel, these tourists will drive on the wrong side of the road for the region they are in. As well as make dangerous and illegal turns, quite happily drive into oncoming traffic, and if they are the Loud Mouth Tourist, yell at the other traffic for being on the "wrong side of the road" when the other traffic is actually obeying the local law and driving correctly.

Gullible: This problem can occur with any tourist. They will have a tendency to believe practically anything said about a region told to them by locals. This ranges from stories about strange and exotic creatures, myths, legends and rumors to being given the wrong directions and believing the most obvious lies and outlandish stories.

No Money Sense: The Tourist has no sense of how much the local currency is worth and will think everything is dirt cheap, even if the price has been doubled by greedy merchants.

No Dress/Style Sense. These Tourists have no sense of style whatsoever, and wear clothing that can be considered only for Tourists, like loud or strange (for the area) clothing, oversized or silly looking hats, wearing shorts, socks with sandals, and so on.

Shopping Bug: This problem generally occurs with No Money Sense, but can be found without it at times. This Tourist can not resist shopping for all sorts of trinkets and mementos of their trip, and have great difficulty passing up a (alleged) "good deal" — steep discount. This even includes going up to Coalition Soldiers and offering to buy their helmets, guns, Dog Boy, etc.!

Retired & Well-Off: This Tourist is retired and has more time than he or she knows what to do with. To make matters worse, the character has oodles of money socked away, so he or she spends 1D4+5 months of the year travelling. Watch out, there may also be a spouse or companion!

Step 4:

Power Objects for The Tourist

All Tourists have about them at all times several **Objects of Power** that give them some additional bonus and/or ability. These items are nearly indestructible, with a Natural A.R. 18, S.D.C. 100 (300 M.D.C. in Rifts). If these items are stolen from a tourist they will function as a "Power focus" for 36 hours before turning into a normal item.

Note: The Tourist always has a *Passport, Return Ticket* and *1D4+1 additional Power Objects* (more if the G.M. deems it appropriate). Pick from the selection below. More than one of the same item can be selected if so desired.

Bermuda Shorts: This is a rugged pair of shorts that adorn a pair of stark white legs (ick) or very slightly tanned legs (only attractive, tanned legs if the character has a P.B. of 18 or higher). They can either be baggy/oversized or frightfully short and revealing. When worn by The Tourist the shorts act as magical armor (as noted above), and prevent the wearer from getting tanned or sunburned legs or from injuring his feet or legs, even from a fall or a tumble through the bush.

Hawaiian Shirts: These shirts have a bright, awful flowery design printed on them. Any sane person never wears them. When worn by The Tourist the shirt acts as magical armor (as noted above), and can deliver a blinding flash once per day.

Camera: What is a tourist without a camera? In this case the camera has unlimited power, and endless film in it. The camera is equipped with a powerful flash, and when used it can cast a *blinding flash* equal to The Tourist's actions per melee.

Tickets: These tickets allow The Tourist to teleport around the place or to summon special vehicles that appear out of nowhere. Every Tourist has at least one of these (*a return ticket*),

some carry one or more blank tickets allowing them to state a destination, and to teleport to that destination (taking a small group of characters with him). The Return Ticket always opens a portal to home.

To use the ticket one simply tears it up and throws it into the air, forming a mystic portal that will remain open for one minute before closing or causing a transport vehicle to appear.

Passport: The Passport is used in conjunction with the return ticket to open up a portal home. The passport contains a record of their journey, and if held in hand, can be used to parry any ranged weapon attack (missiles, lasers, bullets, etc.) with no penalty to parry and full parry bonuses available. It also gives The Tourist a base M.D.C. protection of 100 points.

The Passport must contain a picture or miniature of the person who is to use it as well as their true name. Any Shifter who gets his hand on a Tourist's passport could use it to open a Dimensional Portal back to The Tourist's home dimension or to any dimension that The Tourist has visited or place that has stamped their passport.

If the passport is stolen its magical effects cannot be used by anyone else apart from Shifters, but it can be used to find The Tourist's true name.

Luggage: The Tourist's luggage is a wonder to behold. It may come in different shapes, sizes and appearances, but every piece can hold 5 times what would normally fit into a piece of luggage the same size. Anyone stealing a Tourist's luggage will find it full of all sorts of odds and ends, most of it being useless junk and trinkets picked up in their travels and loud clothes.

Travellers Cheques: This item generally contains 10 blank cheques, and when filled out by The Tourist and passed through his passport, it turns into local currency, from a pouch containing gems or precious metals, coins or credits! The amount or value of each cheque is limited as specified on the cheque (typically \$50-\$100). This way they can carry enormous sums of portable funds with them that can be used anywhere!

Since it has to be passed through The Tourist's passport, stealing the cheques is useless without it.

Map: Any Tourist may possess a map, but unfortunately for them, they never can read the darn thing. To them it seems gibberish, however to anyone else who is not a Tourist the map is perfectly clear, and easily read.

Photo Album: The bane of many a Tourist's companion. This big heavy book contains hundreds of photos (there are more pages than what could normally fit into this space), each picture generally having a story attached to it. When a tourist produces the book, it has an initial Horror Factor of 10. Those who fail to save are momentarily stunned and trapped into looking at it for at least 6D6 minutes. Exposure to the book will cause the same effects as befuddle after five minutes, and sleep within 30 minutes.

Step 5:

Weird & Wacky Appearance.

Since Tourists can come from all over the Megaverse and look different to most people, you can select your own race and work with that you can use the various tables found throughout the various Palladium Books (alien tables are fun, as well as the Nightbane Morpheus tables) or use the tables below for creating your Tourist appearance.

Note: If any of the rolls give incompatible results, like multiple heads, and no heads, either re-roll the one you do not want, or try to combine them (several heads built into the body, facing in different directions, etc.).

Tourist Appearance Tables

01-20 Roll for 1 Feature

21-40 Roll for 2 Features

41-60 Roll for 3 Features

61-80 Roll for 4 Features

81-00 Roll for 5 Features

Once the number of features has been selected, select or roll for the features from the following tables.

01-20 Ears

21-45 Eyes 66-90 Skin

46-65 Head 91-00 Limbs

Ears

01-45 Larger than Normal; +3 to Perception rolls.

46-60 Pointy,

61-80 No Ears.

81-00 Several Ears (1D4 pairs); +1 to Perception for every additional pair of ears.

Eyes

01-20 1D6 pairs.

21-30 On Eye Stalks; allows 270 degree vision.

31-45 Unusually Large.

46-60 Unusually Small.

61-80 Glowing.

81-00 Weird Shape (square, triangular, etc.).

Head

01-10 Multiple Heads (1D4)! Roll I.Q., M.E., M.A. for each head, and give each one their own name, alignment and personality.

11-15 No Head! Can only look straight ahead unless it possesses Eye stalks.

16-40 Unusually Large. The head is twice as large as normal.

41-55 Unusually Small. The head is small, about 3/4 the normal sized head.

56-70 Small Mouth. Can only eat small amounts so meals take forever to eat.

71-80 Extra Large Mouth. Can fit a large amount of food in at all-you-can-eat-buffets. Also can do a bite for 1D6 damage.

81-90 Small Horns; 1D6 damage and may look demonic.

91-00 Large Horns; 2D6 damage.

Skin

01-25 Scaley. +20 S.D.C., Natural A.R. 6.

26-50 Furry. Natural insulation for cool weather.

51-75 Lumpy. +10 S.D.C.

76-00 Colored (pick a weird skin color).

Limbs

01-30 Extra Arms and Hands (1D4 pairs): +1 attack per additional pair of arms.

31-60 Extra Legs (1D4 pairs): +20% to speed per additional pair of legs. +1 to maintain balance.

61-80 1D4+1 Tentacles instead of hands and arms (+1 melee action/attack if has 4 or more limbs).

81-00 Prehensile Tail: adds 1 attack per melee, +3 maintain balance.

Hook, Line and Sinker™ — Tourist Adventures

“Name’s Bob, I’m New Here”

Hook: The player characters are relaxing in a tavern when a stranger walks in. He is dressed in Bermuda shorts and Hawaiian Shirt, and carries several cameras around his neck.

Line: After speaking with several people the stranger comes over to their table, sits down without asking, and opens a small pouch and spills its contents of precious gems onto the table (there should be a generous amount here). The man will introduce himself as Bob in a heavy accent, explaining that he is a visitor to the area, and heard there are some sights to visit, and would like to hire the characters as guides to show him the region. The gems on the table are only a down payment, and in two weeks when he leaves to go back home, they will get more.

Sinker: The Tourist wants to see everything, and has some ancient pre-Rift tourist brochures (or in Palladium Fantasy, an old guidebook). He has also heard of interesting places he wants to visit, and get photos for the family back home, and he wants the characters to guide him to those places (paying for all expenses along the way).

Of course some of the places he wants to visit may be inappropriate or very dangerous, like wanting to see Chi-Town even if he is obviously a D-Bee, and if he visits there, he definitely wants a photo of him standing next to Emperor Prosek.



Oh no! Not more of them?

Hook: The characters are relaxing during the evening in the vicinity of where they picked up the first tourist. (A previous adventure involving a Tourist should occur).

Line: As they are relaxing, one of the characters will notice strange lights approaching them. As they watch, the lights will grow closer, eventually materializing into a bus of some kind. The bus will approach the characters, honking their horn, and slowing down to a stop just outside their camp.

Sinker: As the characters watch, the door of the bus opens, and their old friend “Bob” complete with Hawaiian Shirt and 4 cameras, jumps down from the bus, and calls out to his friends (ignoring any groans coming from them).

“I loved it last time, and my friends all saw the photos and videos, so they all wanted to come as well, so we charted this old bus and I brought them along, and decided to look up my old buddies who helped me around, figuring you could help them too.”

Billy Bob Blyncress, Loud Mouthed Splurgorth Tourist

Billy Bob was your normal Splurgorth Intelligence, at least until he got bitten by the travel bug. He rules a small planet in the three galaxies, and has visited Atlantis on several occasions where he learned about some of the more interesting sites on Rifts Earth from Splynncryth.

Billy Bob travels alone (with no Splurgorth minions), preferring to hire local guides to show him the sights. So as not to scare people, he will generally use the Metamorphosis: Human Spell to disguise himself as a slightly overweight, balding human male. But once with a group after a while, and probably at a most inopportune time, he will ask the guides to take his picture, stand back, and change back into a Splurgorth so he can have his proper picture taken. When disguised as a human, he will be wearing over-sized sunglasses, a battered hat, a Bermuda Shirt, shorts socks and sandals. Two cameras hang around his neck. (Such inopportune times include the Chi-Town ‘Burbs, under a statue to Joseph Prosek the first, in front of a formation of CS troops, etc.). Billy Bob tends to speak in a loud voice with a very strong accent.

In combat, Billy Bob likes to lurk around the outer edge, or throws himself into the middle, camera at the ready. He will not attack anyone, unless it is to take their photo. Likewise, as he is on holiday, he will refuse to use his magic, or psionic abilities.

Race: Splurgorth Intelligence

O.C.C.: 10th level Ley Line Walker, Rune Master, Stone Master, Tattoo Master, Shifter/Summoner.

Power Category: Tourist

Tourist Type: Loud Mouth

Attributes: I.Q. 15, M.E. 18, M.A. 16, P.S. 45, P.P. 18, P.E. 20, P.B. 4, Spd. 10.

M.D.C.: 30,000

Horror Factor: 18 in his natural form.

P.P.E.: 6000

I.S.P.: 2000

Experience Level: 7

Natural Abilities: Nightvision 1000 ft, superior color vision, see the invisible, bio-regenerate 2D6x10 M.D.C. per minute, regenerate limbs (72 hours), does not need to breathe, dimensional teleport home 10% (was 98%). Possession, teleport self 600 miles (10% success rate), turn/animate & control up to 600 dead, healing touch 1D6x10, restoration, resurrection,

stone to flesh, remove curse, summon 2D6 highlords/6D6 lesser minions 3x per day.

Vulnerabilities: Silver and Magic Weapons do x3 damage.

Tourist Powers and Abilities:

Booming Yell once per minute (Thunderclap Spell)

Charismatic Aura 3x per day

Photography/TV/Video 50%

Partial Invulnerability: Any attack directed against him will inflict minimal damage.

Tourist Luck

Tourist Penalties/Vulnerabilities:No Sense of Direction, Curiosity, Bad Accent, Bad Dress Sense, and Gullible.

Tourist Power Objects: Hawaiian Shirt (will automatically resize to fit Billy Bob no matter what form he is in), 4 Cameras, Passport, Return Ticket, Map, 2 Pieces of Luggage. Does not carry any weapons, magic or otherwise.

Combat Skills: 7 attacks or 3 by psionics, or 2 by magic (3 attacks per melee when in human form).

Damage: 6D6 M.D. on a full strength punch (see supernatural P.S. damage table).

Bonuses: +6 initiative, +4 strike and parry, +12 vs Horror Factor, +6 vs illusions, impervious to mind control, possession and vampire conversion, +6 to all other saving throws.

Magic: See Lord Splynncryth.

Psionics: Automatic Sixth Sense (does not cost I.S.P. to use), plus all sensitive, healer and Super Psionics at 7th level.

Skills of Note: Intelligence, swimming, climbing, palming, basic and advanced maths 98%, pick pockets, demon and faerie lore, writing 71%. Language and Literacy: Dragonese, American, Demongogian, Faerie, Gobblely, Atlantean, all at 98%.

Magic Knowledge: Create magic tattoos, read runes, read symbols, create magic circles, recognize wards, enchantment, magic items and weapons 90%

Appearance: When not disguised as a human, he looks like most Splurgorth Intelligences, but a bit on the short side.

Every Motherless son ...

Rifts® Short Story

By Foghorn Ferkelberger

"C'mon, ya mutts, shake yer tails!" Sgt. Brick, a tough mutant boxer, bellowed from the low ridge surrounding "The Gauntlet" as he fired his rifle a few inches over the heads of his recruits. "Let's move it!"

Down below within the obstacle course, four *Dog Boys* crawled on their bellies, each face a mix of shock and confusion. The big bloodhound was caught in a tangle of barbed wire, snagging the back of his jumpsuit just beyond his frantic groping. From behind, the other three mowed up on top of him and each other in a chain reaction. They all pulled and grabbed at him within the close confines of their minimal cover to quickly become a snarl of hands and feet.

"No, demmit! Keep yer heads down!" Sgt. Brick yelled as one of his rounds tagged a soldier behind the bloodhound. A red blotch exploded on the German shepherd's helmet. He fell backwards to the ground and stayed there.

The bloodhound flinched sharply, jerking himself free. The back of his jumpsuit in shreds, he crawled onward in a panic.

The Dog Boy behind the fallen shepherd, a spaniel, clumsily crawled over him and followed the hound.

The last one, a golden retriever, wrapped his arm around the shepherd's chest and shoulder and slowly dragged him along.

"Nah, leave him, ya idiot! He's dead weight! An' stay low!" Sgt. Brick hit the retriever's helmet with a paint pellet, indicating a kill, and he fell motionless beside his companion.

"Too high, moron!"

The bloodhound and the spaniel crawled out from the protective ground debris and into the open. Breathing heavily and crouching low, they bolted straight towards a wall several dozen

yards beyond the open, rocky ground. Small mock explosions to the right and left of them forced them to zigzag wildly and collide with each other several times along the way.

Brick chuckled as he keyed the console on the ground in front of him. "Any time, ladies! Yer girlfriends are waitin'. Let's friggin' go!" He drew his pistol and fired several rounds at their boots, missing by only a foot or so. The Sarge chuckled some more and shook his head.

At the base of the wall, the remaining Dog Boy recruits simultaneously grabbed for a thick rope hanging from above and struggled to climb up it. The two kicked and nudged each other until the bloodhound lost his grip and fell to the ground.

As he was getting up, Sgt. Brick hit him in the chest with enough rounds to cut him in two. Farther up, a red blotch exploded on the spaniel's back. He let go and hit the dirt. The training exercise was over and they had all failed. Of course, they were all green recruits — pups, barely two years old — and he didn't really expect them to do much better.

"Front an' center, ya mongrels!" Sgt. Brick screamed. "NEEE-OW!"

A line was quickly formed by eight of the twelve mutant canines who had already finished the course and were standing nearby. Each one was covered with at least a dozen red blotches.

Taking a deep breath and shaking his head, the exasperated Sergeant walked down the line with his hands clasped behind his back. "I must'a been psychic when I named ya **Blood Squad!** If this was out in the real world, you'd all be seein' blood awright, yer own! You mutts are the sorriest buncha maggots I've ever seen! Haven't ya stumps heard anything I've said? Yer supposed ta be workin' together! Were ya all sleepin' during my briefin'?"

The two Dog Boys from the climbing wall scrambled into line just seconds before the tough little boxer stopped before them. Sgt. Brick fixed his glare on the bloodhound as he walked past. Abruptly he turned around and moved in close, the top of his helmet at the Dog Boy's stomach level. "What's yer story, Posey? Are ya tryin' ta make me look bad or are ya just plain stoopid?"

The bloodhound stared straight ahead and said nothing. Sweat beneath his black and tan coat glistened. His eyes shifted down slightly under the intensive stare of the pug-faced boxer for just a second. He quickly realized his error and looked straight ahead.

"The guys shootin' at ya are the enemy! The dog meat next to ya are yer buddies! Yer supposed to be watchin' each other's backs, not fightin' like STOOPIID PUPS! Have I made that clear for ya little darlins?" His voice strained to a higher octave as if a vital body part was being painfully squeezed.

"Suh, yass suh," Posey said wearily.

"What about cha, kitten?" Sgt. Brick snarled at the spaniel.

"Sir, yez sir!" Clearly drained, the Dog Boy shouted with all the forced enthusiasm he could muster.

"Well, thas just dandy," the Sergeant sneered, spitting onto the next recruit's dusty boots and walking on. "Glad we could all agree as ta the proper etiquette on that dirty, filthy battle-field!" His voice straining still higher.

The recruit looked down without thinking and quickly straightened back up.

Sgt. Brick spun around and stared up at him. "Am I keepin' ya from somethin' more important, dog meat? Already time for yer tea and dog biscuit break, is it?"

"Sir, nooo sir!!"

"Maybe it's yer nap time? Have I tired ya out with all my li'l exercises today?"

"Sir, no sir!"

"Ya sure, dog meat? You an' yer buddies were runnin' around out there like a buncha lost li'l puppies! Maybe yer diaper needed changin'? Do ya wear a diaper, private?"

"Sir, no sir!" Dog Meat growled, "I do not wear a diapah, SIR!!"

"What about yer buddies, dog meat? Should I've checked 'em bafore I sent 'em out there? Was that my mistake? Do I look like a wet nurse to ya, private?"

"Sir, no sir!"

The German shepherd and the retriever joined the end of the line and the Sarge hurriedly cozied up to them. "An' thank ya ladies fer joinin' us at yer earliest convenience! Wouldn't be the same without ya!" The Sarge's shout sprayed spit on the retriever's chin.

"Seen my share of runts an' half-wits, but a whole rotten litter?" the Sarge growled. "Should send ya all back ta the kennel jus' so's the docs kin see what rejects look like, but I refuse ta give up! I musta jus' been too dem easy on ya! Well, no more! If I gotta get tough, I will! Gonna whip ya tails inta shape iffen I gotta step over some carcasses ta do it! I will make or break every one-o-you-mutts! An' that, so help me, is a promise! How it goes down is up ta you!

"Got more than an hour bafore sunset. Give me twenty laps at double-time 'round the course's outer perimeter. That MEANS no shortcuts, no cuttin' corners and twenty full laps from each and every one of ya motherless putzes before the sun goes down! Any stragglers out there after that an' ya all suffer! One way or another, ya all will work and think like a team! Now, move out!"

* * * * *

"It's about time, Posey. Thought you'd gotten lost out there!" said the German shepherd seated at a long table surrounded by other recruits. He stuffed his mouth with a roll he had just dunked into a bowl of chunky, brown stew.

"The Sarge said we had till sunset, Rippa, so's ah took till sunset!" The bloodhound dusted himself off as he stumbled into the mess hall, followed by the last two Dog Boys.

"Had 'em pegged for open country as soon as we started running." said the golden retriever with a toothy smile. "Looks like ya cost me thirty credits!"

"An' I needs that by tamarrah night, no more of this bull about waitin' till payday Rex," the spaniel said from the other end of the table while filling his mouth.

"Yeah, yeah, Stinky. I told you I was good for it and I am." "An' I ain't no dezzerta, an' I ain't no quitta neitha!" Posey added. His steely gaze fixed on Rex and the room got uncomfortably quiet. "Besssides, ya'll got no room ta talk like thet anyways, no-how. You shore didn't win no prizes out thare today an' neitha did no one else."

"Whoa, easy, big fella! I didn't mean nothin' by it," the retriever replied. "Why don't you boys sit down and eat while there's still something chow left? It's not half bad, especially after the workout Brick gave us."

"Ah don't like no one callin' me names," the bloodhound continued.

"He was kidding, Posey!" Ripper cut in, "Pull up a chair and give a rest already. You earned it as much as anybody. Sgt. Brick will only make it worse tomorrow. I for one would like to eat in peace."

"Ah don't like bein' laughed at, is all." The bloodhound took a seat and the three nearest recruits offered him three different trays of food to choose from while a fourth poured him a drink.

"I means it Rex, by tamarra night," Stinky said.

Posey again glared at the retriever. "Ah ain't no race horse an' ah don't like bein' talked 'bout or bet on as such."

"Look Posey, it won't happen again, all rrrright?" Rex snarled. "And Stinky, I heard ya the first time, so lay off."

"Ah jus' don't like bein' made fun of, thas all ah'm tryin' ta sayin," Posey mumbled between mouthfuls. Three more plates of food were quickly held out in front of him and he forgot what he was saying.

Suddenly the door flew inward, bursting free of its hinges and frame and crashing to the ground with a loud clang. In walked two of the biggest Dog Boys any of the recruits had ever seen. Both were very close to seven feet (2.1 m) tall, and clad in full battle armor. They entered and stopped on each side of what was left of the doorway, their rifles at the ready in front of them and their faces devoid of any emotion.

Everybody at the table froze in mid-chew or gulped.

The comparatively diminutive Sgt. Brick, a boxer, entered, his hands clasped behind him. The door wobbled as he walked over it. He stopped near the doorknob and violently stomped his hob-nailed boot, flattening both sides of the hardware. The door lay flat.

The recruits did not move or take a breath as the Sarge slowly walked around the table, stopping here and there to leisurely adjust a plate slightly or to examine its contents.

Stopping near Posey, he picked up a helmet, flipped it over and held it under the bloodhound's chin. "Empty yer mouth private."

"Shuhhh?" Posey slurred, stew dribbling down his chin.

"I said spit out whatever's in yer mouth! NEEEE-OW!"

The Dog Boy sloppily complied.

"Pass it on. ANYBODY with ANYTHIN' in their mouths is ta spit it into the helmet. If I even think I see somebody swallowin' somethin', all of ya will be runnin' laps till sun-up under an armed guard!"

As the helmet slowly made its way around the table, Sgt. Brick stopped to intently watch each recruit contribute to it. After the last Dog Soldier was done, the mutt held it, unsure what to do with it next and afraid to ask.

Sgt. Brick continued on past it and around the table. "Didn't I say I wanted ya all done *before* dark? Ya think I was just talkin' ta hear myself? Posey, ya think this is the navy or something?"

"Suh?" The Dog Boy looked completely lost.

"Ya must, cuz yer the BIGGEST, STOOPIDEST, MOST WORTHLESS ANCHOR I'VE EVER SEEN! Ya may've nabbed a couple 'o high psi-scores along the way but that won't carry ya far if ya don't know spit from boot polish! And the rest of ya aren't much better! Yer the worst excuses fer soldiers I've ever seen, first day or not! AND I WON'T STAND FER IT!"

Sgt. Brick abruptly cut in front of the soldiers seated along one side of the table and swept all the food onto the floor. The four were knocked over, chairs and all. While the Sarge worked his way around the table, the other Dog Boys backed away barely in time to avoid his flailing arms as he flung trays, plates, bowls, utensils and food.

"I've been too easy on ya! Too dem easy! No more food tonight! An' tamarra, bread an' water is all yer gettin' until ya start actin' like soldiers! Now, get to yer barracks! Ya got all night ta think 'bout what ya want ta be, a team 'o Dog Boys or a buncha losers!"

The recruits were all too stunned to say a word. As they filed out past the statue still guards, Sgt. Brick noticed the Dog Boy still carrying the upside down helmet.

"What the hell's this?" he howled.

The Dog Boy shrugged stupidly, not knowing what to say.

Quickly the boxer swatted it out of the shaken Dog Boy's hands and pointed towards the door. "Get outta here! Out, out, out!" he bellowed, following close behind the soldier in quick steps until the Dog Boy passed the guards. He hated being so hard on the pups, but they were scheduled for assignment on the Tolkeen front, and it was his job to make them as ready as he could for the bloody hell they'd face there.

Sgt. Brick paced back and forth through the scattered food, still enraged, and searching for a way to vent. Angrily he ran up to the still wobbling helmet and kicked it across the room, but slipped and fell, landing spread-eagled on his tail with a loud thump.

"What the hell ya lookin' at?" he yelled at the two unflinching (but ever so slightly smirking) guards, "Get the hell outta here, neee-ow!"

* * * * *

Laying on his bunk, Ripper took a deep, comforting drag from his cigarette and exhaled. The lit end glowed brightly in the darkness of the barracks. He wasn't that much of a smoker — most canines weren't — he just liked one to top off a meal. He tried to remember what that stew had tasted like and took another drag. He wished he had paid more attention.

"Hey Rrripper, is the Sarge a psycho or what?" It was Rex in the bunk below.

"Maybe, maybe not. Maybe we just don't know enough yet. This world is all so new and strange. And humans ..., don't get me started on them! Maybe today was so bad because it was the first day of trainin'. There's just so much to learn about the right way to do every little thing. We have no idea how much we don't know. Give them, and us, some time to learn. We'll catch on soon enough and then it'll be different. We'll do better tomorrow, you watch an' see."

"Yeah, but are we gonna wind up as crazy as ol' Brick?" another voice asked from the gathering darkness.

"Yeah!" someone else said.

"Dem straight!" whispered another.

"Instead of criticizing him, you should be listening to him and watching his every move. He's been around a lot longer than any of us, and he knows how things work. I heard he was in the field against the Federation of Magic a few years back."

"I hope you're right Ripper, but there's something about him that just doesn't seem right," Rex added.

"He'ssss jus' plain mean an' nasty, an' he likes bein' thas way. Ah think he was firin' real rounds at us out thare from his pistol. Ah'm sure ah sseen em hit the ground," Posey mumbled. "Now ta me, thas crazy."

"He's just pushing us because he knows what we can do, and what we need to do!"

"Ah don't like bein' pushed like thet, thas all ah'm sayin', Rippa."

"Damn Posey, who wound you up so tight? Just calm down and get used to it! The Sarge don't care about what you like and don't like. We're still low on the food chain. It'll get better if we start workin' with him instead of fighting him. Now shut up and go to sleep."

* * * * *

"C'mon, c'mon, move it ya lazy mutts!" were the gentle words to awaken the squad the next morning at oh-dark-thirty.

Back on the exercise field, it seemed all Sgt. Brick did was yell. "Ya gotta do better'n this!" Red blotches exploded on Rip-

per's chest and face as he frantically made his way over the top of the climbing wall, and fell over out of sight.

"Like shootin' Dee-Bees inna pit!" the bombastic Sergeant yelled as Rex zigzagged as fast as he could towards the wall. Sgt. Brick patiently waited for him to make it up to the top of the wall before tagging him. The retriever fell backwards over the side of the wall he had just come up.

"Yer pitiful! Ya hear me? PIT-I-FUL!" The cranky boxer howled as he fired his rifle back and forth across the obstacle course, hitting the other Dog Boys without a single miss. Enraged, he continued squeezing the trigger for a full minute before realizing he had run out of ammo.

Sgt. Brick tossed the smoking gun at Stinky who had pulled a muscle and instinctively caught it. "E-nuff! Formation NEEE-OW! C'mon, move it, ya mongrels!"

As the able-bodied soldiers scrambled into line, the scowling boxer paced back and forth. Whether he was working himself into a frenzy or trying to calm down, was hard to tell. He shook his head at them all covered from head to toe in mud mixed with red paint. Thoughtlessly he plowed through Stinky and two other Dog Boys limping towards the group and abruptly sent one flying backwards to the ground. "Watch where yer goin' ya moron!"

"We can't go on like this, girls!" he snarled. "When I named ya 'Blood Squad' I didn't think ya were gonna live up ta yer name like this! Are ya all pursuin' the same death wish or what?"

"You are twelve of the slowest, sorriest buncha mutant mess-ups I've ever seen! Oi' ladies on their death beds move faster an' smarter than you! Bob an' weave behind ever piece of available cover, damn it! What are ya gonna do when ya gotta carry the added weight of backpacks an' ammo? Hell, I gotta have ya all change into fresh rags jus so's I kin spot my next rounds!" His voice went up an octave. "Now give me ten laps at triple-time!"

"Sir, request permission to speak, sir!" Ripper shouted.

"G'wan," Brick snarled, a slight smile curling one side of his mouth.

"Sir, the boys are wasted and it's way past chow-time! With a little R an' R, we'll be better able to live up to your expectations, sirrr!"

Sgt. Brick ran over to him and stared up into the shepherd's spattered face. "Well, thanks fer keepin' track o' the time, an' with such an' extremely hectic schedule and all. As fer yer little biscuit break, you're all gonna be busy. Ya think yer still inna birthin' kennel?" His voice got higher and started to crack. "Maybe later we kin order some nice umbrella drinks and cuddle! As fer my expectations, ya all got lot's o' miles ta go 'fore yer anywhere near what I expect! Now quitcher whinin'! Yer supposed ta be Dog Boys! That should mean somethin' even to a sorry bunch like you! Give me FIFTEEN laps, thanks ta Mr. Ripper an' his advice. If ya want any chow at all, ya'll be done in an hour! Neee-ow, move out!" As the Dog Boys started to scatter, Stinky held the rifle out to Sgt. Brick. The boxer grabbed it, angrily pointed towards the other recruits and chased the soldier for a few yards until he broke into a fast run without looking back. Out of the squad's sight, the Sarge stopped and smiled. Looked like a leader was emerging with Ripper, he thought to himself. The pups might actually be starting to think of themselves as a team. That was a good start.

Stinky easily caught up to Posey, the slowest of the group.

"Hey Stinky, kin ah ask ya somethin'?"

"Yeah, yeah, what is it now?"

"Do thay really make drinks with umbrellahs in 'em?"

Stinky frowned and ran past him without a word.

* * * * *

"I'm bushed," Ripper said. "I didn't know I could be thiss sore in so many places! I couldn't go another step if Sarge held a gun to my head! I'm surprrrised I made it without collapsssing."

Rex nodded weakly. "I didn't know I could ache this bad. At least the food smells good." He took in a deep breath and followed the German shepherd through the serving line. "Oh man, it smells really grrreat."

"Come on, give me more than that," Ripper complained to the chubby, grizzled human filling his tray with brown slop similar to last night's, only thicker and chunkier.

"That's all you get. Now move on."

"What do you mean that's it? I need more than this to get me through the afternoon!" Ripper protested. "I need some more, I tell ya! What's your problem? You paying for this meal outta your own pocket? Come on, buddy."

"Orders is orders," the server said blandly. "This is what you get, no more, no less. You got any complaints, you go to him." and he nodded towards the Sarge in the eating area. "Good freakin' luck."

Sergeant Brick sat alone at a small table stuffing himself. The serving tray before him was filled with a large block of meat-loaf smothered in gravy, a mountain of mashed potatoes, half a loaf of bread, and several good sized, colorful side dishes made up of chopped this and that. Easily enough for two big, satisfying meals and then some.

Ripper held up his tray to sniff and frowned at what he couldn't smell in his meager helping. The pleasant aromas wafting across the mess hall were coming from Sgt. Brick's table alone and were so heartily pungent that the German shepherd's stomach growled involuntarily at them. His portion of "brown stuff" paled by comparison.

"I'm tempted to forcibly take that food from him right here and now," he grumbled.

"Yeah, you an' what army, Ripper. You'll have a REAL fight on your hands. Maybe ta the death, and I don't want no part of that." Rex said, eyeing the other Dog Boys behind them as they became aware of the situation as well.

"... jus' ain't right ..."

"... all we get and ... aw man."

The Dog Boys ate their meals in silence. Longingly sniffing the air and stealing glances of Sgt. Brick's feast as he slopped downed each morsel. When he was finished, he smiled contentedly, carefully daubed his mouth from side to side with a napkin, stood up and slapped on his helmet.

At the Dog Boys' table, Posey was the first to finish and had literally licked his tray clean. Without thinking, he proceeded to teethe on the thin metal.

"Hah, good one Posey, that'll put some meat on yer bones." Sgt. Brick chuckled as he walked past. He burped long and loud and sauntered out the door.

"This jus' ain't fair," the bloodhound mumbled. "We do alla the work an' he eats like he's the Emperor hisself. How does he 'spect us ta last without feedin' us good an' proper? Jus' ain't right, thas all ah'm sayin'."

"Good question," Rex said.

"Wish we had a good answer," Ripper added.

* * * * *

"What you young pups need is focus, so start payin' attention. So far it has been fun and games while I've been testin' ya, but now we gotta get down ta the real thing," Sgt. Brick said grimly.

The twelve battered Dog Boys sat on the ground in a wide circle around him as he slowly walked in a smaller circle, purposely making eye contact with each of them. They all lost a little color at the words "fun and games" and "the real thing." Few of them thought life could get any harder or worse.

"Ya all got lots more to ya than what ya think. But bein' stoopid pups, I gotta show ya for it ta make any sense." He stopped at the big bloodhound and flashed a wide grin.

"Posey, yer up first!" and he motioned with his hands for him to come forward. The hound looked over his shoulder absently for a second and then realized all eyes were on him.

"C'mon soldier, I'll go easy on ya. Ya all should be okay in a day or so. I promise." Somehow Posey didn't take any comfort in those words, and gulped hard when Sgt. Brick slowly pulled a long knife from his boot and in a blur, threw it into the ground between the Dog Boy's legs.

"C'mon Posey, try ta stick me. I know ya want to! If ya kin do it even once, ya get the best meal of yer miserable life tonight. C'mon, show me what ya got!"

"Ah cain't Sarge, wouldn't be a fair fight an' then ah'd be in more trouble then ah'd know what ta do with."

"C'mon Posey, or is it Pokey or Pansy? Yeah, c'mon Pansy! That's an order, ya stoopid pup! Whatta ya' afraid of? Ya got a weapon, yer twice my size, ya got me askin' fer it in front o' the squad fer all these witnesses! I'm tellin' ya, try to stick me. NEEEE-OW! Or you'll be doin' laps till the sun goes down an' ya can't feel yer feet! C'mon ya big, dumb, motherless mongrel, move it!"

"Ah don't like ta be pushed, Sarge."

"Go for it," encouraged Ripper.

"Show him what ya got," Rex barked.

"Stick him Posey, he's given you an order!" whimpered a Dog Boy without much hair.

"Posey, Posey," somebody repeated softly.

"Posey, Posey," the chant continued to grow louder and fuller.

"Posey, Posey," everyone in Blood Squad droned until that was all he could hear.

Sgt. Brick blew him a kiss and made several obscene gestures that only Dog Boys would understand. Then he spit at him, laughed and backed into the center of the circle, still urging him on.

White hot with anger, Posey screamed and suddenly realized he was leaping in mid-air towards the little bully. He was squeezing the knife so hard that his hand hurt.

Sgt. Brick leaned to one side, easily evading the blade, and with an effortless push, added to the big bruiser's momentum, sending the hound flying over the others and far out of the circle. Posey hit the ground face and shoulder first. Quickly he got back on his feet, spit out a mouthful of dirt and wiped his face with his sleeve. Through a cloud of dust he saw the Sarge laughing and taunting him to try again.

The other Dog Boys got up, broke the circle and spread out. They were amazed by the Sarge's speed, strength and calmness, still they rooted for their comrade. "Posey, Posey," they continued. "Posey, Posey."

The bloodhound charged like an angry bull, swung the blade and missed. Posey whirled about and locked eyes with Sgt. Brick. Cautiously they circled each other, Posey growling, Sarge grinning. "Good Posey, good. Don't go in half-cocked. Wait fer the right moment."

The bloodhound made a wild slash at the boxer's chest, but Sgt. Brick effortlessly dodged and the knife cleaved empty air.

"That's it. Test yer opponent. Size 'im up an' look fer an openin'."

Posey lunged forward again.

Brick became a blur as his forearm glided into Posey's arm and again sent the weapon slashing into empty air. Then Sgt. Brick's boot came down hard onto Posey's foot. As the Dog Boy doubled over in pain, Brick kneed him in the chest, sending him backwards, while twisting Posey's arm behind him, and sent the knife flying into the ground.

"Aaarrrgh!" Posey yelped. "Yah coulda broke mah arm. Dang! Ah think yah did."

"O'course yer weapon ain't nothin' if ya can't hang onta it." said Sarge as he moved toward Posey.

Posey turned to grab his foe but felt an open palm slam into his snout. A dull haze poured over him as sharp blows seemed to come from every direction. Suddenly the ground was gone and he was spinning sideways like a propeller. There was a momentary sensation of flying, and then pain as the ground came up at him.

As gray faded to black, he heard Sgt. Brick say from far away, "Okay, who's next?"

* * * * *

When he woke up, it took Posey a while to recognize where he was, what the shapes were out there in the fuzzy grayness beyond, and for that matter, his own name. The importance of it all seemed to randomly tug at the farthest reaches of his awareness and then back away before he could grab it. So he just laid there, blankly waiting for it all to come together on its own.

Finally he realized that he, and his dog-brothers, were in their barracks sacked out in their bunks. Through the filtered window, daylight was still visible. Here and there the stillness of the room was interrupted with a low moan, snort or cough.

The bloodhound forced himself to sit up only to feel a dull pain and a strange itching in his arm, his rib cage and other parts of his body.

"Hey, anybody up?" he asked. "Wha' the hell happened?"

"Brick happened, is what, Posey." Ripper said from somewhere out in the gray void. "Don't you remember? He tossed you around like a practice dummy. Then he went down the line an' took out each of us. Said he was disappointed with us, that at least you gave him a challenge."

"He did? Yeah, ah guess ah do 'member parts of it." the bloodhound mumbled as the pieces started to come back to him. "He shore does move good fer a li'l fella. Strong like an ox too."

"Ya think?" someone else grumbled.

"All right, cupcakes, rise an' shine!" Brick yelled abruptly as he turned the lights up to half intensity. "I hope I was able to hammer somethin' inta yer thick skulls this afternoon. Ya all will be fine in a day or so, but the docs gonna wanna coddle ya like newborns, so fer the next few days ah'll be talkin' an' yer gonna listen like yer lives depend on it, cuz someday they will.

"Yer probably feelin' some funny itches ya wanna scratch but can't get ta. Those are the li'l repair robots the docs shot ya up with ta speed up yer recovery. That itchin' will pass before ya know it. Pain too. An' don't get too comfy cuz this sure ain't no blamed day care center. We got lots ta cover an' one way or another, yer gonna pick it up, even if I gotta get rough.

"Let's jus' call today's lesson a li'l demonstration o' what a Dog Boy kin do an' what you miserable pups can't — yet. The smallest of ya still clears me by more then two feet. Hell, Posey is almost two o' me an' who's still walkin' around after our workout? Who did the docs have ta putz over like friggin' kittens, while I went out on maneuvers fer the rest o' the day?"

"Yer all pretty strong an' fast, heck, between a few of ya one might even find a brain. But ya don't know squat about how ta use yer brains or yer brawn. Yah got talent. Maybe even got what it takes in the field, but now ya need ta learn how ta use it. Understand?"

"Inna couple o' days we're going back out on The Gauntlet an' I wanna see Dog Boys out there, not mewlin' mongrels I gotta baby every step o' the way. Anybody got somethin' they wanna add, now's the time ta do it."

The room was silent for a long minute.

"Awright. We wheeled in broken pups but now we got Dog Boys on the mend." Brick chuckled softly as he walked out. "If ya kin make it, chow's at 1900 hours. Oh, an' tonight ya kin all fill yer plates ta overflowin' cuz ya finally earned it."

Nobody spoke for a good ten minutes. Finally Rex broke the silence. "I don't care what he says. I still think he's nuts. A psycho!"

"Thas fer shore." Posey muttered. "When he talks he almost sounds reasonable enough, but somethin's jus' not right in his head. He enjoys it too much."

"Yeah, this is a bunch of bull," grumbled Stinky, painfully stretching and bending his dislocated arm. "We don't deserve this kinda treatment. I mean, he beats the snot outta us all, and then we're supposed to — what? — thank him for some extra chow?"

"Lousy food at that! How do dey expect us ta fight if they don't feed us betta?" another piped up.

"He didn't have ta be that rough, thas all ah'm sayin'," Posey added.

"He's tough and mean," Ripper said, "but he knows the score and we don't. You know, I think in his own mind, he's really trying to help us. You know, train us right. Give it some time, it'll get better."

"My tail it will! That boy is one crazy hairball an' we're in fer a world of hurt," Rex whimpered.

"Golly Rippa, ya soundin' as crazy as Sarge." replied Posey.

"Yeah, and it sounds like yer already chewin' whatever table scraps Sergeant Psycho is throwin' yer way." grumbled Rex.

"Ahmen ta that, bro!"

"Yeah, who's side are you on, Ripper?"

"I'm not swallowing anything yet. I'm just trying to take it all in and make some sense of it, you whimpering mutts. I'm just saying I can see some method to his madness and that we should just give it some time."

"Time. That's all you keep saying, but it ain't getting no better."

"Hey, somebody wake me up at chow-time. I'm puttin' these achin' bones to bed right now."

"Good idea."

* * * * *

"Hah, gotcha, ya blamed maggot!" Sgt. Brick barked from the ridge overlooking the obstacle course.

"A red blotch exploded on the Dog Boy's chest, the impact and surprise adding to his own clumsiness, as he spun around backwards over the climbing wall and his rifle flew off his shoulder. His flailing hands grabbed for any handhold, but got nothing.

"Weighted backpack throws 'em off every time," Sarge chuckled, shaking his head.

Sgt. Brick turned his attention to the five Dog Boys to his right crawling on their bellies amidst foliage, barbed wire and burned out vehicles. Through his scope, he spotted a bobbing helmet, and tagged it.

"Keep yer heads down, ya mutts!" he yelled. Scanning further to the right, he picked off a soldier obscured by some trees. Then Brick panned back to his left and took out another belly-crawler, zipping back to the right he clipped two more running Dog Boys, one high and one low — almost missed the low one. Back to the left, he snagged yet another belly-crawler. Then the action slowed.

"Too quiet," he muttered to himself, and pressed some buttons on his console. Five scattered mushroom clouds puffed up across the course, shaking loose three more runners and marking one as "hit." He shot him anyway and clipped Ripper and Rex, but they had some good moves and it took three tries to tag Rex and five to nail Ripper.

Moving back to his left, Sgt. Brick searched for the last two belly-crawlers. One was just clearing open ground when Brick got him. "Ya takin' a nap out there or what?"

Nearer to the wall, he spotted the last one zigzagging through some semi-open brush. "Awww, my favorite," Brick said to himself, recognizing Posey. "Come ta papa, puppy."

He waited for the bloodhound to get to the top of the wall before taking his shot. The hound surprised him by throwing him-

self over like a mad man, making his first shot miss. Unfortunately, Posey hit the ground hard and was slow to get up, making him an easy mark.

"Ouch, that musta hurt," Sgt. Brick chuckled.

"FRONT AN' CENTER, Mutts! NEEE-OOW!!" Brick bel-lowed and proceeded to pace back and forth while his troops formed a line in front of him.

"It's a whole new game carryin' iron an' full packs, ain't it? But that's no excuse! Dead is dead. Not one o' ya miserable shavetails got past me! Not a one!" he grumbled. "What good are ya other than fer target practice?" His voice got shriller. "An' if I needed stinkin' targets worth a frag, I'd use BLIND, CRIPPLED, BRAIN-DEAD DEE-BEES instead o' you ladies prancin' around out there pickin' flowers! Now give me twenty laps at double-time! Drop yer gear in a pile an' move out!"

"Sir, request permission to speak, sir!"

"Dandy, Ripper. Ya seem ta be the voice o' these squealin' kittens, say it!"

"Sir, we are getting better. We've been out here all day and we've taken only half as many hits as we did two days ago, sir."

Sgt. Brick slowly walked down the line, carefully inspecting each of them. It was true, and he was proud of each and every one of them.

"So what's yer point, private?" he snarled. "Ya want medals or pink frilly ribbons fer yer tails? So yer only half as dead as ya were two days ago, dead is still dead! An' if yer dead, yer one less ground pounder that kin kill the enemy! I'll give ya yer freakin' medals an' ribbons, an' I know jus' where I'll put em! Now give me TWENTY-FIVE laps!"

"Suh, permission ta speak, suh?" Posey requested.

Sgt. Brick leaned in close to him. "G'won cupcake, I'm all ears."

"With all due respect, weez been workin' our tails off since day one an' we're doin' the best we kin. If we ain't doin' it right, than show us howz it done. It jus' don't seem possible that a body could make it all the way through thar wit out gittin' hit at least once, suh."

Sgt. Brick continued pacing in silence for a full five minutes. Beneath their fur and fatigues, the Dog Boys were sweating, but they were sweating as a team, and even Posey was showing some gumption. It was hot out and they had been on and off maneuvers all day.

"Awright kittens," Sgt. Brick finally said with a menacing smile, "first thing tammara, another li'l demo fer teachin' purposes."

"Full pack an' weapons, Suh?" Posey asked.

"Soldier, yer either the stoopidest boy I ever met or the bravest. Fair is fair, full regs, from one end ta the other without gettin' hit. Now give me TWENTY-FIVE laps at double-time WITH FULL PACKS AN' IRON, NEEE-OW!"

* * * * *

"Answer Brick's question, Posey, were ya trying ta be brave or stupid?" asked Rex sprawled out on his bunk.

"Ah wasn't tryin' ta be anythin' Rex. Ah jus' figured mebbe he could show us a thing or two. Ah still don't believe it kin be

done, thas all ah'm sayin'. 'Sides ah thought somebody other than Rippa should say somethin'."

"Yer kidding, right?" Stinky said, "You've seen him fight! If any boy can do it, I'd bet on him."

"Put your credits where yer bite is," Ripper cut in.

"I'll see what I can scrape together in a little while, Ripper, but I'll take that bet." said Stinky. "By the way Posey, thanks for twenty-FIVE laps with the extra weight."

"Idiot ..."

"Next time ya pull that, yer carryin' mine too."

"An' mine, ya big bohunk."

"Lay off of him." growled Ripper. "At least he had nerve enough to speak up, not like you ladies."

"Yeah, well nerve ain't worth doin' 25 the hard way."

"Maybe there's a way we can pay Brick back and cut him down to size at the same time. Anybody interested?"

Eleven sets of ears perked up in unison.

"Ah wouldn't mind seein' somthin' o' that nature, Rippa. Let's get that nasty sucker like he's never been got before!"

"Gee Posey, I didn't realize you were so brave. You sound like you're taking this real personal-like." said Rex.

"Ah don't like bein' pushed, thas all. When somebody pushes me, ah push 'em back. Wha'd ya got in mind, Rippa?"

"Brick said it'd be fair, but we didn't agree to anything."

"I don't know. Sarge has been around for years. Probably knows the course like the back of his hand, right? Why else would he agree to do it?"

"I can't argue with that," agreed Ripper. "but I say we make things interesting. Go in there tonight after the cleanup and stagin' crews prep everything for tomorrow. We move some of the mock charges around to throw him off, an' add a lot more of 'em, along with a bunch of trip wires and other traps. Well, what do you guys think?"

"Sounds great ta me!" Stinky chimed in. "Just remember, all existin' bets are iron-clad and non-refundable. Wha-hoo!"

"The hell they are ..."

"You little creep ..."

"Credit grubbin' sonnava ..."

"We'll need a map of the area," Ripper said

"Ah know where ta swipe that," Posey said.

"And an overlay of the new stuff they'll be putting in."

"I know a boy who knows a boy," contributed Stinky. "I'm sure they'd love ta stick it ta ol' Brick!"

"Sarge will be mighty peeved when he figures out what we done. What do ya think he'll do to us?" asked Posey.

"C'mon Posey, the prep crews are always screwing up. This will just be one more." Stinky said. "Besides, we thought you was the brave one. You and Ripper."

"An' even if he does trace it back to us, we're just doin' what he taught us. Isn't he always saying that Dog Boys are the best, and the best don't always play by the rules?"

"Yep, we'll fix the Sarge good! We'll fix him real good."

* * * * *

"What the hell is going on here?" Ripper asked, searching the faces of his dog brothers. They, in turn, searched each other. The low ridge surrounding the obstacle course was normally used by Sergeants and higher for "observation and guidance" upon those training within. This morning it seemed like every Dog Boy in camp was crowded along it, waiting for the show. Eventually all eleven members of Blood Squad settled their gaze on *Stinky*.

"Hey, I guess word has a way of spreadin' kinda fast around here, especially when the easy credits are on Sgt. Brick, heh, heh." Stinky forced a wide, fake smile.

"Why I ought to ..." Ripper grabbed the spaniel's collar and squeezed tight.

"Wha ... ca... ah... say ...?" Stinky gasped. Ripper relaxed his grip. "The Sarge may be the most hated Dog-Brother in camp, but they also say he's the best of the best. If anyone can make it through The Gauntlet untouched, odds are he'll be the one."

"So you naturally continued taking those odds knowing that we would be sabotaging his best efforts," Rex said.

"Hey, these guys mostly came to me. Nobody forced them to plac ... the... bets..." Ripper retightened his grip.

"Idiot! How much do ya think our lives'll be worth if they find out we're cheating?" the German shepherd whispered.

"Doan... ta... em... split... creds... twel... was..."

"We should just feed him to the boys," Rex suggested.

"Wha... bou... squad ... uni... ty?"

"They'll never believe we weren't a part of this set-up." Ripper grumbled, "but we'll never get another crack at Brick like this. So let's stay frosty and see what happens."

Straining against Ripper's fingers, Stinky tried to force a smile.

"Glad you girls could make it! An' I see you brung an audience. Good. If I'm gonna go ta all this trouble, I figure the more the merrier." Sgt. Brick was dressed in full battle fatigues, backpack, carrying a rifle and several holstered weapons. "Let's make the rules clear."

"What did you have in mind, Sir?" asked Ripper.

"I gotta get from one end ta over the wall in an hour. The twelve o' ya mutts will be audio-linked an' spread out around the ridge watchin' fer me."

"Who'll be trying to tag you?" asked Rex.

"All twelve 'o ya." Brick waved his two giant Dog soldiers forward from the right and left. Each was carrying an armful of rifles and com-link headsets.

"I told ya I wanted ta make it interestin'. Any complaints?"

"No, SIR!!" chirped in Stinky. "This will be even better than I thought."

"What's the catch?" asked a suspicious Ripper, knowing it couldn't be that easy.

"I kin shoot back. All o' my iron is loaded with tagger ammo too. If I nip any one o' ya in a vital spot, ya gotta cut off yer link, lay down yer weapon, an' sit down."

"Dead is dead," Ripper said, quoting Brick.

"So at least one' o' ya was listenin'. Dandy."

"What do we get if you don't make it?" asked Rex.

"My, ain't we gittin' bold. Get a grip, ya stoopid pup! This's a demo! What, ya thought if I couldn't make it through without a tag, the rest o' yer trainin' would be a li'l sewin' party an' we'd all be smokin' an' jokin' between margaritas? No matta what happens, ah'm gonna run you mongrels into the ground till I say yer good ta go. Any more questions?"

"Ah got one," Posey said. "What's a margarita?"

"Kitten, ya'll be tagged dead long bafore ya ever get a chance ta find out! Now move it. Ya got fifteen minutes ta work out the details an' get ta yer positions. Then I'm comin' at ya!"

"Repeat, Sector Five, report?" Ripper said. Looking across to the far end of the obstacle course and the ridge above it, he already knew what he'd see. The Dog Boy had thrown down his gun and was waving his hands in the air. "I'm down, blast it," the Dog Boy said over his headset.

It had been like this as soon as Sgt. Brick had entered The Gauntlet. Like a ghost, he had merged with whatever cover was in the specific area, pop up sporadically several times to draw their fire and then took out the nearest spotter with a flourish.

"This is Six. He's just entered ... ahhh, he just ducked into the first low pile of rocks between the river and the big tree ... Seven, can ya get him from yer position?"

"Negative. I'm lookin' but I don't see nothing. Wait! I think ..."

Boom! Boom! Ripper saw Six firing. Boom! Boom!

A white mushroom cloud puffed up near some thick foliage by the edge of the rocky ground they were talking about.

"Well, did the mine get him?" Ripper shouted.

The headset stayed silent.

"Somebody, anybody, answer! Dang it!"

"This is Six. I lost them both, too much smoke and dust. But I don't see any ... wait, there's Sarge ..." Boom! Boom! Boom!

"Seven, this is Ripper. Anything from yer side?"

"Nah, not yet. But I can hear the action. Doesn't sound like I'll get the opportunity to shoot that little twerp." I wouldn't be so sure, thought Ripper.

Boom!

"This is Six. I think he's between the last two fingers of the Big Hand formation. Musta got Five. No contact. There he goes! Little son of a ..." Boom! "Ahhhhh, damn it! I missed him. He disappeared into the rocks north of the Hand."

"Eight, this is Ripper. Slowly work your way over towards Six. Maybe we can cut him off. Seven and Nine, sound off the instant you spot him from your position. Copy?"

"This is Nine, no ssign of him yet. Wait, he's just cleared the rocks. He's heading into the trees between Sector Seven and Eight. Gunfire!"

Boom! Boom! Boom! Six and Eight.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Nine joined in.

"Seven, report!" Ripper shouted. "You see anything?"

"Nah, rocks and trees blocking my ... wait... what the ...?"
Boom! Boom!

"Ahhh, missed him! He just did a one-eighty back into the rocks in Sector Six! Where's he going? Wait, I..." Boom! Boom! Boom! "I might have winged him in the arm that time, but lost him somewhere in the rocks again."

"You sure?" Ripper was puzzled. Brick had made it past the halfway point and had either missed or avoided all but one of the mines and Dog Boy Seven. Why was he turning back?

"Command! This is Seven. He's almost on top of the fourth finger of the Big Hand! How he, geez, he's lookin' straight at me!"

"Shoot or take cover!" Ripper shouted. "Move! Move!!"

Boom! A single shot echoed from within The Gauntlet.

"Ah, this is Seven. I'm out."

Boom! Boom! Two more shots came from below the ridge.

"Nine here. I'm hit!"

"This is Eight. I'm down too!"

"Ten and Eleven, slowly move south and look sharp," Ripper said. "You'll see him soon enough. He's gotta head back north. There's no way he can get past the debris field without us seeing

"Ah seen 'im, jus' b'low the grass line towards the red bushes by the water." Posey said. Boom! Boom!

"Yeah, yeah, I sees him too! We got him in a cross-fire. He ain't never gonna make it!" Stinky trumpeted excitedly, seeing victory and a pile of credits within his grasp.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom!

"Son of a ... I missed him. Posey too. Brick's gone into the low grass along the river. Look along the water. He's got to be there."

Ripper scanned the area in his scope. For just a second he saw the boxer slither through the grass now on his side of the water, but disappeared before he could get off a shot. He aimed a few feet farther ahead and waited for some sign of movement. Boom! Boom! A couple of shots to the grass, just in case.

"Command ... Rippa, this is Posey. Ah mean, Ten. Sarge. He crossed the river. Ah lost 'im in the high grass."

"I think I have his position. Both of you, slowly move toward me."

"Good idear, Command. Maybe we kin flush 'im out like a rabbit."

Twenty feet beyond in the thicker foliage they all saw some grass shift and a coil of barbed wire move.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! BOOM!!

All three Dog Boys fired. Stopped and waited, looking, sniffing the air and listening for any sign of activity.

Another mock charge puffed up thirty feet north of the field of grass. That suggested they had missed Sarge and that he triggered a mine. Of course by this time, none of them were quick to assume the mine had tagged him. All three Dog Boys scanned for a sign of movement, but there was none. They waited and watched for long, slow minutes.

To their surprise and a hundred feet beyond where they were looking, Sgt. Brick appeared out of nowhere. He was a zigzagging blur as he ran across open ground some two hundred feet in front of the climbing wall.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Wherever the red blotches hit, Brick wasn't. Ripper tried to aim slightly ahead of him, but the Sarge seemed to anticipate his every shot. A few got close, but they all missed. Stinky was shooting like a madman (seeing his fortune suddenly slipping away from him), but was too excited and was shooting wildly. Posey's shots were always one step behind his target.

Within arm's length of the wall, Sgt. Brick ran along side it, grabbed the climbing rope, and continued on in one fluid movement. A steady stream of red blotches marking his passage a half step, now, behind him. Suddenly, he was pulled up by the rope and became airborne as he swung in the opposite direction. His feet bounced off the hard wood planks and the extra spring he gave it propelled him upwards and over the wall in a perfect arc!

BA-BOOOM! The wall exploded in a fiery burst of crimson and shattered into a million splinters. Every Dog Boy along the ridge froze in shock as black smoke billowed high into the sky. Beneath the smoke and dust there was a large, shallow pit where the wall had been. The earth beyond was charred and smoldering for twenty feet in every direction.

Nobody was more dumbfounded than Blood Squad. Ripper was the first to snap out of it and waved his dog-brothers over. The twelve were soon crowded together on the ridge just above the wreckage. The rest of the spectators were a few minutes away.

"What the hell happened, here? Somebody better start talking and I mean now!" Ripper barked. "Who's the moron that couldn't tell a mock charge from a real one?" When no one answered, he eyed each of them and settled on Posey.

"Don't look at me!" the startled bloodhound said. "Shore he was always pickin' on me an' ah didn't like 'im much, but ah didn't do it. Ah'd hafta be crazy! 'Sides ah was startin' to feel like ah was learnin' sumthing from the miserable ol' coot."

"Um, heh, I guess ... it was me. Heh, heh," Stinky said with a sheepish grin. "I told you he'd never make it. The more I heard from the other boys, and saw how they was betting for him to win, the more I figured we needed insurance. No way we coulda stopped that bruiser on our own. So's I got one real charge and rigged it as a last shot! But ... I only meant it to be enough to jar him. Honest! ... you know. Knock him on his behind. I ... I didn't think it would be this big. Heh, I ... um ... goofed up. heh."

"Yerrr an idiot!!" Ripper shrieked as he grabbed the spaniel's throat.

"You think anyone will buy this as an accident? You may have just condemned the entire squad to the experimentation labs at Lone Star! We're all as good as dead!"

"Go ... AWOL ... creds... spli... twelv... waysss..." weezed Stinky in Ripper's tightening clutches.

The other Dog Boys started to crowd around them with blood and vengeance in their eyes.

"Sarge was okay. Yah didn't need ta have 'im kilt. Thas all ah'm sayin'. Thas was wrong. Jus' wrong."

"You're crazy, Stinky." Growled Rex.

"No way we're gonna cover for you on this you greedy lunatic! You did it and you're going to take the fall!" Ripper snapped and roughly pushed him to the ground.

"First yer gonna dance with me, ya motherless mutts. And I have special plans fer Private Stinky."

"Sarge?"

"Sarge!!! Thank god yer alive!" Ripper exclaimed.

"Yas suh! It's ah miracle!" Added Posey.

"Oh, so first ya try ta kill me an' now you mutts luv me?" A dirt covered and battered Sgt. Brick growled as he clawed his

way up over the ridge. His face was blackened and blood from nicks and bruises trickled down the side. One arm hung limp, probably broken. His fatigues were scorched and shredded, but the old boy was still alive and kicking.

"The rest o' ya losers kin start runnin' now! I'll come an' git ya when I'm good and ready. Move out, NEEEE-OW!"

Done

52K APRIL FOOL'S SPECTACULAR

April Fool!



The Truth

By Kevin Siembieda

ALL the news, hype, coming attractions, Giga-Damage, the Ferkelbergers and other silliness are all make-believe. Fake. Not true. A hoax. Ain't real. Isn't happening — so relax!

Everything in this issue is intended as *satire*, *humor*, and *spoof*. All good April Fool's Day fun. None of it is true. Likewise, the crazy characters, O.C.C.'s, powers, magic, and wild ideas are just silly extrapolations of our regular rules and games. Many aren't really useable, others are fine as a zany alternative, and a few are actually useable in a real game setting, provided they are used with thought and consideration. Hopefully all of it was a lot of fun to read, and provided some new ways of looking at things.

The madmen at Palladium Books are ... well ... lunatics. Crazy, goofy, silly people, who sometimes find they can not contain the urge to be mischievous. The end result is the controlled mayhem of this special, once in a Millennium issue of *The Rifter*. We hope you enjoyed it.

The big "inside" joke

What you need to know to truly appreciate this book is that this entire issue is a joke on *Wayne Smith*, the Editor-in-Chief of *The Rifter*™.

You see, we managed to create, paste-up and print this entire book without Wayne ever knowing about it! Wayne won't know anything about the **April Fool's Day Special** until 10,000 copies arrive at the warehouse! We can hardly wait to see the look on his face! Cool, huh?

I don't remember whose idea it was — mine (Kevin Siembieda), Steve's or Maryann's, but I will take credit for orchestrating the entire scheme and pulling it off. The idea popped up during the paste-up of the April 1999 issue and the plotting began then. Originally, we were going to use Wayne's baby picture as the cover, but we were afraid his mother might not cooperate, or worse, let him in on our gag. We were also afraid it might be too embarrassing and we didn't want to hurt Wayne's feelings — he is a good guy and we like him (well mostly).

Limited Edition Collector's Item!?

Unlike normal issues of **The Rifter**®, we printed a small number (approx. 8000-10,000 copies) and we will NOT be reprinting it. So when we sell out, all copies are gone (other than a few hundred that we will keep for the *X-Mas 2000 Surprise Package*). This will make **The Rifter™ April Fool's Day Spectacular** all the more unique and (potentially) precious. As a perk to **The Rifter™** subscribers who returned a postcard survey, this special issue was sent to them as a "bonus" issue absolutely free! A little something to show our appreciation for your support.

No, do not expect to see an April Fool's Special next year. This is a "once in a Millennium" special. So unless Palladium Books and **The Rifter™** are around for Y3K (hey, it could happen!), this is the first and last April Fool's Day Special. Even though we all had a blast doing it.

The Real Author Credits

Wayne Smith (for this issue) — Kevin Siembieda

Percy Ferkelberger — Kevin Siembieda

Penelope Ferkelberger — Maryann Siembieda

Peter Ferkelberger — Bill Coffin

Priscilla Ferkelberger — Allison Coffin

Paulie Ferkelberger — Steve Sheiring

Parcel "Tarzan" Ferkelberger

— Steve "Conan" Trustrum

Philippe Ferkelberger

— Rodney Stott (Australian Tourist Liaison)

J.P. Ferkelberger — Julius Rosenstein

Foghorn Ferkelberger — Jim Osten

Noah Body — Alex Marciniszyn & Jim Osten

P.O.D. — Alex Marciniszyn

Special thanks to Bill, Allie, Steve S, Maryann, Alex, Julius, Jim, Rodney, Steve T (for ideas and suggestions), Scott, Ramon, Ryan (who almost spilled the beans), Freddie, and all our co-conspirators.

A bit about April Fools' Day

By Alex "P.O.D." Marciniszyn

The exact origin of **April Fools' Day** is unknown. I was surprised to learn there are several possible origins. Here are a few.

One is said to involve the decision by the King of France to switch to a different calendar in 1564. At the time, people celebrated the start of the new year during the last days of March, and gave out presents on the first of April. However, the King's new calendar proclaimed the *new year* would now be marked on the first day of *January*. Afterwards, people who went ahead and celebrated and gave presents on April first (to celebrate the new year) were said to have been called "April Fools" for forgetting the calendar had changed.

April first is also said to have come from the British Isles' **All Fools' Day**, so named for those who were sent on a *fool's errand*. On this day, individuals would be tricked into many a fool's errand. It seems to me that some of these errands were mean spirited. For example, in Scotland an individual might be given a letter to deliver to someone. Arriving at his destination, the recipient reads the letter which informs him that the letter carrier is a "gowk" (Scottish for cuckoo, the emblem of simpletons). It further instructs the recipient to inform the *fool* that there has been a mistake and the letter is for someone else living a mile or so down the road. This is repeated until the victim completes a large circle. When he returns to his starting point, the original sender calls him an "April Gowk."

Another account tells how the British started the custom of playing *pranks* on April Fools' Day and settlers took it with them to America. One such *prank* was putting salt in the sugar bowl. In England, performing pranks and practical jokes on April First and defending one's actions by saying "April Fool," dates back to the 1600s.

Generally, the pranks I'm most familiar with involved getting someone worked up over nothing. For example, going over a friend's house, knocking, and when he comes to the door, saying, "Come out, quick! There's a UFO out here!" Only when he rushes out, excited, looking up, all he encounters is me and a few friends having a good laugh at his expense. Another common ploy is telling a "tall-tale" to surprise, shock or confuse the victim, only to have his or her concerns put at ease with the words, "April Fool." Some other pranks include putting a fake bug on a plate of food, putting a plastic ice cube with a fake bug (ant or fly) in a drink, dangling or pulling a fake frog or spider on a thread and so on. An old classic is gluing a coin to the floor and then later, arranging to walk by the spot with the unsuspecting victim. The perpetrator would then point it out, perhaps saying something like, "Today's your lucky day." When he or she is unable to pick up the coin, "April Fool" is said.

Of course, April Fools jokes or pranks should be only played on friends, and should never be done with mean intent or made to be too embarrassing. People who don't know the prankster are likely to get angry. I think the idea has always been silly fun.

In the case of this special issue of **The Rifter™**, part of the joke is on editor, Wayne Smith. The other part is really more of a treat for our readers. Something to chuckle over and have fun with. As for subscribers to **The Rifter™** it will be both a surprise and fun, because those who returned one of our survey postcards got this special issue free. We hope you enjoy it as much as we enjoyed putting it all together.

Glossary of terms related to fooling people:

Fool's errand: An absurd, pointless, or useless errand.

Hoax: Humorous or mischievous deception.

Practical joke: Playful trick, usually involving some physical agent or means in which the victim is placed in an embarrassing or disadvantageous position.

Prank: A trick of an amusing or playful nature.

Sources of References for this article:

Chase's 1999 Calendar of Events

Encyclopedia Britannica 1999

Les Tina, Dorothy. April Fools' Day. Follett Publishing Co., 1969.

Also from Palladium Books®

Rifts® RPG

- A future Earth as strange as any alien planet.
- The melding of magic and technology.
- A complete game.
- Everything you need to play.
- Limited only by your imagination.
- 254 pages; 16 pages of color.
- By Kevin Siembieda.

Rifts® Coalition Wars™

Siege on Tolkeen™

- The CS war machine versus the sorcerers of Tolkeen.
- A six book series.
- The secrets of Tolkeen.
- Conspiracy and treachery.
- Only one will be left standing.
- By Siembieda and Coffin.

Ninjas & Superspies™ RPG

- 41 different martial arts.
- Dozens of Mystic powers.
- Superspies and secret organizations.
- Gimmicks, cyborg agents and more.
- Written by Erick Wujcik.

Heroes Unlimited™

Century Station™

- An entire city described.
- Over 40 villains.
- 50 heroes.
- 101 adventure ideas!
- By Bill Coffin.
- 224 pages.

Heroes Unlimited™

G.M.'s Guide™

- Rampage & brawling rules.
- 10 adventures plus source material.
- By Breaux & Siembieda.
- 224 pages.

Aliens Unlimited™, 2nd Ed.

- Updated for use with HU2.
- Over 100 alien player races!
- New super abilities.
- Robots and weapons.
- By Breaux & Siembieda.
- Over 190 pages.

Available at stores everywhere

The Rifter™ Number Nine & A Half

Wacked out source material and fun. This Special issue is for Palladium's fans from all of us to all of you. Enjoy it.

- April Fool's Day News & Coming Attractions.
- Giga-Damage, the ultimate rules for power gamers!
- Ludicrous Mage O.C.C. and Ludicrous magic.
- Trickster Mage O.C.C. and Card Magic.
- Tourist O.C.C. and related powers.
- Magic items and uncommonly silly spells.
- Wild, new super abilities and weird side effects.
- Wacky superheroes, villains and powers.
- Where's Wayne — HU2™ adventure.
- Question and answers (whether you want 'em or not).
- Wild ideas and fun galore.

Palladium Books® role-playing games
— limited only by one's imagination

\$7.95

Cat. No. 095

I.S.B.N. 157457-042-0

ISBN 1-57457-042-0

