

Palladium Books® Presents:

THE RIFTS®

Your Guide to the Megaverse®

Inside this Issue...

Rifts®: 30 New Magic Tattoos

Rifts®: 6 New True Atlantean/Tattooed Men O.C.C.s

Palladium Fantasy RPG® – Living Rune Weapons

Palladium Fantasy RPG® – Cannibal Magic

Hammer of the Forge™

News & Coming attractions

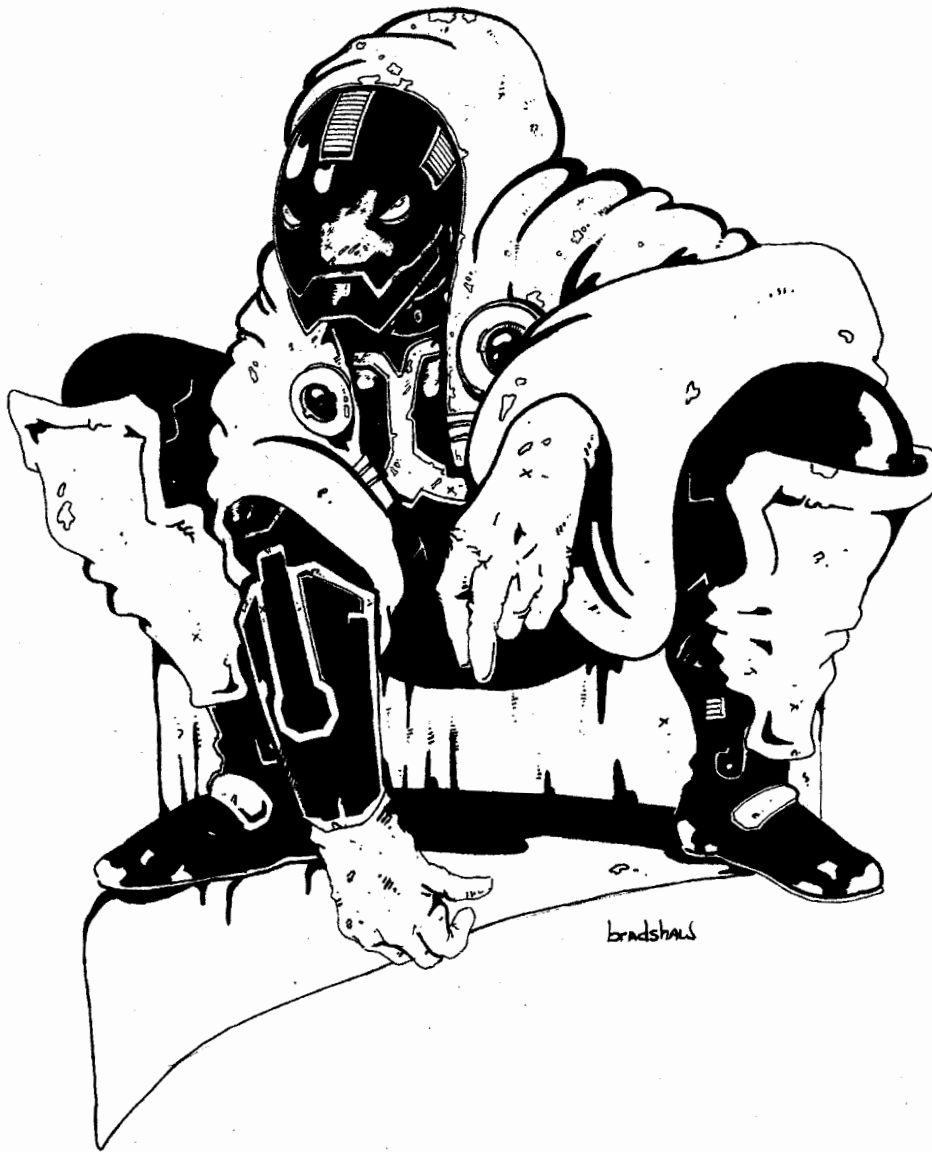
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Some parents may find the violence, magic and supernatural elements of the games inappropriate for young readers/players. We suggest parental discretion.

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



The Rifter® Number 52

Your guide to the Palladium Megaverse®!

First Printing – October 2010

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The slogan “A Megaverse of adventure – limited only by your imagination,” and titles and names such as Black Crusade, Chaos Earth, Cannibal Magic, Dead Reign, Dyval, Elf-Dwarf War, Warpath: Urban Jungle, Heroes of the Megaverse, Dimensional Outbreak, Armageddon Unlimited, Wormwood, Minion War, Mysteries of Magic, Hammer of the Forge, Beyond the Supernatural, BTS-2, HU2, NEMA, MercTown, Merc Ops, Tome Grotesque, Beyond Arcanum, Naruni, Mechanoid Space, Dinosaur Swamp, Arzno, Lazlo, Victor Lazlo, Lazlo Agency, Lazlo Society, Heroes Unlimited, Powers Unlimited, Ninjas & Superspies, Aliens Unlimited, Mutant Underground, The Nursery, Hardware Unlimited, Gadgets Unlimited, The Three Galaxies, Void Runners, Gramercy Island, Skraypers, Atorian Empire, Land of the Damned, The Citadel, The Palladium of Desires, Wolfen Wars, Wolfen, Wulfen, Cosmo-Knight, Cyber-Knight, Gargoyle Empire, Free Quebec, Xiticix, Xiticix Invasion, Fadetown, Siege on Tolkeen, Psyscape, Dweomer, ARCHIE-3, Morphus, Northern Gun, Coalition States, Erin Tarn, Emperor Prosek, Splugorth, Splynncryth, Splynn, Mega-Damage, Mega-Hero, Skelebot, SAMAS, Glitter Boy, Dog Boy, Dog Pack, Techno-Wizard, Ley Line Walker, Shifter, Bio-Wizardry, Psi-Stalker, Brodkil, Juicer, Crazy, ‘Burbs, ‘Borg, ‘Bot, D-Bee, Chi-Town, Triax, NGR, and other names, titles, slogans, and the likenesses of characters are trademarks owned by Kevin Siembieda and Palladium Books Inc.

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Palladium Books® Presents:

THE RIFTER® #52

BRANDT -97

Sourcebook and Guide to the Palladium Megaverse®

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concepts and Megaverse® created by **Kevin Siembieda**.

Special Thanks to all our contributors, writers and artists – and a special welcome on board to the artists and writers making their debut this issue. Our apologies to anybody who may have gotten accidentally left out or their name misspelled.

– *Kevin Siembieda, 2010*

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Page 6 – Art

The illustration on Page Six is by the Second Place runner up in Palladium's first **Rifter® Art Contest** in the Black and White category. This category of the contest was very tight, with only two votes separating First and Second Place. *Joe Lawn*, a talented and nice guy, came in Second Place. The Page Six art was the fan favorite of his five entries. Furthermore, you can count on seeing more of his artwork next issue. Welcome onboard, Joe.

Page 7 – From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda

Palladium's trials and tribulations continue on a number of fronts. The most taxing and personal one for us all is Henry Siembieda's health struggle after his cancer surgery. It's been tough on everyone at Palladium Books, especially our founder, Kevin Siembieda and his family, but he and all of us are trying to stay positive and hopeful. In the quiet moments at Palladium . . . hmmm, scratch that. There are no quiet moments. We're fighting to protect the **Rifts®** trademark and working hard to release 4-5 new books by Christmas. Keep the faith, game on and Happy Holidays.

Page 8 – News

The latest updates and news start here. Written by Kevin Siembieda, the guy who should know.

Page 10 – Coming Attractions

Those of you looking for holiday presents for the gamers in your life should take a careful look at these pages. There are some great books already out, like **Rifts® Dimension Book 12: Dimensional Outbreak™**, **Rifts® Triax™ 2**, **Rifts® Heroes of the Megaverse®** (which is actually suitable for all Palladium settings whether S.D.C. or M.D.), as well as these upcoming titles: **Armageddon Unlimited™** (at the printer and shipping end of October), **Rifts® Dimension Book 14: Thundercloud Galaxy™**, **Rifts® World Book One: Vampire Kingdoms Expanded & Updated**, the all new **Rifts® Vampires Sourcebook**, **Dead Reign™ Sourcebook Three**, and maybe **Rifts® Lemuria** and **Robotech® New Generation™ Sourcebook**.

Page 15 – 2010 Christmas Surprise Package

It's that time of year again, when the holidays start to roll out and people show their affection with gifts and acts of kindness. That also means it's time for **Palladium's Christmas Surprise Package**. It's our gift to you, our fans. Send us your wish list of 8-12 items and Santa Kevin will try to make your gaming wishes come true. Ask for autographs and we'll sign every book in your Surprise Package. With the economy still in the slump and so many people still struggling, Kevin vows to make this year's "grab bags" as good as ever. Buy one. Buy several. Buy one as Christmas or Hanukkah gifts for your friends. Buy one to treat yourself (you deserve it). Buy one to get the books you've been meaning to pick up but haven't gotten around to yet. Buy one to try out a new game setting you've never tried before. Buy one to fill in your **Rifter®** collection or favorite game series. But what-

ever you do, make sure you buy at least one. Ho, ho, ho from us to you.

Page 18 – The Crusaders & The Black Crusade (Tattoo Magic) – *Optional source material for Rifts®*

Writer *Andrew Lander* starts the reader off with a pair of short stories that are followed up with a plethora of fun source material about True Atlanteans and Tattoo Magic.

Page 19 – The Crusaders Short Story.

Page 23 – The Black Crusade Short Story.

Page 26 – Game Information Begins.

Page 26 – Nogs, a New Race of beings.

Page 27 – Atlantean Dilettante O.C.C.

Page 29 – Atlantean Tattoo Master O.C.C.

Page 32 – Atlantean Drifter O.C.C.

Page 33 – Sunaj Assassin O.C.C. (Revisited).

Page 36 – Sunaj Slayer O.C.C.

Page 38 – Sunaj Warrior Thrall O.C.C.

Page 39 – Sunaj Slaver O.C.C.

Page 42 – Atlantean Equipment (TW and other).

Page 44 – Atlantean Armor.

Page 44 – Aerihman/Sunaj Weapons and Equipment.

Page 48 – New Magic Tattoos.

Page 48 – Weapon Tattoos.

Page 49 – Power Tattoos.

Page 58 – Flux Tattoos.

Artwork by the indomitable *Nick Bradshaw*.

Page 60 – Cannibal Magic *Optional source material for Palladium Fantasy RPG®*

Writer *Paul Herbert* offers up a delicious recipe for murder and magic in the **Palladium Fantasy RPG®** setting – **Cannibal Magic**. Yum, good eating.

Artwork by *Kent Burles*.

Page 64 – From Ruins to Runes *Optional source material for Palladium Fantasy RPG®*

Travis Guerrero presents a fascinating array of ancient and powerful Rune Weapons from the days of the Elf-Dwarf War. Living Rune Weapons that transcend being mere magic items. Rune Weapons that not only contain an intelligence and personality, but a physical humanoid form and R.C.C.

Page 64 – Living Rune Sword.

Page 67 – Notes Common to All R.C.C.s & Experience Table.

Page 67 – Invoked R.C.C. (a.k.a. Sword of Spells).

Page 68 – Elementalist R.C.C. (a.k.a. Sword of Nature).

Page 70 – Cleric R.C.C. (a.k.a. Healing Sword).

Page 72 – Psion R.C.C. (a.k.a. Mind Sword).

Page 74 – Warper R.C.C. (a.k.a. Dimension Sword).
Page 76 – Lightbringer R.C.C. (a.k.a. Holy Sword).
Page 78 – Soul Drinker R.C.C. (a.k.a. Vampire Sword).
Page 80 – Runed Personalities.
Page 80 – Darklight, Non-Player Character.
Page 81 – Dalv, Non-Player Character.
Page 83 – Hand to Hand: Elongated Blade.
Page 83 – Hex, Non-Player Character.
Page 87 – Weapons Expert O.C.C.
Page 88 – Questions and Answers.
Art by *Kent Burles*.

Page 90 – Palladium Greeting Card Sale

See what the six greeting cards look like and order yours today.

Page 92 – The Hammer of the Forge™

Chapter 52: Death Comes to Town. The latest chilling installment of *James M.G. Cannon's* epic tale set in the Three Galaxies.

Page 96 – Happy Holidays from All of Us at Palladium

The Theme for Issue 52

This issue of **The Rifter®** focuses on dark and nearly forgotten magic. Some issues seem to just fall together and this is one of them. The articles were lengthy, but packed with compelling source material to fill your campaigns with adventure, villains, weirdness and new magic. Though written with **Rifts®** or the **Palladium Fantasy RPG®** in mind, all the material, from Cannibal Magic and Rune Weapons to Tattoo Magic and True Atlanteans, can be easily adapted to any setting and seems prime material for any Minion War campaign.

The Rifter® Needs You

We need new writers and artists to fill the pages of **The Rifter®** for years to come. You do not need to be a professional writer to contribute to **The Rifter®**. This publication is like a “fanzine” written by fans for fans. A forum in which gamers just like *you* can submit articles, G.M. advice, player tips, house rules, adventures, new magic, new psionics, new super abilities, monsters, villains, high-tech weapons, vehicles, power armor, short works of fiction and more. So think about writing up something short (even something as small as 4-6 pages). Newcomers and regular contributors are always welcomed.

The Rifter® needs new material, especially when it comes to adventures and source material, for *all* of our game lines, especially **Rifts®**, **Chaos Earth™**, **Palladium Fantasy RPG®**, **Heroes Unlimited™**, **Ninjas and Superspies™**, **Beyond the Supernatural™**, **Dead Reign™**, **Splicers®** and **Nightbane®**.

Pay is lousy, fame is dubious, but you get to share your ideas and adventures with fellow gamers and get four free copies to show to your friends and family.

The Cover

The cover is by newcomer, **Zach Schoenbaum**, the gent who came in Second Place in Palladium's first **Rifts® Art Contest** in the Color/Cover Category. Zach's cover depicting Elves, swords and monsters just seemed perfect for this issue of **The Rifter®**. Like we said, some issues just fall together. Welcome onboard, Zach. Keep that imagination burning bright.

Optional and Unofficial Rules & Source Material

Please note that most of the material presented in **The Rifter®** is “unofficial” or “optional” rules and source material.

They are alternative ideas, homespun adventures and material mostly created by fellow gamers and fans like you, the reader. Things one can *elect* to include in one's own campaign or simply enjoy reading about. They are not “official” to the main games or world settings.

As for optional tables and adventures, if they sound cool or fun, use them. If they sound funky, too high-powered or inappropriate for your game, modify them or ignore them completely.

All the material in **The Rifter®** has been included for two reasons: One, because we thought it was imaginative and fun, and two, we thought it would stimulate your imagination with fun ideas and concepts that you can use (if you want to), or which might inspire you to create your own wonders.

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The Rifter® #53

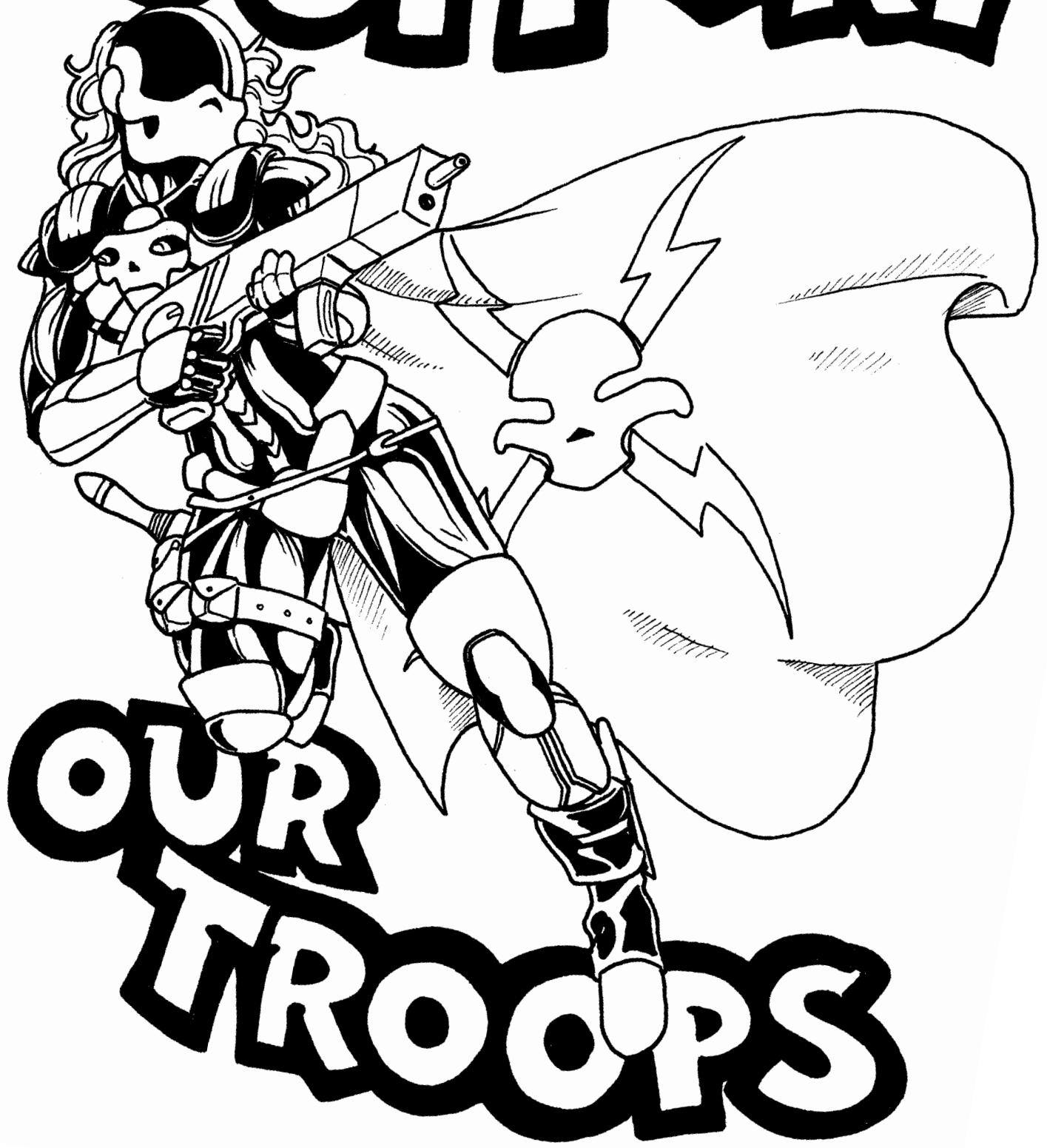
The Rifter® #53 marks the start of the New Year and the 30 Year Anniversary of Palladium Books. Founder Kevin Siembieda, and Alex Marciniszyn, who have been with the company since day one, can't believe so many years have passed. Both hope 2011 marks the beginning of a new era of success and greatness for the company. We have big dreams for the next 30 years and hope you'll join us for the journey.

The January issue of **The Rifter®** is sure to contain more thrills and adventure to make you smile.

- **Wayne says since issue #52 was all magic, #53 will have its share of technology.**
- **Source material for numerous settings.**
- **Kevin Siembieda's vision of Palladium's future.**
- **The latest chapter of Hammer of the Forge™, fiction.**
- **News, coming attractions and more.**

Palladium Books® role-playing games ... infinite possibilities, limited only by your imagination™

SUPPORT



OUR TROOPS

From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda

Please forgive me if this *From the Desk* is rather introspective and subdued. Between my writing of *Heroes of the Megaverse* (a not so secret tribute to Palladium fans), the lawsuit and my father's ongoing fight with cancer, I'm in a rather introspective mood. What had looked like a year of growth and new achievement has turned into another roller coaster ride with many ups and downs.

My Dad. As I write this, between September 14 and September 22, 2010, my father's health continues to ping pong back and forth, good and bad. On August 31, he had his bladder and prostate removed as part of his ongoing battle with cancer. The surgery would be hard on you or me, let alone a man who'll turn 80 years old on December 14. The surgery went as well as one could want, and we were filled with relief and hope. As the days went by there has been one new problem or setback after another. Dad has been on a respirator for days now due to pneumonia. The pneumonia is pretty serious and doesn't seem to be clearing up. Just this morning I was informed that the doctors feared he may have an infection in his upper abdomen. Bad news. Worse, removing the fluid could nick a lung and cause it to collapse. Remember, the ping pong comment. I get a call the afternoon of September 14 with some good news. No infection and pneumonia seems to be clearing up ever so slightly. New hope. Things look good for a few days, but then Dad seems to lose hope. We encourage him to keep fighting. It has been an upward battle. I can only imagine the frustration and pain he is going through.

The worst part of all this, from a selfish point of view, is the helplessness you feel. There's nothing we can do and I find myself faced with the loathsome prospect that my father could die. I pray I'm wrong and in that the next issue of **The Rifter**® I'll be telling you about his wonderful recovery. My Dad's fight is not yet done, and I cling to the hope that he'll recover and even be able to return home after some time in convalescence and rehabilitation. I know many of you are praying for him and I thank you for that. We'll take all the prayers and positive vibes we can get.

Legal matters. I wish I could tell you about the **Rifts**® trademark lawsuit, but I cannot. While it is a pain in the neck, I can say we are positive and hopeful for a desirable outcome.

The Rifts® **Movie.** This has been a long wait, hasn't it? I wish I could tell you what's happening on this front too, but I can't talk about it either. I can say we are positive and hopeful. Time will tell.

Sales. I'm happy to report distributor sales remain strong. Online sales have been up and down, but decent overall, which is encouraging. The downturns this year are always attributed to stretches without new releases. As soon as a new title comes out, sales across the board go up. If we can keep new product rolling out, Palladium does well. That's a good sign. Of course, the trick is keeping quality product coming out on a regular basis – especially with all these other serious issues and demanding distractions stealing away our time. We have a bunch of new product planned for the next few months. Keep an eye out for 'em.

Holiday season means Christmas Grab Bags. It's that time of year again: Holidays, joy, warm regards and goodwill to others. At Palladium Books that spells *Christmas Surprise Packages* complete with autographs (for those who want them), savings, surprises, fun and lots and lots of books. Complete details about

the 2010 Surprise Package (grab bags) are elsewhere in this issue and on the Palladium website.

Epic RPG sourcebooks are coming!

Despite our concerns and distractions, we've continued to bang out one quality new product after another.

Rifts® **Heroes of the Megaverse**® is available now! If you haven't gotten a copy yet, you need to take a look at it. I went all out to make this book a tribute to all the heroes in my life, the Palladium fans in particular. **Rifts**® **Heroes of the Megaverse**® is for you. Many of you have stuck with Palladium Books through thick and thin for years. Others are new to our products and loving them (keep spreading the word!), and some of you have returned after a hiatus away from gaming (welcome back). All of you are appreciated more than you know. We think of you, and I wrote this sourcebook with all of you in mind. I hope you find it to be a useful, fun sourcebook that takes you on adventures across the Megaverse.

The Rifter® #52 is in your hands and is another great issue filled with cool ideas and adventure from the minds of fans just like you. Never forget that **The Rifter**® is a *fanzine*. A place where YOU can submit written source material for any and all of Palladium Books' RPG settings. We need and want your submissions, so don't be shy, share your ideas for villains, monsters, D-Bees, superpowers, magic, weapons and adventure. We especially like to get short articles, 6-12 pages long. If we accept your submission, you get to see your name in print, get several copies of the book, and a small payment for your effort. Give it a shot. We're always looking for new writers, and artists too.

The Rifter® #53. Next issue will continue the legacy of fun and adventure across the Palladium RPG Megaverse®. We recommend you check out every issue. Better yet, get a subscription so you don't miss a thing.

Armageddon Unlimited™. By the time you read this, I expect to have **Armageddon Unlimited**™ at the printer and hitting store shelves by the end of October. It is a *Minion War*™ crossover title for *Heroes Unlimited*™ and presents epic superhero adventure in which your heroes are pitted against the forces of, not one, but two Hells, and the fate of the world hangs in the balance. Easily adapted to the **Rifts**®, **Phase World**® and **Nightbane**® settings. October release date.

Rifts® **Thundercloud Galaxy**™ is the next **Rifts**®/Phase World® Dimension Book (October or November release). The John Zeleznik cover and Mike Mumah interior artwork are fantastic, as are the setting, people and adventure ideas by *Braden Campbell*.

Rifts® **Vampire Kingdoms**™ and the **Rifts**® **Vampires Sourcebook**™ will follow, as will a new **Dead Reign**™ sourcebook and with a little luck, **Robotech**® **New Generation**, **Rifts**® **Lemuria**, **Mysteries of Magic**™ and **Megaverse**® **in Flames** (the final chapter of the *Minion War* saga), though the latter 2-3 are likely to be how we kick off the New Year.

Palladium Auctions. We'll be hosting a few Palladium collectibles auctions with great deals, rare items and fun for all involved throughout October. Read Palladium's weekly online updates and Murmurs from the Megaverse for dates and details (palladiumbooks.com).

With the holidays coming up, I urge you to find the time for the people you love. Tell them how much they mean to you. Spend time role-playing, talking or just hanging out, but find the time. I know it's falling out of favor, but send a card and/or a note for the holidays or just to say hello. I just got one from a pair of friends I haven't seen or talked to in about a year. It put a smile on my face and it meant a great deal to me. Heck, send an email just to say hello. Appreciate all the good things in your life, especially the people who matter and make your life so much richer. It's such a small effort and expense, and means so much. Trust me on this.

We're looking forward to a wonderful holiday season and fantastic New Year. We hope you continue to enjoy all Palladium Books has to offer and keep those imaginations burning bright.

– Kevin Siembieda, Autumn 2010

News

By Kevin Siembieda, the guy who should know

News is a bit light this issue. My father's continuing battle with cancer and related health issues continues to consume a lot of my time and attention as it ping pongs up and down. We don't know where things are going to end up with him, but are doing our best and hoping for a positive outcome. The same holds true for the Rifts trademark lawsuit.

Overall at Palladium Books, we are focused and motivated to get several new products out by the end of the year and keep that trend going in the start of the New Year. We see plenty of positive amidst the darkness and turmoil, and can't shake the feeling that things are going to be looking up for us.

Rifts® Heroes of the Megaverse® is a hit

We follow up our last hit Rifts® book – Rifts® Triax™ 2 – with another epic sourcebook that is winning shouts of praise and approval: Rifts® Heroes of the Megaverse®.

Rifts® Heroes of the Megaverse® is designed in such a way that the 2,000 names listed in the sourcebook can be turned into super beings and used in a variety of different ways in any of Palladium's world settings, from Rifts® and Phase World® to Heroes Unlimited™ and Palladium Fantasy RPG®. It has been a real treat for the fans who purchased the \$50 print sold during the Crisis of Treachery to see their names in print among the 2,000 as the ultimate Heroes of the Megaverse. All names listed are real Palladium fans and supporters.

Of course, Heroes of the Megaverse® is much more than a book of names. It presents 101 new super abilities, the powers of the magical Book of Heroes, eight statted out Heroes of the Megaverse, and serves as an avenue to new adventures in the Minion War™ saga.

As the forces of evil spread across the Megaverse, heroes are being born as if by magic. The source of their powers. The fabled Rune tome known as the *Book of Heroes*. The stuff of legends and you will love it.

The Minion War™ Continues

Rifts® Dimensional Outbreak™, released at the beginning of 2010, presented the *Battle for Phase World* and the demons' invasion of the Three Galaxies. It was just the first Minion War™ title released this year (building upon the Hades and Dyval™ sourcebooks from previous years). Heroes of the Megaverse® (available now!) has hit store shelves in just the last few weeks and adds an entirely new dimension to the story. Armageddon Unlimited™ – for the Heroes Unlimited™ RPG setting – comes out by the end of October, so watch for it! Each book blends with the others to weave a sweeping story arc, or can be used as a *standalone* sourcebook.

Rifts® Megaverse® in Flames™ carries the Minion War™ to Rifts Earth as the war between demons and Devils ripples across the Megaverse. This title should be released early 2011.

Rifts® Crossover Comic in Heavy Metal® Magazine

This is fun. As you may recall, RC and Dominic Aradio have created a two-part Rifts®/Colt the Outlander™ crossover comic strip that is appearing in Heavy Metal® Magazine. Part One appeared in the September issue (which may still be on newsstands as you read this). It looks and reads great. Part Two should appear in the December issue of Heavy Metal, "on sale" in November, 2010. Watch for it. We can hardly wait for Part Two. It's always a blast for me to see my ideas, characters and game worlds brought to life in new mediums. Dom and RC are doing a wonderful adaptation and creating a story I'm proud to see out there. With any luck, this is just the beginning of many more.

Rifts® Movie Update

We remain very optimistic on this front. 'Nuff said. Wish we could say more, but can't.

Nightbane® Movie Update

The gent pursuing Nightbane® for film development is supposed to "pitch" it to a major studio or two any time now. As of this writing there is no word. Fingers crossed.

Another Path to Hollywood

As reported in the last issue of The Rifter®, Palladium has been talking with a local, Michigan film-maker about developing one of their promising IPs into a role-playing game series. We really want to work with these talented people, and they want Palladium onboard, but with everything going on with my Dad and other areas, I'm still not sure we can take on this additional obligation. They want us, but would it be too much? We'll see.

Palladium Bookmarks

I'm thinking of doing color bookmarks for Rifts and other Palladium game lines. I've always enjoyed and used bookmarks myself, and have kicked around the idea of doing some, or even a set, for years now. We're getting quotes for their production with an eye for making them available in time for the holiday season.

Each would be full color and probably reflect various game lines. Just wanted to give you a heads up.

Palladium Fall Auctions

Rare finds, bargains and fun

Palladium hosted a few online auctions this past Summer and we're supposed to do a few more this Fall. Go to the Palladium website – www.palladiumbooks.com – for links and information about the latest auction. Auctions are fun and we recommend you take a look. It's a cool way to get holiday gifts for the gamer who has everything, as well as bargains and stuff you might want. Palladium's online **Weekly Updates** offer details and links about the latest auction, special sales events, other news and release information.

2010 Christmas Surprise Package

Yep, it's that time of year again. Time for **Palladium's Christmas Surprise Package** (also known as the "Christmas Grab Bag"). Don't let the name fool you, the **Surprise Package** is suitable for the entire Holiday season, be it *Christmas*, *Hanukkah*, *Kwanza*, or any occasion for family, friendship and gift-giving like birthdays, anniversaries, graduation, etc.

There's a full description elsewhere in this issue, but here are the basics about the Christmas Grab Bag. It's Palladium's way of giving back to you, our wonderful fans, and sending out a little holiday cheer.

How?

First, by sending you \$80-\$90 worth of product for \$37.00 (plus shipping).

Second, the Palladium staff and I, plus whichever freelance artists and writers we can round up, are happy to *sign* every book in your Surprise Package. For many fans, this is the only way to get autographs.

The surprise. Part of the fun is the surprise. You don't know exactly what you'll get. You send us your "Wish List" of 8-12 in stock items and we pick books and items from that list (plus other books or things we think you might enjoy), sign 'em (if you want autographs) and ship 'em out to you. As a result, when that holiday *Surprise Package* arrives, you don't know what's in it. It's like getting a Christmas present – you don't know what it is until you open it up. Which makes the Surprise Package that much more exciting and fun. And we aim to please, so there are few disappointed customers.

Many fans buy 2-3 of them. Heck, some people purchase 5-6, though such individuals are usually purchasing one or two for themselves and the rest as gifts for friends. In fact, a single Christmas Surprise Package could net you gifts for 2-3 people, especially if you indicate you are trying to buy gifts for others and give us 4-5 choices per person. But a lot of people get an entire Surprise Package for a gamer friend. That's smart, because you can get your pal \$80+ worth of stuff for under \$40. Cool.

It's fun, you save money, get friends a ton of stuff for cheap at Christmas (plus autographs), fill holes in your collection, try new RPGs and settings, and spread the gift of role-playing during the holiday season.

Queen of Ghouls

'Tis the season to be scary.

If you are looking for something truly unique, scary and fun to enhance your Halloween decorations, check out the Halloween Props made by Kathy Simmons and sold at queenofghouls.com – they are awesome. And I help by painting masks, hands and tattering and bloodying clothing.

Think "life-sized action figures" you can pose and that break down for easy storage to the size of a king-size pillow. Cool, eh? Comes with instructions, plastic storage bag, and everything you need to display the "ghoul" in your yard. Kathy won a local contest last year for spookiest house in her city using these exact types of props.

Out of print titles available as PDFs at DriveThruRPG.com

Palladium has made several out of print titles and the first 40 issues of **The Rifter®** available as PDF digital downloads from DriveThruRPG.com. We are regularly asked if out of print titles such as **Nightbane® Book Four: Shadows of Light™**, the original **Mechanoids® RPGs**, **Boxed Nightmares™**, **BTS First Edition**, etc. are available, and they are, at DriveThruRPG.com. Check 'em out. And sometime in 2010, DriveThruRPG.com expects to be able to offer complete print on demand features so you can get a pdf of the game or an actual, printed book.

Coming Attractions

Palladium's 2010 Release Checklist

All release dates are tentative, but these are the dates Palladium is shooting for.

2010 Releases Available Now

- **The Rifter® #49**
- **Rifts® Dimension Book™ 12: Dimensional Outbreak™**
- **The Rifter® #50** (128 page Rifts® 20th Anniversary issue).
- **Rifts® World Book 31: Triax™ Two**
- **Rifts® Hoodies** (2 styles)
- **Rifts® 20 Year Anniversary T-Shirt**
- **Rifts® 20 Year Anniversary Art Print by Mike Mumah**
- **Rifts® Vampire Kingdoms – "Death is for the Weak" T-Shirt**
- **Rifts® 20 Year Anniversary T-Shirt**
- **Palladium Books® Game Master T-Shirt**
- **Rifts® 20 Year Anniversary T-Shirt**
- **The Rifter® #51**
- **Rifts® "Accept No Imitations" SAMAS T-Shirt**
- **Heroes of the Megaverse®: A Rifts®/Phase World® Sourcebook**
- **The Rifter® #52**
- **Palladium greeting card sale** (October & November only).

Coming Autumn 2010

- **Armageddon Unlimited™** (October)

- **Rifts® WB One: Vampire Kingdoms™, Expanded & Updated**

- **Rifts® Dimension Book™: Thundercloud Galaxy™**

- **Rifts® Vampires Sourcebook™**

- **Dead Reign™ Sourcebook Three** (tentative)

- **Robotech® New Generation™ Sourcebook** (tentative)

Coming in the First Half of 2011

- **The Rifter® #53**

- **Rifts® World Book™: Lemuria**

- **Rifts® Chaos Earth™ – First Responders Sourcebook**

- **Rifts® Megaverse® in Flames** (Minion War™ crossover)

- **The Rifter® #54**

- **Robotech® UEEF Marines** (and other Robotech® sourcebooks)

Plus more **Rifts®**, **Robotech®** sourcebooks, more **Mysteries of Magic™** sourcebooks, more **Nightbane®** sourcebooks, more **Dead Reign™** sourcebooks, **Warpath™** and other good stuff.

Palladium Christmas Card Sale

With the holidays coming up, I wanted to remind you that Palladium offers fun and attractive greeting cards. Surprise and tickle your gaming pals with these truly cool, colorful and keepsake greeting cards. The two “Rifts® Christmas cards” are perfect for the **Rifts®** gamers in your life, so make this holiday season a *Rifts® Christmas*.

Special 2010 Holiday Prices:

- \$1.25 per individual card (was \$1.75), comes with a white envelope for mailing. Order any quantity. Mix and match as desired.
- \$7.00 per pre-packaged set of six cards and envelopes (was \$9.00). That can be six of the same card to send to multiple gamers - or - the “mixed set” containing one of each of the six different cards.
- Full color collector greeting cards.
- Fan favorite artists: Kevin Long, John Zeleznik, Scott Johnson, Larry Elmore and David Dorman.
- Each card is 5 x 7 inches, full color, and looks fantastic. White mailing envelope.
- Available only while supplies last.
- This *greeting card sale* is limited to the months of October and November, 2010. So get ‘em while you can.

- **Mixed Set:** One of each card; six different greeting cards and envelopes. 1 Rifts® Ultimate Happy Holidays, 1 Rifts® Christmas card, 1 Rifts® (Glitter Boy in Flames) Birthday card, 1 Heroes Unlimited Birthday card, 1 Rifts® Thinking of You (D-Bees), 1 humorous Fantasy card (Elmore) and six white envelopes.

#2515 for six card set. \$7.00 sale price.

- **Rifts® Ultimate, Happy Holidays Card** (humorous, Christmas & New Years, Rifts® Ultimate cover). Scott Johnson art.

#2516 single card and envelope – \$1.25 sale price.

#2517 for six card set – \$7.00 sale price.

- **Rifts® Ley Line, Christmas Card** (humorous). Kevin Long art.

#2518 single card and envelope – \$1.25 sale price.

#2519 for six card set – \$7.00 sale price.

- **Have a Super Birthday, Heroes Unlimited™ Card.** John Zeleznik art.

#2520 single card and envelope – \$1.25 sale price.

#2521 for six card set – \$7.00 sale price.

- **Happy Birthday. Rifts® Glitter Boy™ Card.** Scott Johnson art.

#2522 single card and envelope – \$1.25 sale price.

#2523 for six card set – \$7.00 sale price.

- **Thinking of You, Rifts® D-Bees™ Card.** Dave Dorman art.

#2524 single card and envelope – \$1.25 sale price.

#2525 for six card set – \$7.00 sale price.

- **Fantasy Card** (humorous). “Faeries, the other white meat.” Larry Elmore art on the card face, Kevin Siembieda interior art.

#2526 single card and envelope – \$1.25 sale price.

#2527 for six card set – \$7.00 sale price.



Rifts® Poster by Mike Mumah

20 Year Anniversary Color Print – Available now

This is a gorgeous color version of the T-shirt, with color and art by Mike Mumah, signed by Kevin Siembieda and Mike. It features iconic Rifts characters charging to battle, including a Glitter Boy, Ley Line Walker, Cyber-Knight, Juicer, Crazy, Dog Boy, Burster, cyborg, dragon, and others.

- **Type:** Sturdy card stock suitable for hanging on the wall or framing.
- **Limited:** 350 copies. Signed but not numbered.
- **Signed By:** Kevin Siembieda (Rifts® creator) and Mike Mumah (artist).
- **Size:** Approximately 19 x 9 1/4 inches. Full color.
- **Art By:** Mike Mumah.
- **Cost:** \$10.00, plus shipping.
- **Cat. No. PR808.** Available now.

Rifts® World Book 31:

Triax™ Two

Triax™ Two is the long awaited and hotly anticipated sequel to the hugely popular **Rifts® World Book 5: Triax™ & The NGR**, and it delivers with a ton of new weapons, vehicles, power armor, giant robots, history of the NGR/Gargoyle War, history of Triax and more.

- **27 new Triax weapons plus new body armor and additional gear.**



- 10 new Triax giant robots including the Talon and Devastator Mk II.
- 10 cars and commercial vehicles plus more than 50 special features.
- 9 new robot drones including robot assistants, pets and Spy 'Bots.
- 6 new Triax power armor suits, including the Predator II, Ulti-Max II, War Eagle, Fat Boy, and a flying Glitter Boy.
- 5 new aircraft and other combat vehicles.
- The New Luftwaffe – not what you are expecting.
- Cybernetic airframes and Cyborg Combat Pilot O.C.C.
- Drop ships, deployment pods and makeshift fortifications.
- Mobile NGR forts and bases.
- Zoom, Atomix Powder, Rat & other drinks that augment the user.
- History of the NGR, Gargoyle War and Triax.
- The VGN – German Black Market.
- Mercenaries, adventurers, work for hired guns and Gargoyle bounties.
- The New German Republic, its society, and key cities.
- The Autobahn, Railbahn and other places of interest.
- The New German Republic's military and plans for the future.
- Update on the Gargoyle Empire and surrounding region.
- More ideas for battles and adventure.
- Written by Taylor White, Brandon Aten and Kevin Siembieda.
- 192 pages – \$24.95 retail – Cat. No. 881. Available now.

Rifts® Dimension Book™ 12:

Dimensional Outbreak™

Available now. **Dimensional Outbreak™** is space opera at its best. A blend of sci-fi, horror, magic, technology and the alien that is sure to get your adrenaline flowing. **Dimensional Outbreak™** describes Center and key locations within, and offers new weapons, new spacecraft, new demons and aliens, new magic, and a wealth of information about Phase World, the Prometheans, the Three Galaxies, the Minion War, deception and betrayal. There are enough adventure ideas, turmoil and information to run a campaign in the Three Galaxies for years!

- An overview of Phase World's *Center* Levels 1-20.
- Four levels of Center mapped and the rest described.
- 60+ Demon Magic spells and rituals.
- New Demons include: Demon Knights, Phase Demons, Plasma Demons, Star Slayers, demonic legions and more.
- "Living" demonic spaceships, magic weapons and new horrors.
- The demons' plans for conquest, their bases and troops.
- Deevil spaceships, bases and defenses.
- New minion races serving Deevils and demons.
- Historical time-line of Center leading up to the Minion War.
- The Battle for Center and more.
- A stand-alone Dimension Book that is also the third step in an epic, six book crossover series that races across the Palladium Megaverse®, including *Heroes of the Megaverse®* (any setting), *Heroes Unlimited™* (Armageddon Unlimited™), and *Rifts®* (Megaverse® in Flames).
- Written by Carl Gleba. Additional text & spells by Kevin Siembieda.
- 192 pages – \$24.95 retail – Cat. No. 875. Available now.

Rifts® Heroes of the Megaverse®

Heroes of the Megaverse® is the hotly anticipated source-book designed for use across all of Palladium's role-playing game settings, including *Rifts®*, *Phase World®/the Three Galaxies™*, *Splicers®*, *Heroes Unlimited™*, *Palladium Fantasy RPG®*, *Nightbane®*, and other M.D.C. and S.D.C. settings. Includes stats and conversions for Mega-Damage and S.D.C. settings.

The Book of Heroes is an ancient magic tome that empowers those with the potential for greatness. In times of fear and darkness the Book is said to appear to make sure the forces of evil don't get the upper hand. The *Minion War™* is such a dark time, as the forces of Hell ripple across the Megaverse, bringing death and destruction.

This magic artifact is a *hero maker*, able to find beings with the spirit of a hero and bestow upon them incredible power to do battle against evil. Only one copy of the book is known to exist, and everyone wants to get their hands on it – good guys and bad (demons, Deevils, the Splugorth, the Dominators, the Kreeghor,

etc.). According to legend, he who controls the Book of Heroes and wields the “Power of the Two Thousand” can rule the universe. The book has been missing for millennia. No one knows its fate or the true power contained within its *List of Heroes*. No one except YOU – the current keepers of this legendary Rune book.

- The legend and magic of the Book of Heroes.
- The powers of the book itself.
- The ability to empower and turn worthy heroes into super-humans.
- 101 detailed super abilities (not reprints from other books).
- Hero Avatars, Hero Mentors, and their powers.
- Quick roll creation tables and ways to turn the 2,000 named in the book into Heroes of the Megaverse® for your campaigns.
- Why the book must never fall into the hands of any Lord of Hell.
- Nearly a dozen NPC heroes and surprises.
- For use with *Rifts*®, *Phase World*®, *the Three Galaxies*™, *Splicers*®, as well as *Heroes Unlimited*™, *Palladium Fantasy RPG*®, *Nightbane*®, and other M.D.C. and S.D.C. settings. Includes stats and conversions for Mega-Damage and S.D.C. settings.
- Contains the names of *nearly 2,000 real life gamers* who purchased the special print during Palladium’s Crisis of Treachery (and other heroes).
- Cover by Apollo Okamura. Art by Bradshaw, Dudley, Mumah and others.
- Written by Kevin Siembieda.
- 112 pages – \$16.95 retail – Cat. No. 877. Available now.

Armageddon Unlimited™

A sourcebook for Heroes Unlimited™

Demons and Deevils are trying to turn Earth into one of their playgrounds. It’s worse than you think. The plan is to bring about Armageddon to unleash a powerful force that could change the tide of the Minion War™. Only Earth’s greatest superheroes (that’s your characters) stand in their way. Can be played as a Minion War™ crossover bringing in heroes from across the Megaverse, or as a stand-alone adventure setting for *Heroes Unlimited*™.

- A dozen new super abilities.
- Enchanted and Demonic Weapons.
- Demon Hunter Power Category and abilities.
- Demonic Immortal Power Category and abilities.
- Crusader of Light Power Category and abilities.
- Magically Bestowed Variant Power Categories and abilities.
- Hellion monster creation table – NPC villains.
- Arcane orders, secret societies, and magic guilds.
- The Chaos Generator and the coming of Armageddon.
- Notable villains, people and places.
- The Armageddon scenario and adventure ideas.
- Written by Carl Gleba. Art by various artists.
- 160 pages – \$20.95 retail – Cat. No. 527. Ships October, 2010.



Rifts® Dimensional Outbreak™

Thundercloud Galaxy™

The *Thundercloud Galaxy*™ is the perfect companion to *Rifts® Dimensional Outbreak™* to expand one’s gaming Megaverse in the Three Galaxies. History, aliens, weapons, spacecraft, and adventure in a galaxy far, far away.

- The galaxy described; history and time-line.
- 16 new alien R.C.C.s, plus notes on the Exiles and Dominators.
- 6 new O.C.C.s.
- Monster and Animal Creation Tables.
- Guidelines for Magic Weapon Making.
- Notable weapons and technology.
- Notable organizations and secret societies.
- The Trensik Mercenaries.
- The Vortex Region.
- The Splugorth Kingdom of Desslyth and many other notable worlds.
- New worlds of adventure.
- Written by Braden Campbell. Art by Michael Mumah.
- 160 pages – \$20.95 retail – Cat. No. 883. November 2010.

Rifts® World Book One:

Vampire Kingdoms™, Expanded & Updated

Kevin Siembieda is reorganizing, tweaking, expanding and updating one of the most popular *Rifts® World Books* ever published: *Vampire Kingdoms*™. This will include *some* new artwork and an expanded page count. The book will be updated and expanded in much the same way as Kevin did with *Rifts® Sourcebook One* a few years ago. Best of all, it will be accompanied by the *Rifts® Vampires Sourcebook*™.

- The observations of Doc Reid.
- Vampires: Their strengths, weaknesses and powers.
- The Vampire Kingdoms expanded.
- Vampire strategies and plans for conquest.
- Vampire hunters and Techno-Wizard slayer devices (new and old).

- Key locations including Juarez and El Paso.
- The mystery of the Yucatan Peninsula.
- Traveling Shows, Freak Shows and Circuses.
- Monsters, D-Bees, and adventure ideas galore.
- Updated and revised to 110 P.A.
- Cover by E.M. Gist. Interior art by various artists.
- Written by Kevin Siembieda.
- 192 to 224 pages – \$24.95 retail – Cat. No. 802-E. 2010 release.



Rifts® Vampires Sourcebook™

All new source material

Trouble is stirring in the Vampire Kingdoms as ambitious vampire lords, ladies and misanthropes seek to expand their power to dominate more mortal life forms.

Written by Kevin Siembieda and a handpicked selection of other writers, this sourcebook explores the vampires of Mexico and their kingdoms in ways you never imagined. Tons of new data, adventure ideas and revelations.

- Vampire protectors and guardians.
- Vampire rogues, mercenaries and warlords.
- Vampire operations away from the Kingdoms.
- Vampire incursions along the southern borderlands.
- New vampire hunters and human strongholds.
- Vampire hunter “exterminators.”
- Frightful revelations, secrets, and adventure ideas.
- And much, much more.
- Cover by Michael C. Hayes. Interior art by various artists.
- Written by Kevin Siembieda, Braden Campbell and Mark Dudley.
- 128 pages – \$16.95 retail – Cat. No. 884. 2010 release.

Robotech®

New Generation™ Sourcebook

We’re hoping to squeak this Robotech® sourcebook out in time for Christmas, otherwise it will be an early 2011 release.

- Rules for using mecha, power armor and technology from all four eras of Robotech.
- Kit-bashed mecha and rules for jury-rigging and combining parts from different generations of mecha.
- Freedom Fighter O.C.C.s and resistance organizations.
- Rogues and misfits from the three Robotech Wars.
- New weapons, vehicles, mecha and more.
- Villains, traitors, bandits, Invid henchmen, adventure and adventure ideas galore.
- Written by Kevin Siembieda and Irvin Jackson.
- A “manga” size sourcebook.
- 192-256 pages – \$16.95 retail – Cat. No. 554. Final page count and price may be subject to change. December 2010 or early 2011.

Rifts® World Book: Lemuria™

At last, the underwater realm of Lemuria. The people and history of Lemuria, new magic, sea herbs and healing, sea monsters, and more.

- The Lemurians, their race, history and society.
- New O.C.C.s including the Serpent Hunter, Shriekers, Oceanic Guardsman, Aquatic Biomancer and others.
- The Stone Guardians of Easter Island and other mysteries.
- Biomancer Gardens and Aquatic Biomancy.
- Bio-Armor, Bio-Weapons and Bio-Construct Symbiotes.
- New psionic abilities.
- Sea Serpents, monsters, adventure ideas, and more.
- Written by Greg Diaczyk.
- 160 pages – \$20.95 retail – Cat. No. 885. Final page count and price may be subject to expansion and increase. 2010 or 2011 release.

Rifts® Megaverse® in Flames™

The Minion War spills across Rifts Earth, where demons and infernals hope to recruit allies and use the Rifts as gateways of destruction. Their influence shakes things up across the planet, especially at locations where demons and Deevils already have a strong presence. More details to follow, but for now, ‘nuff said.

- Soulmaner and Blood Magic.
- The Seven Deadly Plagues.
- The Demon Plagues across the globe.
- Battleground: Earth – as demons and infernals amass their legions.
- Rifts Calgary – also known as Hell’s Pit; the kingdom described.
- Ciudad de Diablo, Harpies’ Island and other notable Hell holes on Earth.
- Lord Doom, Pain and other demonic leaders.
- Horune treachery, Dimension Stormers and other villains.
- Global chaos and the places most dramatically affected by the Demon Plagues.
- Notable demonic Generals, mercenaries, people and places.

- Many adventure ideas.
- Written by Carl Gleba.
- 192 pages – \$24.95 retail – Cat. No. 876. February or March, 2011.

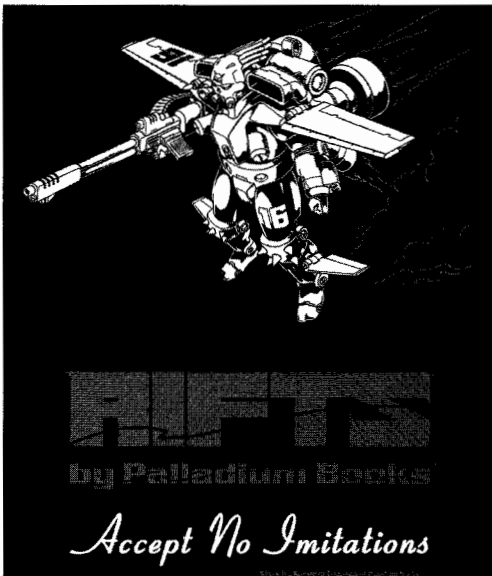
Rifts® Chaos Earth™ Sourcebook:

First Responders

Data about the chaos and madness of the early days of the Great Cataclysm, and the brave men and women who tried to stem the tide of destruction and save lives, the First Responders.

- **Apocalypse Plagues: Strange diseases, symbiotes and mutations that transform, torment, harm and kill Earth's survivors.**
- **First Responder O.C.C.s, skills and special equipment.**
- **Civilian O.C.C.s, skills and orientation.**
- **Notable rescue vehicles, robot drones, and technology.**
- **New weapons, vehicles, mecha and more.**
- **Character modification and enhancement rules.**
- **Creatures from the Rifts and adventure ideas galore.**
- **Written by Jason Richards & Kevin Siembieda.**
- **96 to 128 pages – \$16.95 retail – Cat. No. 665. Coming in 2011.**

New Shirts



Rifts® SAMAS T-shirt – Accept No Imitations

White art on a black T-shirt featuring a classic Kevin Long SAMAS, blue Rifts® logo, and a snappy saying “Accept No Imitations.” This is a dynamic and powerful shirt.

Type: 50/50 cotton polyester blend.

Sizes: Medium to 5XL.

Color: White art, blue Rifts® logo on a black T-shirt.

Art by: Kevin Long.

Cost: \$18.95 for sizes Medium to XL. \$20.95 for 2XL, \$22.95 for 3XL, \$24.95 for 4XL and \$26.95 for 5XL. Plus shipping (approximately \$5 to most places in the USA).

Cat. No. 2552. Available now.

Rifts® Logo – “Zipper” Hoodie

It's Autumn and time for a warm hoodie on a cool day. A white imprint of the Rifts® Logo on a black zipper hoodie. The famous, full Rifts® Logo appears front and back; a small logo over the left breast on the front and a large logo printed on the back.

Type: 50/50 cotton polyester blend; full zipper.

Sizes: Medium to 3XL.

Color: White logo on a black zipper hoodie.

Cost: \$32.95 for Medium to XL. \$34.95 for 2XL. \$36.95 for 3XL; plus shipping (approximately \$6 to most places in the USA).

Cat. No. 2546. Available now.

Rifts® Logo – “Pullover” Hoodie

A white imprint of a large Rifts® Logo on the front of a black pullover hoodie.

Type: 50/50 cotton polyester blend; pullover.

Sizes: Medium to 3XL.

Color: White logo on a black pullover hoodie.

Cost: \$28.95 for Medium to XL. \$30.95 for 2XL, and \$32.95 for 3XL, plus shipping (approximately \$6 to most places in the USA).

Cat. No. 2547. Available now.



Vampire Kingdoms™ T-shirt – Death is for the weak™

White on black T-shirt featuring a snarling vampire and the slogan: *Death is for the weak*™.

Type: 50/50 cotton polyester blend.

Sizes: Small to 5XL.

Color: White art and text on a black T-shirt.

Art by: Mike Mumah.

Cost: \$18.95 for sizes Medium to XL. \$20.95 for 2XL, \$22.95 for 3XL, \$24.95 for 4XL and \$26.95 for 5XL. Plus shipping (approximately \$5 to most places in the USA).

Cat. No. 2548. Available now.



Game Master T-shirt – Power Incarnate

White on black T-shirt featuring a powerful cyborg. Above the cyborg art are the words *Palladium Books Game Master*, and below the art it reads: *Power Incarnate*.

Type: 50/50 cotton polyester blend.

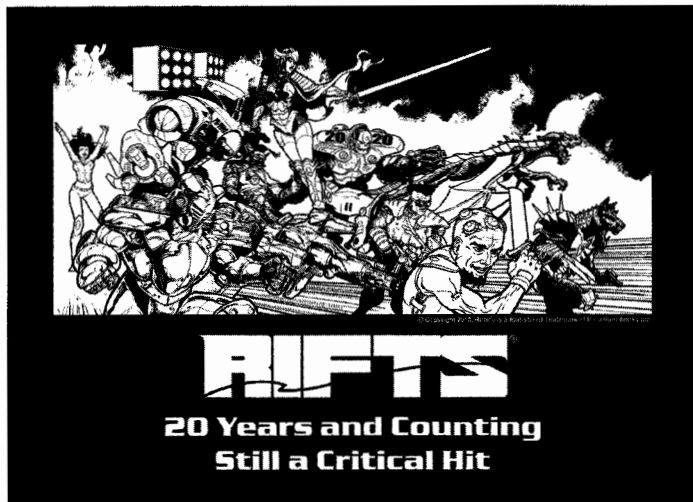
Sizes: Small to 5XL.

Color: White art and text on a black T-shirt.

Art by: Freddie Williams II.

Cost: \$18.95 for sizes Small to XL. \$20.95 for 2XL, \$22.95 for 3XL, \$24.95 for 4XL and \$26.95 for 5XL. Plus shipping (approximately \$5 to most places in the USA).

Cat. No. 2549. Available now.



Rifts® T-shirt – 20 Years and Counting

White on black T-shirt featuring a gathering of Rifts characters, from a Glitter Boy and Juicer to a Rogue Scholar.

Type: 50/50 cotton polyester blend.

Sizes: Small to 5XL.

Color: White art and text on a black T-shirt.

Art by: Mike Mumah.

Cost: \$18.95 for sizes Small to XL. \$20.95 for 2XL, \$22.95 for 3XL, \$24.95 for 4XL and \$26.95 for 5XL. Plus shipping (approximately \$5 to most places in the USA).

Cat. No. 2550. Available now.

2010 Christmas Surprise Package

Available now till December 23, 2010

Every year for the last 12 or 13 years now, Palladium has been doing its **Christmas Surprise Package** – our way of saying thank you to our fans and making their Christmas a little more special.

What is a Palladium Christmas Surprise Package?

\$80 or more worth of Palladium Books product for only \$37 *plus shipping!* A minimum of *eighty dollars (\$80) retail*. Sometimes much more! Santa Kevin wants to make gamers squeal with delight. Our goal: To help lift everyone's spirits in these gloomy and uncertain times.

- **Autographs** from Kevin Siembieda, available staff and freelance artists and writers. If you "request" autographs we'll sign *every* book in your box! For many, especially those across the country or overseas, this is the *only* way they are likely to get autographs from Kevin Siembieda and crew. *Take advantage of it.*

If you do *NOT* want autographs, please state – "No autographs."

If you do NOT want T-shirts, please write – "No T-shirts."

- **Each order is handpicked by Kevin Siembieda** from a "wish list" you provide! Please list at least 8-12 items that you know are in stock. PLEASE do not list books you know are *out of print*; you will not get them.
- **The Grab Bag makes a wonderful gift for Christmas, Hanukkah, birthdays, anniversaries, etc.,** for the gamers in your life. Since there will be so much in every Surprise Package, ordering just one might enable you to give books to two or more pals.
- **Impress your friends with a gift worth \$80 or more** for a cost of only \$37 (plus shipping and handling).
- **Fill holes in your own collection** or get books and product you've been meaning to get or have been eyeballing longingly.

It's a **surprise package** because you never know exactly what you're going to get or who will sign your books. We try to include *many* of the items on your "wish list," but we may surprise you with stuff you are not expecting. Extra items may include other *RPG books, The Rifter®, posters, prints, art books, greeting cards, magnets, Rifts® calculator, Rifts® Sticky Note pads, back stock items,* and other items. Some items may be slightly damaged so we can send you more.

Spread the word. The Christmas Surprise Package is only being publicized by word of mouth, to readers of **The Rifter®** and on **Palladium's website** – www.palladiumbooks.com – so

tell your friends, buy one for *every gamer you know* and have a very Merry Christmas.

Multiple orders WILL result in some duplication.

The Cost

\$37.00 plus \$10.00 for shipping and handling in the USA; \$47 total.

\$37.00 plus \$30.00 estimated for shipping and handling to CANADA; \$67 total.

\$37.00 plus \$52.00 estimated for shipping and handling OVERSEAS; \$89 total. **Note:** Sorry, we are only passing along the increased postal rates of Priority Mail International (typically 4-10 days delivery). We always try to load up on orders going overseas, so you can expect at least \$90 worth of product with *autographs* and items you might not normally be able to get.

All North American orders are shipped U.S.P.S. Media Mail (the “slow” Book Rate), or UPS, or the way Palladium decides is best. Those ordering online can select the desired method of shipping, but will pay accordingly. We strongly suggest UPS because it is fast, reliable and can be tracked. Media Mail cannot be tracked, takes 2-4 weeks to arrive, and one-of-a-kind items like artwork or a gold edition can NOT be replaced if lost.

Credit card orders are welcomed. Visa and MasterCard are preferred, but we accept all. Order by mail, telephone or online.

No C.O.D. orders.

We must have YOUR *street address* (no P.O. Box) to ship via UPS.

Make sure you give us your entire, correct street address and APARTMENT NUMBER! Sorry, Palladium is NOT responsible for loss if you give us an *incorrect* or *incomplete address*, or if you *move*.

Note: Orders received by Palladium after December 14th can NOT be *guaranteed* to arrive *before Christmas*. Palladium makes no promise that foreign or military base orders will be received before December 25th regardless of when they are placed. Rare books and one-of-a-kind items, like art prints or gold editions, can NOT be replaced if lost in the mail.

Send Mail Orders to: Palladium Books – Dept. X – 39074

Webb Court – Westland, MI 48185-7606. Or e-mail using the ordering info on our web page at www.palladiumbooks.com – or call our order line at (734) 721-2903 to place an order by telephone using a credit card.

Ideas for “Special Wants”

To insure your X-Mas Surprise Package is everything you want it to be, send us a *wish list* of your “wants.” **The more items listed**, the more likely you are to get items you want. List them in order of preference (at least 8 items, but 10 or more is better). That way, you don’t know what you’re getting and we have a large selection to choose from, making it fun for you and easier on us. Thanks.

PLEASE do *not* ask for books you *know* are not yet available or out of print like *Tome Grottesque* or *Mechanoid Space*®.

Note: Santa Kev and his elves are NOT mind readers. If you do not give us a clear idea of your wants, you *may* be disappointed by what comes in your Surprise Package. You do NOT make our job easier when you say something like “I own everything, surprise me.” Provide a list of 8-12 books and other items!

- **Rifts® Ultimate Edition** and core books like **Rifts® G.M. Guide**, **Rifts® Book of Magic**, and **Rifts® Adventure Guide**. Note: The **Rifts® G.M. Guide** is currently available only as a damaged book (until it is reprinted next year).
- For **Rifts®: Dimensional Outbreak™**, **Heroes of the Megaverse®**, **Hades**, **Dyval™**, **Triax 2™**, **Shemarrian Nation™**, **Fleets of the Three Galaxies™**, **Tales of the Chi-Town ‘Burbs™** (short stories), **Rifts® Machinations of Doom™** (graphic novel and awesome sourcebook), **Rifts® & the Megaverse® – the Art of John Zeleznik** (soft cover art book or the \$50 hardcover, both color throughout), **the Zeleznik Coloring Book**, **Rifts® Sourcebook One Revised**, **Rifts® Vampire Kingdoms “Expanded”** (may not be available till November), **Three Galaxies™** (back in print), **Thundercloud Galaxy™** (not available till November), **Naruni Wave 2™**, **World Book 10: Juicer Uprising™**, **WB 11: Coalition War Campaign™**, **WB 12: Psyscape™**, **WB 14: Rifts® New West™**, **WB 15: Rifts® Spirit West™**, **WB 26: Rifts® Dinosaur Swamp™** and/or **WB 27: Rifts® Adventures in Dinosaur Swamp™**, **Rifts® Atlantis**, **Rifts® Australia**, **Rifts® South America**, **Rifts® Mercenaries**, **Rifts® MercTown™**, **Rifts® Merc Ops™**, **Rifts® Merc Adventures**, **Rifts® WB 28: Arzno™**, **Rifts® WB 29: Madhaven™**, **Rifts® WB 30: D-Bees™ of North America** (86 D-Bees!), **Rifts® Chaos Earth™ RPG** (and sourcebooks), etc.
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2010

The Crusaders & The Black Crusade

Short Stories and Optional Source Material for Rifts®

By Andrew Lander

The Crusaders

Crete paused, his tattooing needle hovering over the Undead Slayer's skin. He glanced up at her face; her eyes were closed in meditation. The tight line of her lips betrayed her, though. No amount of focus could ward off the intense pain of receiving such a powerful tattoo.

Crete focused again on the tattoo. He had finished the heart and all that remained was an intricate web of vines to cover and encircle it. He channeled his energy, the very essence of his being, down his arms, through his hands, and into the needle tip. He began again, laying down detailed green lines, curves, and swirls.

Suddenly, the door behind him burst open. "Crete, we found him!" screamed Arrelia.

Crete ignored his little sister and continued his complex weaving of magic.

"Did you hear me, Crete? We found him! We found Master Cho-Ye!"

"One moment please," Crete said softly. He increased his channeling of energy and concentration as the last green lines were laid down into the Slayer's flesh. When he was done, he set aside his needle and looked into the Slayer's face. She had not come out of her intense meditation, and sweat beaded her brow.

Arrelia, finally seeing her brother was in the middle of a ritual, kept her silence. However, she bounced her lithe six-foot frame up and down on her heels, impatiently waiting.

"Almost done," Crete whispered, more for Arrelia's benefit than the inwardly focused Slayer's. He laid her on her back, stood over her, and began softly chanting. This last part of the ritual wasn't strictly necessary. The tattoo was complete. However, tradition stated that Crete's short prayer would help the Slayer recover from the grueling ritual.

Finally, he finished and turned to Arrelia. "Come, let us not disturb her rest." Crete led Arrelia from the room. In the hallway he asked, "You found him? Where?"

"The Splugorth have him! In Atlantis!" blurted Arrelia. "He's a prisoner! We have to help him, Crete!"

"Calm down. How do you know this?"

"Valas told me. His friends in the Liberated Underground ..."

"Valas is here?!" Crete interrupted. "Take me to him."

* * *

"The Pyramid at Azlum is not nearly as large as Splynn's, but it still has many levels," stated Valas. "And we don't know where they might be holding Cho-Ye. We can't just 'port in, grab him, and 'port out. We'll have to search the whole thing."

In walked Ariel with an Atlantean in tow. "That will take too long," she announced. "Even a small pyramid has dozens of rooms. And the whole thing will be crawling with Powerlords,

High Lords, and Conservators. It would take an army and a whole lot of fighting to search the entire pyramid."

Crete gave Ariel a warm hug, "Well met. I see you've brought reinforcements."

Ariel smiled and indicated her companion. "Greigoran, of the Liberated Underground. May I introduce Master Crete, Slayer Valas, and Arrelia."

Greigoran raised his hands, wrists outward, their Marks of Heritage clearly visible, and intoned, "Never forget, never surrender."

Crete raised his left hand similarly and quickly stated, "Never surrender, never forget." He smiled. "But we don't stand on formalities here. Be at peace and join us."

They moved to Crete's dining room and sat around the small table. Arrelia brought a fresh decanter of water and began pouring for everyone.

"Greg's friend Sash," Ariel explained, "lives in Azlum and has many contacts in the city. He's the one who found Cho-Ye. Greg is a Drifter, and once briefly attuned himself to the Azlum Pyramid."

Greigoran took a glass of water from Arrelia. "Thank you, Arrelia." He addressed the others, "I am confident I can Rift us directly into the Azlum Pyramid. It has a very distinctive feel. However, I'm not familiar with its layout. I have no idea where they might keep a prisoner such as Cho-Ye."

Silence descended around the table, each person pondering their quandary. Suddenly, Arrelia brightened. "If we capture a High Lord in the pyramid, I can charm him with my new spell and force him to tell us where Cho-Ye is!" Arrelia grinned like a kid in a candy store.

"It's simple. It's effective. I think it will work," Greg said.

"But not a High Lord," Valas quickly stated. "Or a Conservator for that matter. They're best avoided if possible. Too dangerous. A mid-level officer, such as a Kydian or Powerlord. Or perhaps a Kittani."

The others nodded their approval. Crete didn't like it. "Arrelia, you don't have much combat experience. This is going to be extremely dangerous. We can find another who knows the Charm spell."

Arrelia was already shaking her head no. "There's not enough time. We don't know how old our information is and they could move Cho-Ye at any time."

"She's right," Valas agreed. "We must leave by the end of today. I don't see any other way." Valas waited, looking at Crete.

Crete frowned, then grudgingly nodded his assent.

"It's settled then," Valas concluded. "I'll speak to Lord Markum at the Slayer Academy and see if I can recruit a squad of Slayers. We'll meet on the Nordor Ley Line where it intersects Green Star Lake in an hour."

* * *

Green Star Lake's emerald waters glistened in the sunset. Crete looked around at his companions. Valas and Ariel stood talking with the dozen Undead Slayers he had brought from the Academy. In addition to their formidable magic tattoos, they wore partial suits of plate armor and carried a variety of Techno-

Wizard rifles, grenades, and other implements of war. Arrelia, by contrast, wore only light leather armor and carried a Firebolt pistol. It was only two years before that Crete had given her a seventh tattoo, permanently infusing her flesh with magical energy. She almost looked like she was out for a stroll.

Crete focused on Greg. The faint blue energy from the ley line swirled around him as he raised his hands in the air and recited arcane words of power. He had been performing his ritual for over half an hour. His chanting began to rise in volume and pitch, and his arms gesticulated in arcane arcs. "I think he's almost done," Crete said.

Valas gathered everyone around and spoke softly so as not to disturb Greg. "Remember, don't activate your defensive magic until you're inside the pyramid. Its ambient energy will bolster your tattoos and spells. However, be careful not to draw on the pyramid's reserves directly unless absolutely necessary. Their Stone Masters might sense it and we don't want to tip them off." Everyone nodded.

Greg's ritual reached a crescendo pitch and then, suddenly, a rectangular portal ten feet tall opened in front of him. Unlike a random Rift in space and time, his dimensional portal had distinct edges and straight lines. Greg smiled at his own skill.

Ariel jumped through the portal at the head of the other Undead Slayers. Valas, Arrelia, and Crete followed. They found themselves in a stone corridor with high ceilings. A soft orange glow radiated from the stone walls. No Splugorth minions were in sight. Crete could feel the magical forces throb through the floors and walls around him. They were somewhere inside the pyramid.

The Slayers began to activate their tattoos, covering themselves in protective blue auras. Arrelia began casting a spell. "Wait," Crete softly spoke. "Use this instead. It's more powerful." He touched his shining star in a circle tattoo and concentrated for a moment. Surrounded by the power of the pyramid, the magic came quickly and easily. Touching Arrelia, he channeled its magical force through his arm and into her. A bright flash of pure white light surrounded Arrelia and then she stood in a suit of silver and red cosmic armor. She nodded her thanks.

Greg stepped through the portal and it closed behind him. Crete activated his own tattoo of a heart encircled by a chain and a blue aura of protection surrounded his body. Greg began quickly casting his own defensive spell and was soon encased in a shimmering suit of translucent plate armor.

Valas picked a direction and pointed. Ariel led the group quickly down the corridor and into a large, domed circular chamber. Stone tables and shelves were lined with beakers, flasks, and strange potions. A ten-foot circular pit filled with glowing purple slime dominated the center of the room.

"Bio-Wizard lab," Arrelia breathed.

Valas nodded to the only exit from the chamber, large double doors to their left. They headed in that direction led by Ariel.

Suddenly, the doors burst open and a half dozen pink-skinned Kydian Powerlords in full armor walked in. Everyone froze, the giant Kydians as surprised as the Atlanteans. Valas leveled his Techno-Wizard force cannon and fired. The transparent bolt struck the nearest Powerlord in the head, splitting it with a terrific explosion. Then all hell broke loose. The Kydians leveled their magic staves and bolts of bright energy streamed into the Slayer ranks. The Slayers returned fire, their magical rifles spitting flames and lightning.

Crete raised his grenade launcher, but couldn't get a clear shot past the Slayers in front. Arrelia began casting a spell, as did Greg. Crete then spotted a skinny, bug-eyed High Lord in the doorway behind the Kydians. He took aim with his grenade launcher and fired. The grenade magically expanded into a net and streaked towards the High Lord, but he dodged back into the corridor beyond its reach.

A Slayer near Crete screamed in agony and fell to his knees, obviously affected by some spell. Valas summoned a flaming sword and charged into the Powerlords. Ariel and the other Slayers followed suit and rushed into close combat with magical swords, axes, and spears.

"They're resisting my magic," Arrelia said, exasperated.

"Keep trying," Crete encouraged. He loaded another grenade into the launcher as two Kittani in sleek power armor came through the doorway. He raised the weapon and fired. The magical net caught both, ensnaring and affixing them to the floor and left doorframe. Meanwhile, two Powerlords went down under the weight of the Slayers' magical weapons.

Crete heard chanting from the doorway. He felt magical energies gather as the High Lord prepared to cast a powerful spell. Quickly, he selected an explosive round to load into the launcher.

Arrelia's loud voice carried over the racket of combat, "The High Lords of Azlum have betrayed Lord Splynncryth. They must be destroyed at all costs!"

Crete looked back at Arrelia in confusion. She just grinned and winked. Crete looked back at the battle as one of the Powerlords broke ranks and ran back through the doorway. Just as the High Lord's spell was coming to completion, the Powerlord smashed his staff into the ugly creature's face, ruining the casting. The charmed Powerlord, fervently believing Arrelia's flimsy lie, repeatedly smashed his staff into the High Lord.

Another Slayer fell to the ground unconscious, but the Kydians were outnumbered and two more of their own fell to the Slayers' flaming blades. The Slayers quickly surrounded the remaining Powerlords, forcing them into a tight knot.

Crete motioned to Arrelia and they circled around the melee towards the door. They ignored the armored Kittani, who were trying to cut their way out of the magical net with their plasma axes. In the hall, the High Lord turned and ran away from the charmed Kydian.

"Stop him," Arrelia ordered her charmed minion.

Crete loaded another magic net cartridge into the launcher. But then, at the end of the hall, a magic portal opened on the left wall and out stepped Greg. He leveled his laser rifle at the ugly beast and fired a triple pulse, burning a section of the creature's chest plate. The High Lord stopped, caught between two foes. Before he could act, the Kydian slammed into his back and they went down in a heap.

"Keep a firm hand on him," Crete told Arrelia, indicating the charmed Powerlord. "Just because he likes you does not mean he likes the rest of us." Satisfied that Greg and Arrelia had the High Lord trapped, Crete turned back to the room and the Kittani.

The melee was over, the Kydians all slain, and three Slayers surrounded the Kittani with conjured blades of flame.

"Surrender, you Splugorth lackey," the lead Slayer commanded.

The Kittani had almost cut their way out of the net when Valas walked up to the group. "We don't have time for prisoners." He

shoved the emitter of his force cannon into the nearest Kittani's faceplate and fired. The Kittani lay still. The other armored trooper cut the last strands and tried to stand, but two Slayers, their strength enhanced by magic tattoos, grabbed his arms and pinned him down.

"The Splugorth don't deserve our mercy, in any case." Valas' frozen tone caused the younger Slayer to flinch. Valas landed his boot on the Kittani's chest to stop his squirming and then wriggled the end of his cannon up under his armored chin, pointing it right at his vulnerable neck armor.

Crete turned away as Valas pulled the trigger.

The room was suddenly quiet. The fighting in the hall had ended. Crete surveyed the lab. The Slayer who had gone down in agony earlier was getting up, the pain-inducing spell no longer in effect. Three others had minor wounds and were reactivating their blue protective auras. One lay motionless on the ground with Ariel looking over him. Crete approached them.

"He's still alive," Ariel exclaimed.

"Ariel, go help Arrelia question our new friend," Valas ordered. "Leave Korgan to Crete."

Ariel left for the hallway while Crete bent over the fallen Slayer. Upon examination, Crete agreed with Ariel's assessment. The Slayer was alive, but just barely. Crete touched his phoenix rising from the flames tattoo and channeled energy through it. He placed his hands on Korgan and felt warmth spread through the Slayer's body. The bloody wounds on his belly, chest and shoulder glowed with orange flames and magically closed. Korgan coughed once and opened his eyes. They smoldered with orange flames for a moment before dying out. He sat up and quickly regained his bearings.

"Thank you, Master," Korgan said.

Crete only nodded in acknowledgement, breathing hard. Using the powerful tattoo had drained much of his reserves, and by the time he had regained his composure they were ready to move out again.

* * *

They traveled down thin side passages, levitation tubes and other, less used routes to reach their destination on a higher level. The charmed Kydian successfully kept them away from search parties, but now he halted in the passageway just before it turned left.

"Two rune statues guard the entrance you seek. I cannot get you past them," the Kydian flatly stated in Dragonese.

Arrelia nodded in acknowledgement and then turned to the rest of them. "My magic is about to wear off."

Valas took command again, "Recast your Charm spell and tell him to stand guard here and watch our backs."

"I'll take a closer look at these statues," Crete said as Arrelia led the Kydian to the back of the party. Crete inched towards the corner slowly and activated his Eye of Mystic Knowledge tattoo. Slowly peering around the corner he saw an antechamber with huge, 20-foot tall double doors directly across from him. The doors, made out of rust-colored metal, were inscribed with dozens of runes and wards of protection. Flanking the doorway stood two dragon's head statues. The base of each consisted of a dragon's chest, and their snaking necks topped with giant dragon's heads rose over thirty feet to the ceiling. Crete's tattoo

revealed the intricate runes carved into the stone dragons' scales. He crept back to his companions silently.

"An antechamber, with large doors directly opposite," Crete reported. "The doors are strongly warded and two dragon's head rune statues flank them. The statues will come alive as soon as we enter and are indestructible. However, they are not mobile and cannot leave the room. And they can be restrained," Crete patted his launcher, "but they probably have an arsenal of spells they could still use."

"We'll take casualties getting past those," Ariel said.

"We need to get past or around them, and quickly," Valas stated.

Greg came forward. "Are the walls next to the doors warded as well?"

"No. The walls are featureless stone and the room appears empty."

"I can create a passage through the stone wall, getting us past the doors."

Valas lowered his head in thought for a moment. "The statues will still raise the alarm."

Greg spoke up again, "If Master Cho-Ye is in there, I can use the pyramid's energy to Rift us directly from the room before reinforcements arrive."

Valas was silent a moment longer. "OK, lets do it. Ariel and I will lead the Slayers to the left of the room and distract the statues. Greg, you create the passage to the right of the statues. As soon as it's open everyone piles through. Got it?"

The Slayers approached the corner while Arrelia came up behind Crete.

"You hear the plan?" Crete asked Arrelia.

"I heard. Our friend is guarding the last intersection. We won't have anyone come up behind us anytime soon."

The Slayers rushed around the corner into the room. Greg advanced just inside the doorway to the right and Crete and Arrelia stayed next to him. Runes at the base of the statues flashed bright red and the stone came to life. Greg began casting.

The Slayers fanned out to the left and began firing bolts of fire and lightning from their rifles. The energy harmlessly bounced off the statues' indestructible hides. The right statue opened its four-foot maw and roared. The stone floor and walls shook and Arrelia covered her ears. Greg managed to keep his concentration and continued his casting.

The left statue spit a gout of fire at the nearest Slayer. His blue aura flared, but held. Crete took aim at the right dragon's head and let loose a magic net. It snared the stone beast, pinning it to the wall behind.

Greg finished his casting and a circular tunnel opened in the wall to the right of the statues. Greg, Crete and Arrelia rushed forward. The left statue swiftly bent its neck and closed its jaws around a Slayer's torso. It lifted the Slayer twenty feet in the air and rattled its head back and forth. The Slayer's aura popped with a blue flash and dragon's teeth sank into her flesh.

Greg entered the tunnel. Crete pushed Arrelia in, but lingered at the entrance, reloading his launcher.

"Go!" Valas ordered. The remaining Slayers started for the tunnel while he activated his heart with wings tattoo and floated up into the air.

The ensnared right statue's eyes flashed blue and a film of blue ooze appeared under two Slayers. Their feet stuck to the ooze, immobilizing them. Across the room Valas activated his broken

chain tattoo and closed with the left statue's head, twenty feet up. Valas tried to grapple the beast's jaws but it swung back and forth, butting him with its snout while still gripping the Slayer.

Crete took careful aim at the free statue's long neck and fired another net. It partially snagged the neck and caught it against the wall behind without ensnaring the Slayer in its jaws. Several Slayers ran past Crete into the tunnel. The right statue's eyes flashed again and blue ooze conjured under a Slayer to Crete's left. She fell to one knee as her feet become glued to the floor.

Valas gripped the dragon's jaws and pulled with all his might. Enhanced by Tattoo Magic, his muscles rippled as they slowly forced the creature's teeth apart. The Slayer, unconscious, dropped to the floor in a heap.

Ariel reached Crete. "Go!" she yelled, pointing down the tunnel.

"But..." Crete looked at the Slayers trapped in the blue ooze.

Ariel grabbed him by the belt and flung him down the tunnel. "You want to get caught too?" she screamed. As she ran down the tunnel she picked Crete up and carried him into the next room. Crete, looking back through the tunnel, saw the glued Slayer give a defiant smile and heard him call out, "Don't worry, we'll guard your back."

Valas flew down the tunnel, carrying the unconscious Slayer in his arms. "Close it!" he ordered Greg. The tunnel twisted and folded back into a featureless stone wall.

Crete looked around at the new chamber for the first time. It was large, square, and empty except for one thing. At its exact center sat a dark-haired oriental man in black silk robes.

"It's Cho-Ye!" Arrelia yelled. His eyes were closed and he seemed oblivious to the world around him. "He's sitting in a magic circle of some kind," Arrelia commented.

Crete stepped over to the circle and examined it. His eyes, still enhanced by his tattoo, easily deciphered the circle's function. "It's designed to imprison him. It may also keep him unconscious."

"Can't we break it?" Arrelia pointed at the circle, which appeared to be drawn on the floor in dried blood.

"Yes, but I need to check and see if it's trapped first. I've never seen this type of circle before." Crete slowly started to examine the closest section, deciphering each mystic symbol, trying to understand their function.

Meanwhile, Ariel took the unconscious Slayer and used her own phoenix rising from the flames tattoo to revive him. Soon he was up and taking a quick inventory of his equipment. The others watched quietly as Crete slowly circled Cho-Ye and the magic inscriptions.

A grating sound issued from the rear wall and the stone shifted aside, revealing a secret passage. Four Conservators stepped out. Each was nine feet tall, with two legs, three eyes, four arms, and a stinger-tipped tail. Covered in thick organic carapace armor, they wielded the best magical weapons the Splugorth could provide. Then both the left and right walls folded and shifted, revealing magically created tunnels not unlike the one Greg conjured. Six Conservators casually stepped through each and fanned out.

"Krum!" Arrelia swore. "This is not good."

The Slayers raised their weapons, but the Conservators did not attack. Then, the huge metal doors to the antechamber swung open and in clattered a Conservator unlike any Crete had seen before. His four-armed torso was raised to twice the height of a man by six insect-like legs in place of its normal lower body.

Two of his arms held the unconscious bodies of two Slayers they had left in the antechamber. His other arms held a Rune Sword and magic staff.

"Sssurrender! Or thiss iss the fate that awaitsss you," the monster seethed, shaking the unconscious Slayers for emphasis.

Valas looked back at Greg, who nodded. He then looked at Crete and the still unresponsive Cho-Ye. Crete understood and nodded.

Crete handed his launcher and its bandoleer to Arrelia, and whispered, "Use this."

Valas raised his force cannon and blasted the Spider-Conservator in the chest. He barely flinched. Then all Hades broke loose. The Slayers let free a furious burst of fire while the Conservators charged into close combat. Greg stepped towards the center of the room, behind several Slayers, and began chanting.

Crete did not have much magical energy left. The time for stealth was ended. He drew upon the energy of the pyramid directly and channeled it into his three shining stars tattoo. He felt the cool, white glow of the tattoo suffuse his flesh. He raised his right hand and three tiny motes of bright starlight formed and then spiraled towards the nearest Conservator. He yelled in pain as the energy motes struck home, burning deep into his chest, straight through his carapace.

"Break the circle," Crete calmly told Arrelia.

"What?"

"Break the circle. Then help protect Greg."

Crete let loose another burst of star motes to arc towards a Conservator trying to reach around the Slayers to strike Greg. Valas, backpedaling to the center of the room, repeatedly fired his force cannon. Ariel had conjured a magic bow, and fired a flaming arrow at a Conservator. The shaft magically duplicated itself twice, all three arrows striking the creature's hard shell. The Conservators slammed into the Slayers, slashing, biting, clawing, pummeling, and pressing them into a tighter circle.

Arrelia hesitated only a second, then slid her boot over the circle, smearing the dried blood. There was no flash, no sound, but everyone felt the powerful circle's energy being harmlessly released. Everything stood still for a half second.

Cho-Ye rose and opened his eyes.

The Spider-Conservator screamed in a foul language and, dropping the unconscious Slayers, charged forward. Cho-Ye calmly slid back his voluminous right sleeve, revealing a tattoo of a swarm of Yil-Tree Climbers. He activated it, conjuring four of the predators, which immediately jumped onto the nearest Conservators, ripping and slashing with claws and tails.

Crete shifted next to Arrelia, protecting Greg's flank, and sent another spray of star motes into a Conservator. Two more of the monsters closed in and battered Crete's blue aura with blinding fast attacks. Arrelia fired the launcher, but the Conservator facing her jumped over the net with supernatural speed and slammed a Rune Axe into her cosmic armor.

The Spider-Conservator screamed in fury and tried to push his way towards Cho-Ye. But Valas, still empowered with his strength and flight tattoos, slammed into his chest, grabbed him by one arm, and fired his force cannon one-handed into his armored belly. The circle of Slayers around Greg tightened as the monsters pressed the attack.

Crete's protective aura began to wane under the fusillade of attacks. He glanced at Arrelia. She fared no better, brought to one knee by the Conservator pummeling her. Crete let loose yet

another burst of star motes into the most wounded Conservator, pounding him, and he dropped with a scream. But another stepped over his body to take his place.

Cho-Ye quickly surveyed the battle. Then, sliding up his left sleeve, he activated his black sphere tattoo. A globe of utter darkness the size of a fifty-gallon drum appeared next to him. He pointed towards the Spider-Conservator and the sphere flew in a circle, around Valas, and struck the monster in the back. The monster gurgled and convulsed once as the sphere emerged from the front of his chest. Then, his entire body dissolved into dust and fell to the floor in a heap.

Suddenly, the air rippled as the space in front of Greg tore open. Unlike his previous portal, this hastily created Rift was ragged, with strands of blue-white energy lashing at the floor and ceiling. He shoved the nearest Slayer over the threshold into the other dimension while Valas flew in to cover their escape.

In a flash of blue, Crete's aura gave out and a Conservator raked his forearm with his claws, drawing blood. He tried to draw energy from the pyramid to reactivate it, but found only a trickle left. The High Lords must have burned up its energy rather than let the Atlanteans use it for their escape. Arrelia, thrown bodily by her opponent, slammed into Crete and they both went down in a tangle. A Conservator smashed his Rune Mace into her chest and shattered her cosmic armor into a million shards. The Conservators poised to strike the vulnerable pair.

Suddenly, a gargantuan silver lion glowing with green energy bounded over Crete and Arrelia to strike down two Conservators, and a Yll-Tree Climber clambered onto a third's back, raking and slashing.

Cho-Ye stood over the pair of Atlanteans. "I see your expertise in power tattoos is complete, Master Crete," Cho-Ye calmly intoned. "However, might I recommend a more complete study of monster tattoos? A Tattoo Master's strength comes from wise use of all his talents." He pointed at the nearest Conservator and the black globe flew straight through his chest, leaving a cloud of dust behind.

Crete and Arrelia righted themselves. Valas was finishing off a Conservator while Cho-Ye's conjured minions occupied the other two remaining. Shouts came through the doorway, heralding reinforcements. Ariel grabbed Crete and Arrelia. "No time to sit on the job," she crowed and threw them through the Rift.

The Black Crusade

Tel-Deja slammed through the doors and into the hall. Stalking towards the exit, he finally let his face twist with the concealed rage that bubbled up inside. No one had said anything, but every officer in the briefing knew his assignment was a death sentence.

A collared Nog emerged from a side passage, casually buffing the spotless floor. Busy with his work, he didn't see the twisted look on Deja's face as he approached. Deja slammed the ugly creature up against the wall and kneed him hard in the stomach. The pitiful slave crumpled to the floor. Deja stared at him for a moment. But, conditioned since birth, the Nog kept his eyes on the floor and didn't say a word for fear of death ... or worse. Frustrated that he didn't have an excuse to slit the ugly creature's throat, Deja viciously kicked him once more and then strode outside.

The night was cool, but not cold. He took a deep breath and let it out slowly. All it did was chill his anger down to a dull

throb. He looked up at the black sky with its softly glowing green clouds. No matter how long he lived in this dimension, he'd never quite get used to its strange sky.

The doors to the command building opened and Tribune Garax and his cronies from the briefing walked out. Their soft conversation stopped when they saw Tel-Deja. They paused as Deja stared back, then turned and quietly walked toward the pyramid in the opposite direction.

Deja sighed. He wasn't going to get any help. They all considered him dead already. He turned away and walked slowly down the avenue, his anger slowly draining away.

"Hey!" a voice called behind him. He turned to see a tall, skinny officer run up. He recognized her from the back of the room, during the briefing. She had long, jet-black hair and green eyes. They positively shined under the soft evening glow. As she pulled up next to him he had to look up at her; she was tall, and he short, for an Aerihman Atlantean.

"I'm Aquilifer Murriat. I'm assigned to your unit for the central assault," she exclaimed with a smile. Deja noted the pins on her collar. She was both low ranking and inexperienced. Obviously, she hadn't caught on to the danger that awaited them both.

Deja just grunted, turned away, and continued walking.

A little confused, she fell in beside him. "It's a great honor to lead the central assault," she cautiously commented.

Deja kept silent and didn't even look at her as he slowly walked down the avenue.

"We might even have a chance to kill Lord Markum ourselves since we'll be in the compound before the other units."

Deja stopped and looked around cautiously. "Keep your voice down. You know we're to maintain security, even here." The street was empty except for a Slaver covered in black Sunaj armor leading a line of chained Ogres and Nogs.

Deja waited until they turned the corner, then spoke softly. "The central assault is a death trap." He looked right into her eyes without blinking. "We're both going to die tomorrow."

Murriat's eyes widened to round circles. "But the plan is sound. Garax's company Rifts in north of the compound while Huhdau's Rifts in south. They'll surround it while we Rift directly into the training yard. We'll catch them by surprise. None will escape."

"You're right," Deja explained. "None will escape. Not even us. Think about it. We're assaulting an Atlantean Undead Slayer academy - over two hundred students and fifty teachers. Even assuming there'll be no Mind Melters, how many will have pre-cognitive psionic powers? One in thirty? You ever seen a colony of pearlbugs when just one of them catches scent of a crimson puma? By the time we get through the Rift, half will already be armed. Plus, everyone will sense all three Rifts opening, but ours will be right on top of them. So, they'll deal with us first. We're just a distraction while Garax and Huhdau get into position."

Murriat looked at the ground, mulling it over for a few moments. "That's why you requested additional troops in the central assault," she said, thinking back to the briefing.

"You ever hear of one Sunaj Slayer and one Temporal Wizard leading a single platoon of Warrior Thralls on such a mission?" Deja added, "You must have crossed someone important to get this assignment."

"Huh?" Murriat questioned. Dazed by the sudden revelations, she didn't understand what he was getting at.

"I got Legate Brehgag's daughter pregnant." Deja said quietly. "Never mind that *she* decided to have a child before completing her training. Never mind that *she* specifically selected me for the honor. Never mind that it was all for the glory of the empire. It wasn't in the Legate's plans, so here I am."

They walked down the avenue in silence for several moments.

"What are we going to do?" Murriat finally asked, worried inexperience clouding her voice.

"Chaos," he announced. "We need chaos."

* * *

"I got them." Murriat strode through the barracks door and up to Deja. "I had to go all the way to Center to find just two. And I was only able to get three fuel canisters. They won't take normal E-Clips." Murriat handed one of the thick, stubby rifles to Deja.

"Yeah, this is the right kind," Deja commented. "Guess we'll have to make due with only two."

"What kind of weapon is it?"

"It's a plasma-thrower. Short range, good against concentrated troop positions. But most importantly, damn scary to be on the receiving end of." Deja handed the weapon to his First, a stocky Nog named Kurd, who immediately began field-stripping and cleaning it.

Deja looked down the line of Warrior Thralls. Human, Ogre, and Nog, they all wore half suits of slick, black armor. Most left their arms exposed to show their magic tattoos. They looked about at each other and the Aerihman, getting used to their new thermo-imaging goggles. The quartermaster had been suspiciously uncooperative, and Deja had had to spend some of his personal savings on the slaves' new goggles and gas masks.

Deja selected Norrem, a proven veteran, to wield the second plasma-thrower. Kurd started showing him its proper use.

"You bring everything you need?" Deja asked Murriat.

"Sure, standard field equipment." Murriat tapped the mobile pack on her back. In addition to the armored backpack, she wore flat black Scout armor and was crisscrossed with a web belt covered in Black Balls, Vibro-Blades, and amulets. She brandished a black light carbine, same as the slave soldiers, except hers looked like it had not yet been used.

"Guess we're as ready as we're going to be," Deja commented as he strapped his helmet and monstrous faceplate on. He was similarly armored, but armed instead with a long Black Lance. He gave the order, "MOVE OUT!" and they filed out of the barracks.

* * *

"That's a full three minutes earlier than we discussed in the briefing!" Deja retorted, his facemask distorting his voice.

"I have my orders!" the Shifter nearly yelled back. "All three Rifts have to be carefully coordinated. I won't delay yours without word from Garax. Now leave me be. I must concentrate to hone in on the beacon left by our infiltrator." The Shifter closed his eyes, ignoring Deja, and began composing himself for the complex ritual.

Seeing that the argument was lost, Deja strode back to Murriat and the Thrall platoon. They were in a smaller chamber of the pyramid, and Deja could feel its magical power thrumming

beneath his feet. Garax and Huhdau's companies were in larger chambers below.

"Everyone in position," he ordered. "We move in a couple of minutes."

Deja activated the battle computer on his right forearm, touched it to Murriat and channeled a trickle of magic energy into it. The blue dot on its electronic map representing her turned green, and he typed her name in above it.

"Now remember, as soon as you get through the Rift, fly straight up," he addressed her. "And don't drop your Shadow Meld, I'll find you."

"I don't see why I can't use my Invisibility spell instead," she said.

"There are many counters for magical invisibility, but few for blending with shadows. And it will be the dead of night, so hiding will be easier."

Murriat nodded her assent and took her position at the rear of the room. The Thralls formed into three groups; one each to the right and left and the third centered in a long line ready to run through the Rift in a rush. Deja took position at the front of the center line.

"Sir, are you sure you want to go through first?" Kurd asked.

"We can't afford for the lip of the Rift to get jammed up with dead bodies. Besides, I can't let you grunts do all the killing," Deja stated flatly.

Kurd seemed to take the comment as a compliment and saluted smartly, "Yes, Sir!"

Deja waited. When the Shifter's tone and gesticulations seemed to be reaching a crescendo, he called to his troops, "Activate defense!" Every Thrall reached for a tattoo and surrounded himself with either a transparent suit of conjured armor or a blue, glowing aura. Deja followed his own order by drawing power directly from the pyramid and activating his heart encircled by chains tattoo. A blue aura surrounded his body as well. He then quickly activated a battery of tattoos – black sun, chain with broken link, black skull in a circle, and black crescent dripping blood. He could hear Murriat softly chanting her own spells at the rear of the room. Lastly, he flipped a crystal attached to his left forearm forward and channeled energy into it. A translucent white energy shield floated before his left fist. He positioned his Black Lance over its lip, facing forward.

The Shifter shouted in climax and the floor vibrated with power as the Rift opened. Ten feet wide and twenty tall, blue white energy erupted from its center.

"Support, grenades!" Deja shouted. The Thralls to the right and left threw a fusillade of smoke, poison, and flash grenades through the Rift. Deja flipped his own thermal-imaging goggles on and charged forward, Kurd and Norrem right behind.

Tel-Deja emerged from a kaleidoscope of white light into a cloud of jet-black smoke. With his goggles he made out several warm bodies a short distance in front and also to the left. He rushed forward and a hail of fire, lightning, and magic flaming arrows met his advance. Most struck his shield, but some splattered against the blue aura.

Tall stone buildings and balconies surrounded the starlit courtyard he emerged into. Three tattoo-covered Atlanteans let loose a second burst of fire and arrows, but Deja just raised the shield and charged straight at them, activating the laser blade of his Black Lance. One, affected by the terror of his black skull in a circle tattoo, turned and ran back into a building. The second lost her head

to his Black Lance, his skilled swing turned fatal by the fortune of his black crescent dripping blood tattoo. The third, covered in a flaming aura, reached out his hands and a jet of flame launched towards Deja. Keeping his shield between them, Deja repeatedly stabbed at the Atlantean until he dropped to the ground in a bloody mess.

Deja paused. Screams and dull roars could be heard where Kurd, Norrem, and their men had circled the flanks of the Rift, burning and scorching as they went. Warrior Thralls still emerged from the smoke enshrouded Rift, spreading out to the right and left, blasting anything that moved.

"A good start," Deja commented.

A magic lightning bolt glanced off Deja's right shoulder. He turned and crouched as another struck and dissolved his weakened magic shield. An Atlantean on a balcony fired a third time, striking the crown of his head, but his magical aura absorbed it. Deja could tell by the lightning's lack of force and the Atlantean's lack of numerous tattoos that he faced a weak opponent. He took careful aim with his Black Lance and let loose a controlled burst of laser fire. The Atlantean fell back, wounded. Deja then armed a Black Ball and tossed it into the balcony to explode in a gory mess.

The last of the Thralls emerged from the Rift and it closed with a loud hiss-snap. He pointed to the nearest buildings. "Seek and destroy!" They jumped to obey.

Looking about to make sure no one paid him any heed, Deja stepped into the shadow of a nearby shed and accessed his black sun tattoo. His body dissolved into the shadow. Then, channeling energy into his mobile pack, he softly floated straight up into the night sky.

At one hundred feet up he turned in a circle, examining the compound from above. None had seen his escape from the battle. And, one with the darkness, unless a spotlight was pointed in his direction, none would find him anytime soon.

He then activated his battle computer. Its readout of red, green, and blue dots indicated that the Undead Slayers were rallying for a counterattack. Outnumbered five to one, the Warrior Thralls didn't have a chance. Tel-Deja dismissed them and found Murriat's indicator on the readout, six hundred feet above him. He turned his radio to the private frequency they had arranged earlier. "Murriat, you don't need to be so high up, drop to three hundred feet and hold position."

"I can't see you."

"I'm Shadow Melded, same as you. Don't bother looking. Just follow my orders. Our new mission is to find Lord Markum and take his head. If we present it to the elders, we'll be famous. If we're famous, Legate Brehgag can't send us on suicide missions without people asking a lot of questions. Got it?"

"Got it," she replied. "Holding at three hundred feet."

Deja then turned his radio to the command frequency so he could listen in on Garax and Huhdau. Only static came through. "Damn, they must have cut me out of the new encryption codes as well." He went back to his battle computer and flew a slow circuit of the compound. Its Techno-Wizard sensors gave him a clear picture of the Undead Slayers' movements. The last of the Warrior Thralls were dead or dying, and the Slayers appeared to be consolidating near the northeast wall. "Damn!" Deja breathed. He checked his map of the area on the battle computer to verify his fears.

"Murriat," he called on their private frequency. "Move to the northeast wall, where the Slayers are gathering."

"On my way. What's going on?"

"They've realized they're surrounded and are going to try to break through Garax's lines to the northeast. If they do, they'll have a straight shot to the Nordor ley line. If even one of them makes it to the line, he'll be able to phase all the way to Junction City and warn the rest of the Atlanteans on this planet. Our other attacks will lose the element of surprise. We have to stop them."

"And we have to kill Lord Markum," she reiterated.

"Right."

The Undead Slayers exited the compound and started to organize into a spear formation. Deja saw Murriat's heat signature through his goggles as she flew nearby.

"As the most powerful Warrior, Markum will be at the tip of the formation," Deja explained. "We'll pace them from above. Don't attack until I give the order. What's your best debilitating spell?"

"I can temporarily age someone via Time Warp," she replied.

"Be ready to cast it on Markum when I order." Deja took a moment to reactivate his heart encircled by a chain tattoo, re-energizing his defensive aura.

The Undead Slayers started northeast at a jog. Deja and Murriat flew overhead silently. In mere moments, energy blasts erupted from dark shapes ahead, cutting through the Slayers.

Deja checked his battle computer. There were only a thin line of Aerihsman Slayers and Thralls ahead, but more quickly flew in from the right and left to reinforce them.

"Garax is spread out too thin," Deja said. "Markum will break through. Let's get ahead fast so we can be waiting." As they increased their speed the Undead Slayers below charged into the Aerihsman forces with flaming blades. Markum slew two Thralls in short order and was about to break free of the battle when Garax and his bodyguards flew in at ground level and circled before him. Garax shouted an order and suddenly the battlefield filled with every kind of predator imaginable as the Aerihsman used their monster tattoos. In turn, Markum shouted an order and the Undead Slayers conjured their own gaggle of beasts. The field degenerated into a chaotic melee of teeth, claws and flaming blades.

Murriat flew back and forth in agitation. "I lost him. Which one is Markum?"

"He's furthest forward. The one skewering Garax's bodyguard with a spear."

Lord Markum pulled his flame-drenched spear from the belly of a dead Thrall and stepped over the body. Only Garax stood between him and open ground. Garax, wielding a sword of purple flame, called for help. But every Aerihsman, Undead Slayer, Thrall, and conjured monster was entwined in the bloody melee behind Markum.

Murriat began to gather her magical energies. "I'm going to cast now."

"Hold!" Deja ordered. "Let Markum finish the bastard."

Murriat stopped and waited while Deja softly landed in the shadow of a boulder behind Garax.

Markum conjured a large, flaming shield for his left hand and bore down on Garax with a flurry of spear thrusts. Garax parried left and right, but only his black armor saved him from grievous wounds. Garax counterattacked with a deft combination of over and under slices, but Markum blocked every one.

The duel continued for several moments. Both combatants spun, thrust, and slashed with incredible speed, but Garax couldn't penetrate Markum's powerful magical aura. Finally, with a quick feint, Markum slipped his spear tip past Garax's blade and through his damaged chest plate. Garax slumped to the ground in a motionless heap.

Tel-Deja whispered into the radio, "Now," and reactivated his forearm energy shield. As Markum pulled his spear free, Deja slipped from the shadow, activated the Black Lance's laser blade, and crept up behind the veteran Undead Slayer. Deja thrust. But Markum, somehow sensing the attack, turned and parried. Deja sidestepped into another shadow and tried to circle his quarry.

Markum touched his blazing sun tattoo and a globe of pure daylight flared up above him, revealing Deja. In turn, Deja called again on his black sun tattoo and shrouded himself in a small cloud of darkness, concealing the positioning of his lance and shield. They circled slowly in the ring of daylight.

Suddenly, Markum's arms drooped under the weight of his weapons. His hair turned a thin gray and his skin wrinkled like dry paper. He looked about for the source of the magical attack. Deja leaped forward and thrust downward with his lance. Still enhanced by his black crescent tattoo, Deja's sure strike slammed into Markum's blue defensive aura. Weakened in the battle, the aura burst with a loud pop, leaving the Undead Slayer vulnerable.

Undeterred by his sudden weakness, Markum counterattacked with a combination of thrusts and arcing chops. Deja parried and blocked, but his own defensive aura took a pounding. The two spun in a circle, trading blows and seeking advantage.

Deja was aware of energy blasts raining down on the field and caught a glance of Huhdau's troops flying above the fray. Determined to take Markum before someone blasted him, Deja redoubled his attacks. A lightning combination of beat, feint, high thrust, low thrust left Markum with a wicked wound in his thigh. Under the effects of the spell, the Undead Slayer's reflexes could not keep up and Deja pressed the attack. Markum took another slash to the shoulder before Deja dodged left then right to outmaneuver the hobbled veteran. Deja finished with a feint, then reversing his weapon to strike Markum's good leg with the lance's butt, and then reversing again to stab the laser blade down into his chest.

Markum lay still. Deja looked about. The battle was over. Many of Garax's troops lie dead, but the Undead Slayers had quickly succumbed to Huhdau's aerial assault.

Game Information

New Race

Nogs

Nogs are a race of sub-humans discovered by the Aeriehman True Atlantean clan. Native to a savage, primitive world barely beyond its Stone Age, the Nogs were easily conquered. At first the Aeriehman planned to gather up all the Nogs they could find, sell the majority to the Splugorth and perhaps keep a small number for their own slave stock. However, the Aeriehman soon discovered that Nogs could accept magic tattoos. This surprised the Aeriehman because they originally thought the Nogs were an off-



shoot of Goblins or Orcs, rather than humans. Now the Nogs have become one of the most numerous of clan Aeriehman's slave races and are not shared with the Splugorth or anyone else.

The Aeriehman have found the Nogs to be excellent slaves for several reasons. First, they are easily awed by either magic or technology. Due to their generally low intelligence, even Nogs that grow up in cities naturally fear and respect the Aeriehman's use of magic and technology. Second, they are surprisingly good workers. They have great endurance and work with great focus once assigned a task. They also don't seem to get bored doing a single task repeatedly, day after day, until they die of old age. Lastly, while they have depressingly short life spans, they do breed quite fast. Nog females usually have twins, triplets or quintuplets.

Physically, Nogs resemble Orcs more than humans. They have large hands and feet, thick fingernails and toenails, pronounced jaws and chins, large canine teeth (especially the lower pair, which sometimes stick out of their mouths like small tusks), sunken eyes, and pointed ears. They are slightly shorter than humans, on average, but tend to be more muscular and stocky. (To see the illustration that was the inspiration for the Nog, see *Rifts® Book of Magic*, page 1, lower left figure.)

Alignment: Any, but lean towards selfish.

Attributes: I.Q. 2D6, M.E. 2D6+4, M.A. 2D6, P.S. 3D6+2, P.P. 3D6, P.E. 3D6+4, P.B. 2D6, Spd 3D6.

Average Size: Five feet (1.5 m) plus 1D6 inches tall.

Weight: 140 to 220 pounds (63 to 99 kg).

Hit Points: P.E. +1D6 per level of experience.

S.D.C.: 40, plus those gained from O.C.C. and Physical skills.

Horror Factor: Not applicable.

P.P.E.: 3D6 base.

Disposition: Despite being 'civilized' by the Aerihsman, Nogs still are a backward and barbaric lot. Things like hygiene, cleanliness, and manners seem alien to them, and foul language, speaking their mind, and selfish behavior in general come naturally. However, they do perform assigned tasks with a single-minded stubbornness and take well to military discipline.

Average Life Span: 2D6+36 years. Physical maturity is attained by age 12. Females give birth to 1D4 young after a seven month pregnancy, and can bear children till the age of 35.

Natural Abilities: Basically same as a human except has Night-vision 90 feet (27.4 m; can see in total darkness) and good overall vision and hearing.

Skills of Note: Speak Gobblely at 98%. Most slaves of the Aerihsman learn Dragonese as well at 85%.

Available O.C.C.s: Nogs can select any O.C.C. that a human can select, including 'Borgs, Juicers, and Crazies. The exception is psionic O.C.C.s. Nogs do not possess *any* psionic potential. They must still meet the O.C.C.'s attribute requirements. Most civilian Nogs are equivalent to Vagabonds or simple unskilled laborers. Some learn to be Wilderness Scouts. Many among the Aerihsman become Warrior Thralls.

Experience Level: 1D4 or as set by the Game Master for NPCs. Most Nogs are unskilled and have few opportunities to better themselves. Player characters should start at first level. Use the experience table of the chosen O.C.C. to determine level of advancement.

Attacks per Melee: As per Hand to Hand Combat skill.

Damage: As per P.S. or weapon.

Bonuses: No racial bonuses beyond any high attributes.

Vulnerabilities: None, other than potentially being born a slave and having an inhuman appearance.

Psionics: None. Psionics are also feared and respected by Nogs.

Magic: By O.C.C. only. Few Nogs learn magic, except Warrior Thralls given magic tattoos by the Aerihsman.

Standard Equipment: As per chosen O.C.C.

Money: As per chosen O.C.C.

Bionics & Cybernetics: As per O.C.C. Nogs associated with the Aerihsman rarely have access to bionics or cybernetics.

Habitat: Nogs can adapt well to any environment that humans can live in, and indeed are a little more hardy and used to "roughing" it.

Slave Market Value: 2D6x1000 credits for a healthy Nog laborer. If it's discovered outside of the Aerihsman Clan that they can accept magic tattoos, a breeding pair may fetch several million credits. Among the Aerihsman, Nog Warrior Thralls sell for 2D6x100,000 credits.

Alliances and Allies: As part of the Aerihsman Empire, they work with whomever they're told to. As slaves, their lives are generally less onerous than Splugorth thralls, since many Aerihsman

give individual Nogs a small measure of respect or praise for a job well done (a calculated ploy to ensure loyalty).

Rivals and Enemies: None, other than the enemies of their masters. The vast majority of Nogs accept their place as vassals to the Aerihsman and are easily impressed by other powerful races as well. Individual Nogs, especially those who become well traveled, may eventually see the Aerihsman for who they are; monsters every bit as evil as the Splugorth.

Occupational Character Classes

Atlantean Dilettante

True Atlanteans are known for their varied pursuits of magic, psionics, tattoos, and other skills. The Atlantean Dilettante is a dabbler in many such pursuits, but a master of none. Some Dilettantes study under a host of Atlantean elders. Others pick up such diverse abilities while traveling the Megaverse. Roughly 2% of Atlanteans are Dilettantes. However, they are slightly more common among the more nomadic clans.

Arrelia, in the first story above, is an example of an Atlantean Dilettante.

Atlantean Characteristics as They Apply to the Dilettante:

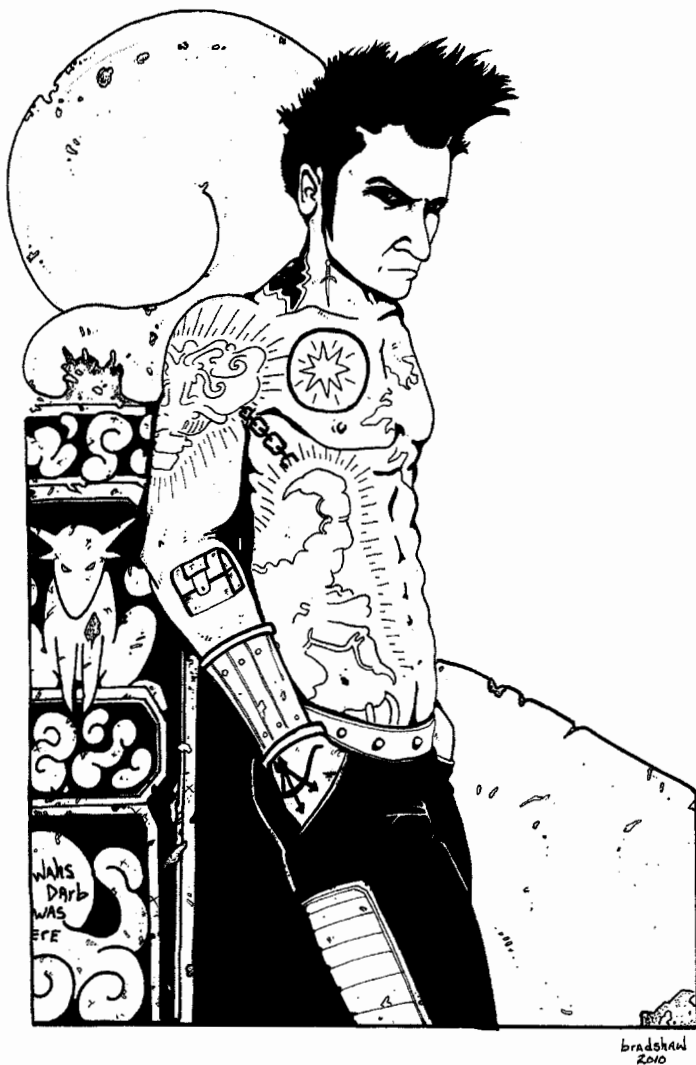
1. Magic Tattoos Denote Heritage: Each True Atlantean has a tattoo of a heart impaled by a wooden stake (no blood) on the right wrist for protection from their eternal enemy, the vampire, and a flaming sword tattoo on the left wrist to create a magic M.D.C. weapon. The tattoo is placed on an Atlantean child at age five or six. The clan crest may be part of the sword's hilt. These "Marks of Heritage" are magic tattoos and can be activated at will; the standard tattoo rules apply. The Marks are just two of the four to twelve tattoos that cover their body. **Note:** Clan Aerihsman Atlanteans less than fifty years old will have the skull with glowing eyes tattoo (charisma) in place of the heart impaled by a wooden stake.

2. Increased P.P.E. from Magic Tattoos: Base P.P.E. is 1D6x10+20 for all Atlantean Dilettantes, both males and females. Add 10 P.P.E. points for each level of experience and six P.P.E. points for each tattoo. The typical first level Dilettante will start with approximately 64 to 114 P.P.E. Remember, the character can also draw energy from ley lines and nexus points.

3. Increased P.P.E. Recovery: The Dilettante's P.P.E. replenishes itself at the rate of 10 points for every hour of rest or sleep, twice as fast as normal humans.

4. Increased S.D.C. from Magic Tattoos: Each tattoo provides the Dilettante an additional 10 physical S.D.C. points. **Note:** One to six tattoos do not change the physical structure of an ordinary human into a Mega-Damage being like the Undead Slayer.

5. M.D.C. Transformation: Atlantean Dilettantes can get more than six magic tattoos without losing their abilities or changing their class. When the Dilettante gets her seventh tattoo she turns into a minor Mega-Damage being with a base M.D.C. equal to her P.E. attribute. Each tattoo beyond six instills the male



Dilettante with 10 M.D.C. points and the female with 11 M.D.C. points.

6. Cannot Be Physically Transformed by Any Means: Including, but not limited to, Metamorphosis potions and spells, the Transformation ritual, vampire transformation, Petrification, Turn to Mist, Growth or reduction/shrinking by spells, potions, or any other form of magic or supernatural transformation spell, curse, wish, or enchantment.

7. Continue to Grow as Adults: After reaching adulthood at about age 25, True Atlanteans grow about an inch (2.5 cm) every century or so, which gives them an average height of six feet, six inches to about seven feet (1.98 to 2.1 meters).

8. Sense Vampires: Can sense the presence of vampires and Vampire Intelligences within a 1,000 foot radius (305 m), but cannot pinpoint the exact source/person responsible for the sensation. Recognizes vampires by visual identification/appearance: 10% per level of experience.

9. Operate Dimensional Pyramids: All Atlanteans are seasoned dimensional travelers who know how to operate the pyramids created by the Stone Masters for the purpose of communication and dimensional teleportation. Base skill is 30% +5% per level of experience. Note that the average Dilettante does not know exactly how Stone Magic works or how to build pyramids.

10. Sense Ley Lines: Same as the Line Walker.

11. Sense Rifts: Same as the Line Walker.

12. Ley Line Phasing: Same as the Line Walker.

13. Other Bonuses: +2 to save vs magic of all kinds (in addition to P.E. bonuses), +4 to save vs Horror Factor.

Special Powers of the Atlantean Dilettante:

1. Initial Spell Knowledge: The Atlantean Dilettante has a passable knowledge of spell magic. At level one experience, players may select any three spells from each common magic level from 1-3, for a total of 9 spells. The Dilettante tends to avoid ritual magic, but can learn and perform rituals at a later date if so needed.

2. Magic Tattoos: The typical first level Atlantean Dilettante will start with four tattoos. Including:

- Flaming Sword (M.D. weapon).
- Power: Protection from Vampires (heart impaled by stake).
- One Simple Weapon or Animal tattoo of choice.
- One Magic Weapon or Monster tattoo of choice.

3. Learning Additional Magic: At each new level of experience the Atlantean Dilettante can either learn one new spell or acquire one new magic tattoo (her choice).

If she chooses to learn a new spell its magic level must be equal to or lower than her new level of experience. Learning a new spell may come from her own experimentation or be taught by another. The Dilettante may also purchase or be taught additional spells and rituals of any magic level at any time just as a Ley Line Walker (see *The Pursuit of Magic, Rifts® Ultimate Edition*, page 190). However, it takes the Dilettante twice as long to learn a spell or ritual, so many teachers may get frustrated with the Dilettante's slow progress and require additional compensation or services. The Dilettante can learn a spell by translating a scroll (*Rifts® Ultimate Edition*, page 191), but is -5% to do so.

If she chooses to acquire a magic tattoo, the Dilettante seeks out an Atlantean Tattoo Master. At levels 2-4 the Dilettante can only select a Simple Weapon or Animal tattoo. At levels 5-7 she may select a Simple Weapon, Animal, Magic Weapon, or Monster tattoo. At eighth level or higher, she may select a tattoo from any category. Note that getting a new tattoo may require traveling to a different dimension, so the character may have to disappear for a few days from time to time. It is possible that circumstances will not allow the character to get the tattoo immediately after attaining the appropriate level of experience. The most tattoos the Dilettante can get at any time is two. There must be at least six months between the acquisition of another pair of tattoos.

4. Expanded Spell Knowledge: Starting at level three, the Atlantean Dilettante can choose to learn a specialist spell rather than a more common spell invocation. If she wishes, at third level and every third level after (6th, 9th, etc.) she chooses a specialist category of spells that she may select from. Thereafter, she may select to learn a spell from that category rather than a common spell. The specialist spell must still be equal to or lower than the Dilettante's level. After selecting a category, she may also purchase or be taught a spell from the selected category as described above. Available categories include: Biomancy, Blue Flame Magic, Elemental Magic (each element counts as a separate category selection), Living Fire Magic, Nature Magic, Necromancy, Ocean Magic, Shamanistic Magic (all categories count as one selection, but Paradox spells cannot be learned), Spoiling Magic, and Temporal Magic. The Game Master may allow other specialized categories of spells to be learned, but cannot include rituals and the spells must have defined levels.

5. Psionic Powers: The Atlantean Dilettante starts as a Minor Psychic. She chooses one psionic category from *Healing*, *Physical*, or *Sensitive*. This is considered her favored category and she starts with two powers of choice from this category. Base I.S.P. equals M.E. +2D6. At each level of experience, add +1D6 I.S.P.

Any time the Dilettante gets to choose an O.C.C. Related Skill (including at first level), she may *instead* choose a psionic power from the *Healing*, *Physical*, or *Sensitive* category. Every time she trades an O.C.C. Related Skill for a psionic power she adds +2 to her I.S.P. base. Any time the Dilettante gets to choose a Secondary Skill (including at first level), she may *instead* choose a psionic power from her *favored* category. Every time she trades a Secondary Skill for a psionic power she adds +1 to her I.S.P. base.

If the Dilettante acquires six or more psionic powers, she is then considered a Major Psychic. However, she will never attain the level of Master Psionic, no matter how many psionic powers she learns.

Alignment: Any, but most True Atlanteans are good or selfish.

Attribute Requirements: I.Q. 10, M.E. 10, P.E. 10 or higher.

Racial Requirements: True Atlanteans only.

O.C.C. Skills:

Language & Literacy: Dragonese/Elf, American, and Greek at 98%.

Language: Speaks two additional languages of choice (+10%).

Basic Math (+20%)

Lore: Magic (+10%)

Lore: One of choice (+10%).

Physical: One of choice.

Pilot: One of choice (+10%).

Two of choice from Communications, Science, or Technical (+10%).

W.P.: Two of choice.

Hand to Hand: Basic; can be changed to Expert at the cost of one O.C.C. Related Skill, or Martial Arts (or Assassin if an evil alignment) at the cost of two.

O.C.C. Related Skills: Select 10 other skills. Plus select two additional skills at levels three, six, nine, twelve, and fifteen. Alternately, the Dilettante may select psionic powers instead (see above). All new skills start at level one proficiency.

Communications: Any (+5%).

Cowboy: Any.

Domestic: Any (+10%).

Electrical: Any (+5% to Basic Electronics).

Espionage: Any.

Horseanship: General, Equestrian, and Exotic Animals only.

Mechanical: Any (+5% to Automotive Mechanics).

Medical: Any, except Medical Doctor and M.D. of Cybernetics.

Military: Any.

Physical: Any, except Wrestling, Gymnastics, and Acrobatics.

Pilot: Any, except Robots and Power Armor (+5%).

Pilot Related: Any (+5%).

Rogue: Any.

Science: Any.

Technical: Any (+5%).

W.P.: Any.

Wilderness: Any.

Secondary Skills: The character also gets to select eight Secondary Skills from the Secondary Skills List found on page 300 of *Rifts® Ultimate Edition*. Select two additional Secondary Skills at levels four, eight, twelve, and fifteen. Alternately, the Dilettante may select psionic powers instead (see above). These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get any bonuses, other than any possible bonus for having a high I.Q. All Secondary Skills start at the base skill level.

Standard Equipment: Portable compact disc recorder/player and headphones, portable language translator, notebook, sketch pad or blank paper, a dozen pencils and markers, normal binoculars, set of traveling and a set of dress clothes, survival knife, a cross of some kind, knapsack, backpack, extra pack or sack of books and/or discs, a long-range radio, and personal items. Any electronics may be powered by TW batteries rather than conventional (requires 2 P.P.E. or less to recharge).

Starts with one weapon appropriate for each W.P. and four E-Clips/magazines for each (or other ammo, if appropriate). Body armor can be of any type, but lean toward light.

The vehicle can be any non-military type of ground vehicle the Atlantean Dilettante is skilled to use. Often a hover cycle or truck, robot horse, or other vehicle for traveling over rough terrain.

Money: 3D6x1000 in precious gems or artifacts.

Cybernetics: None. If cybernetics are required at a later date, the character will strive to get Bio-Systems, because mechanical bionics will reduce the potency of his magic. Even a single mechanical arm or leg will reduce the effect, range, damage, and duration of the magic by 25%.

Experience: Use the same experience table as the Tattooed Med.

Atlantean Tattoo Master

In True Atlantean society, Tattoo Masters are healers, scholars, and providers of the magical tattoos True Atlanteans are famous for. Although most Tattoo Masters do not seek conflict and adventure as much as Undead Slayers or other Atlanteans, they are inter-dimensional explorers seeking new knowledge and forgotten lore. Many Tattoo Masters are compassionate doctors who combine magical healing with conventional medicine. Others are intellectuals of renown and keepers of lost lore. All are respected for their ability to grant magic tattoos to deserving Atlanteans. Fewer than 1% of all True Atlanteans are Tattoo Masters.

Master Crete, in the first story above, is an example of an Atlantean Tattoo Master.

Atlantean Characteristics as They Apply to Tattoo Masters:

1. Magic Tattoos Denote Heritage: Each True Atlantean has a tattoo of a heart impaled by a wooden stake (no blood) on the right wrist for protection from their eternal enemy, the vampire, and a flaming sword tattoo on the left wrist to create a magic M.D.C. weapon. The tattoo is placed on an Atlantean child at age five or six. The clan crest may be part of the sword's hilt. These "Marks of Heritage" are magic tattoos and can be activated at will; the standard tattoo rules apply. The Marks are just two of the 10 to 28 tattoos that cover their body. **Note:** Clan Aerihman Atlanteans less than fifty years old will have the skull with



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glowing eyes tattoo (charisma) in place of the heart impaled by a wooden stake.

2. Increased P.P.E. from Magic Tattoos: Base P.P.E. is 2D4x10+40 for all Tattoo Masters, males and females. Add 12 P.P.E. points for each level of experience and six P.P.E. points for each tattoo. The typical first level Tattoo Master will start with approximately 132 to 192 P.P.E. Remember, the character can also draw energy from ley lines and nexus points.

3. Increased P.P.E. Recovery: The Tattoo Master's P.P.E. replenishes itself at the rate of 20 points for every hour of rest or sleep, four times as fast as normal humans!

4. M.D.C. Transformation: Tattoo Masters have a base M.D.C. of 1D6x10 plus each additional tattoo beyond six instills the male Tattoo Masters with 11 M.D.C. points and females with 13 M.D.C. points.

5. Cannot Be Physically Transformed by Any Means: Including, but not limited to, metamorphosis potions and spells, the Transformation ritual, vampire transformation, Petrification, Turn to Mist, Growth or reduction/shrinking by spells, potions, or any other form of magic or supernatural transformation spell, curse, wish, or enchantment.

6. Continue to Grow as Adults: After reaching adulthood at about age 25, True Atlanteans grow about an inch (2.5 cm) every century or so, which gives them an average height of six feet, six inches to about seven feet (1.95 to 2.1 meters).

7. Sense Vampires: Can sense the presence of vampires and Vampire Intelligences within a 1,000 foot radius (305 m), but cannot pinpoint exact source/person responsible for the sensation. Recognizes vampires by visual identification/appearance: 12% per level of experience.

8. Operate Dimensional Pyramids: All Atlanteans are seasoned dimensional travelers who know how to operate the pyramids created by the Stone Masters for the purpose of communication and dimensional teleportation. Base skill is 40% +5% per level of experience. Note that the average Tattoo Master does not know exactly how Stone Magic works or how to build pyramids.

9. Sense Ley Lines: Same as the Line Walker.

10. Sense Rifts: Same as the Line Walker.

11. Ley Line Phasing: Same as the Line Walker.

12. Other Bonuses: +4 to save vs magic of all kinds (in addition to P.E. bonuses), +6 to save vs Horror Factor.

Special Powers of the Tattoo Master:

1. Reduced Tattoo P.P.E. Cost: Starting at 1st level, the Tattoo Master reduces the P.P.E. cost to activate certain of his tattoos by half (round up). At 1st level the cost of all simple weapon tattoos is halved. At 3rd level halve the cost of animal tattoos. Halve the cost of magic weapon tattoos at 5th level, monster tattoos at 7th level, and power tattoos at 9th level. At the G.M.'s discretion, the Tattoo Master may halve the cost of other categories of tattoos that he acquires at 11th level or later.

2. Pass Tattoo Power: At 4th level the Tattoo Master can pass the benefit of his tattoos to others. When activating one of his tattoos, he can choose to have it affect another intelligent creature he touches just as if the creature had possession of the tattoo and activated it. The creature need not have magic tattoos itself, or even be eligible to receive magic tattoos. The creature has complete control over the powers that the activated tattoo provides (controls the animal/monster, wields the weapon, controls the power, etc.), with one exception. Only the Tattoo Master that granted the powers can deactivate the tattoo prior to its duration ending. He can do so at any time, over any distance. The active tattoo counts against the Tattoo Master's six maximum tattoos active at one time.

3. Create Conventional Tattoo: The Tattoo Master is a skilled tattoo artist who not only can create magic tattoos (see below) but also traditional tattoo artwork. Essentially, this is a specialization of the *Art* skill. Virtually all Atlantean Tattoo Masters take pride in their tattoo artistry and only the legendary Chiang-Ku dragons rival their artistic skill. Tattoos drawn by an Atlantean Tattoo Master (or a Chiang-Ku for that matter) tend to have a higher level of detail, artistry, and realism when compared to most Splugorth tattoos. Many Tattoo Masters develop

a distinctive style that can be recognized. **Base Skill:** 35% +5% per level of experience. The Atlantean Tattoo Master receives an additional +15% O.C.C. bonus on this skill.

4. Create Magic Tattoo: The Tattoo Master can create magic tattoos on True Atlanteans, humans, Ogres, Elves, and Chiang-Ku, including on themselves. The Tattoo Master has knowledge of all magic tattoos listed in *Rifts® Book of Magic* and any other tattoos that the G.M. rules he would be trained in. Drawing a magic tattoo is considered a ritual, taking approximately an hour. During the process, the Tattoo Master must expend P.P.E. equal to twice the magic tattoo's P.P.E. cost (or 50 P.P.E. if the tattoo has no P.P.E. cost, such as the *Runic Pattern* tattoo).

The Tattoo Master may learn new types of magic tattoos from other Tattoo Masters, much like a spell caster can learn new spells from other spell casters. However, most new types of magic tattoos are closely guarded secrets since they take years and much experimentation to develop.

Note that level limits and/or time restrictions may apply to when a particular creature can receive magic tattoos. Generally, those with six or fewer tattoos can receive another tattoo as soon as they recover from the last. Those with seven or more tattoos can only receive two tattoos every six months, and are restricted by level limits. The Tattoo Master can sense how long a recipient must wait before receiving another tattoo by touch.

5. Magic Tattoos: The typical first level Tattoo Master will start with 10 tattoos. Including:

- Flaming Sword (M.D. weapon).
- Power: Protection from Vampires (heart impaled by stake).
- Power: Knowledge & Reading (eye with lines).
- Power: Mystic Knowledge (eye with circle and lines).
- Power: Healing Basic (rose).
- Power: Healing Super (phoenix).
- One Simple Weapon of choice.
- Once Magic Weapon of choice.
- Two of choice from any category.

The Tattoo Master gives himself one additional Simple Weapon, Magic Weapon, Animal, or Monster tattoo at every level of experience starting at 2nd level. He gives himself one additional Power tattoo (or other advanced category he has knowledge in, if the G.M. allows) every other level of experience starting at 3rd level.

Alignment: Any, but most True Atlanteans are good or selfish.

Attribute Requirements: I.Q. 14, M.E. 14, M.A. 12 or higher. A high P.E. is also suggested but not mandatory.

Racial Requirements: True Atlanteans only.

O.C.C. Skills:

Language & Literacy: Dragonese/Elf, American, and Greek at 98%.

Language & Literacy: Two additional of choice (+20%).

Language: Speaks two additional languages of choice (+20%).

Basic Math (+20%)

Lore: Magic (+25%)

Lore: Two others of choice (+25%).

Paramedic or Holistic Medicine (+15%)

W.P.: Two of choice.

Hand to Hand: Basic; can be changed to Expert at the cost of one O.C.C. Related Skill, or Martial Arts (or Assassin if an evil alignment) at the cost of two.

O.C.C. Related Skills: Select 14 other skills, but at least four must be selected from Technical and two from Science or Medical. Plus select two additional skills at levels three, six, nine, twelve, and fifteen. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

Communications: Any (+5%).

Cowboy: Lore skills only (+15%).

Domestic: Any (+10%).

Electrical: Any (+5% to Basic Electronics).

Espionage: Any.

Horsemanship: General, Equestrian, and Exotic Animals only.

Mechanical: Any (+5% to Automotive Mechanics).

Medical: Any, including M.D. and M.D. of Cybernetics (must still meet prerequisites, +10% to all).

Military: Any.

Physical: Any, except Wrestling, Gymnastics, and Acrobatics.

Pilot: Any (+5%).

Pilot Related: Any (+10%).

Rogue: Any.

Science: Any (+10%).

Technical: Any (+20%).

W.P.: Any.

Wilderness: Any (+5%).

Secondary Skills: The character also gets to select eight Secondary Skills from the Secondary Skills List found on page 300 of *Rifts® Ultimate Edition*, and one additional at levels 4, 8 and 12. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get any bonuses, other than any possible bonus for having a high I.Q. All Secondary Skills start at the base skill level.

Standard Equipment: Portable compact disc recorder/player and headphones, portable language translator, notebook, sketch pad or blank paper, a dozen pencils and markers, old-fashion dip pen and ink, magnifying glass, normal binoculars, set of traveling and a set of dress clothes, survival knife, a cross of some kind, knapsack, backpack, carrying case for artifacts, extra pack or sack of books and/or discs, a long-range radio, a tattooing kit (for creating conventional and magic tattoos) and personal items. Any electronics may be powered by TW batteries rather than conventional (requires 2 P.P.E. or less to recharge).

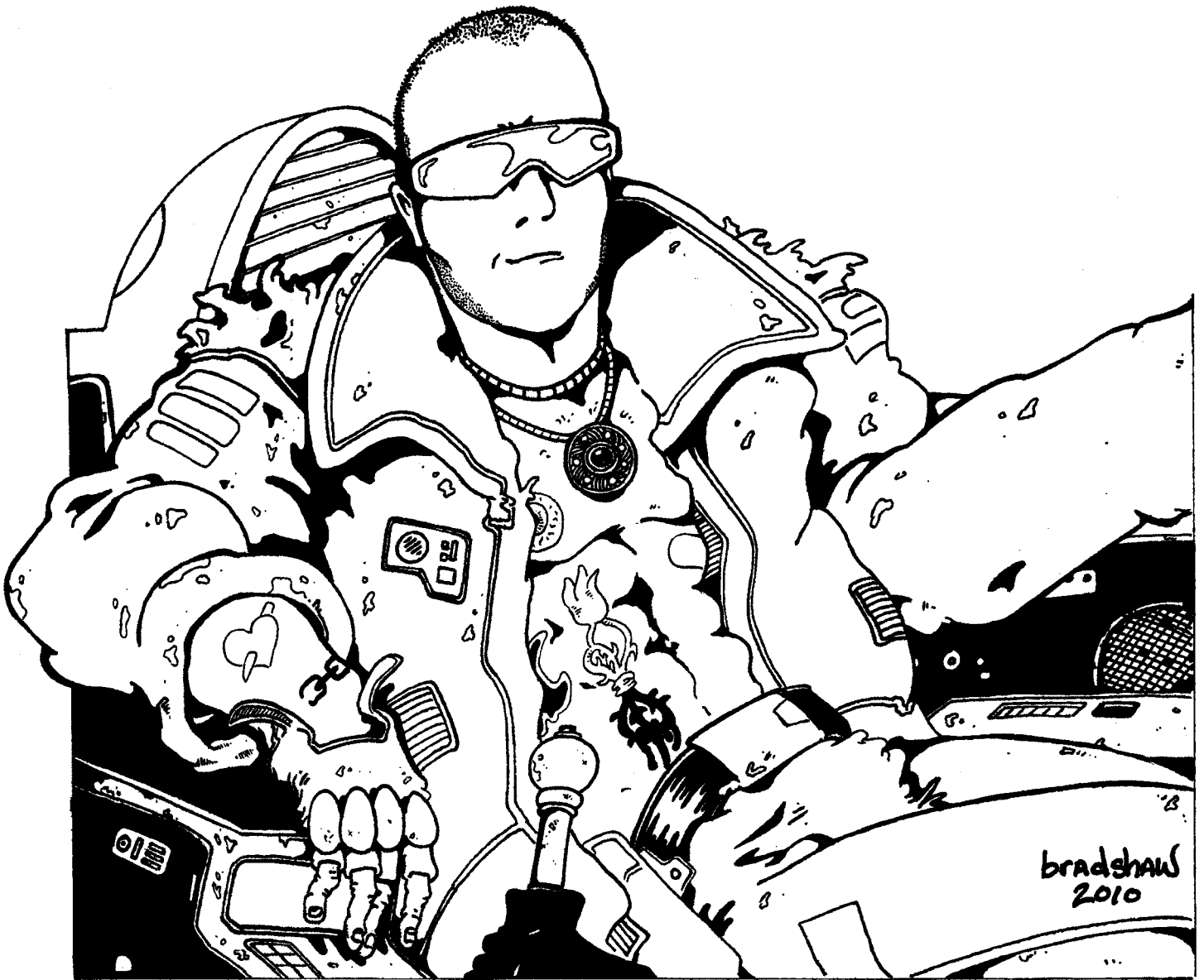
Starts with one energy weapon of choice and two extra E-Clips, plus one other weapon appropriate for W.P.s. Body armor can be of any type, but lean toward light or none so they can carry more books and artifacts.

The vehicle can be any non-military type of ground vehicle the Tattoo Master is skilled to use. Often a hover cycle or truck, robot horse, or other vehicle for traveling over rough terrain.

Money: 4D6x1000 in precious gems or artifacts.

Cybernetics: None. If cybernetics are required at a later date, the character will strive to get Bio-Systems, because mechanical bionics will reduce the potency of his magic. Even a single mechanical arm or leg will reduce the effect, range, damage, and duration of the magic by 25%.

Experience: Use the same experience table as the Undead Slayer.



Atlantean Drifter

The True Atlantean Drifter is a dimensional explorer combining the magic of a Shifter with the wanderlust of an Atlantean Nomad. Unlike a Shifter, they do not consort with demons or monsters. They do, however, travel between dimensions very easily and often lead small groups of Atlanteans on cross-dimensional expeditions. Roughly 8% of all Atlanteans are Drifters. **Author's Note:** Adjust the percentage of Atlanteans that are Shifters and Nomads down to 6% and 8% respectively, as listed in *Rifts® Atlantis*, page 16.

In the first story above, Greigoran of the Liberated Underground is an example of an Atlantean Drifter.

Atlantean Characteristics as They Apply to the Drifter:

1. Magic Tattoos Denote Heritage: Each True Atlantean has a tattoo of a heart impaled by a wooden stake (no blood) on the right wrist for protection from their eternal enemy, the vampire, and a flaming sword tattoo on the left wrist to create a magic M.D.C. weapon. The tattoo is placed on an Atlantean child at age five or six. The clan crest may be part of the sword's hilt. These

"Marks of Heritage" are magic tattoos and can be activated at will; the standard tattoo rules apply. The Marks are just two of the four to six tattoos that cover their body. Note: Clan Aerihman Atlanteans less than fifty years old will have the skull with glowing eyes tattoo (charisma) in place of the heart impaled by a wooden stake.

2. Increased P.P.E. from Magic Tattoos: Each magic tattoo adds six P.P.E. points to the Atlantean's permanent base amount.

3. Increased P.P.E. Recovery: The Tattoo Master's P.P.E. replenishes itself at the rate of 10 points for every hour of rest or sleep, twice as fast as normal humans, or 15 an hour if using meditation.

4. Increased S.D.C. from Magic Tattoos: Each tattoo provides the Atlantean an additional 10 physical S.D.C. points. **Note:** One to six tattoos does not change the physical structure of an ordinary human into a Mega-Damage being like the Undead Slayer.

5. Cannot Be Physically Transformed by Any Means: Including, but not limited to, metamorphosis potions and spells, the Transformation ritual, vampire transformation, Petrification, Turn to Mist, Growth or reduction/shrinking by spells, potions,

or any other form of magic or supernatural transformation spell, curse, wish, or enchantment.

6. Continue to Grow as Adults: After reaching adulthood at about age 25, True Atlanteans grow about an inch (2.5 cm) every century or so, which gives them an average height of six feet, six inches to about seven feet (1.95 to 2.1 meters).

7. Sense Vampires: Can sense the presence of vampires and Vampire Intelligences within a 1,000 foot radius (305 m), but cannot pinpoint exact source/person responsible for the sensation. Recognizes vampires by visual identification/appearance: 10% per level of experience.

8. Operate Dimensional Pyramids: All Atlanteans are seasoned dimensional travelers who know how to operate the pyramids created by the Stone Masters for the purpose of communication and dimensional teleportation. Base skill is 40% +5% per level of experience. Note that the average Atlantean Drifter does not know exactly how Stone Magic works or how to build pyramids. However, they are just as skilled as Stone Masters when using pyramids for dimensional travel. Like a Stone Master, when using the pyramid power of Dimensional Teleportation he can hold open the portal for 15 seconds (one melee round) per level of experience rather than a maximum of just 15 seconds.

9. Sense Ley Lines: Same as the Line Walker.

10. Ley Line Phasing: Same as the Line Walker.

Atlantean Drifter O.C.C. Abilities:

1. Initial Spell Knowledge: The Drifter's focus of mystic knowledge is on dimensional travel, the energies that create Rifts and other spells useful for exploring. Thus, a Drifter starts with the following spells: Calling (8), Call Lightning (15), Compass* (12), Dimensional Beacon* (42), Dimensional Portal (1,000), Energy Bolt (5), Energy Field (10), Exorcism (30), Portal Divination* (20), Re-Open Gateway (180), Rift Teleportation (100), Sense Evil (2), Sense Magic (4), Shadow Meld (10), Sustain (12), Teleport: Lesser (15), Teleport: Self (120, see *Rifts® Megaverse® Builder*, page 47), Tongues (10), and Turn Dead (6).

* For those spells with an asterisk (*), see *The Rifter® #15*, pages 93-102.

2. Learning New Spells: The Drifter's spell knowledge leans towards spells that deal with channeling and controlling energy, dimensional travel, and exploration.

Starting at level two, and every level after, the Drifter can choose one spell from the following list: Artificial Environment* (750), Bar Portal* (250), Breach Portal* (340), Breathe Without Air (5), Circle of Travel (600), Climb (3), Close Rift (200), Communication Rift* (50), Create Water (15), D-Step (50), Dimensional Anchor* (55), Dimensional Barrier* (2,000; cannot select until 10th level), Dimensional Observation Ball* (20), Dimensional Teleport (800), Dispel Magic Barriers (20), Distant Voice (10), Divert Portal* (180), Energy Disruption (12), Energy Sphere (120), Eyes of the Wolf (25), Fly (15), Fly as the Eagle (25), Follow Dimensional Wake* (80), Hide Portal* (60), Lantern Light (1), Ley Line Transmission (30), Locate (30), Lockdown* (90), Magic Pigeon (20), Mystic Portal (60), Phantom Mount (45), Plane Skip (65), Power Bolt (20), Purification: Food/Water (20), Reality Flux (75), Reality Merge* (5,000; cannot select until 15th level), Reroute Teleport* (1,500), Rift to Limbo (160), Sheltering Force (20), Superhuman Endurance (12), Superhuman Speed (10), Swim as a Fish: Lesser (6), Swim as a Fish: Superior (12),

Teleport: Lesser (15), Teleport: Superior (600), Time Hole (210), Turbulence* (360), Watchguard (10), and Winged Flight (35).

* For those spells with an asterisk (*), see *The Rifter® #15*, pages 93-102.

In addition, the Drifter can select one non-dimension-related spell not on the above list, but they are limited to spells equal to or less than the Drifter's current level. For example, at third level the Drifter is limited to spell invocations from levels one through three.

Of course the Drifter can still purchase and learn spells in the same manner as other magic users, including spells not on the list above that he could not normally figure out on his own until a high level. However, Drifters rarely spend time learning spells and tend to spend their spare time studying dimensions and traveling.

3. Dimension Sense: Identical to the Shifter (*Rifts® Ultimate Edition*, page 121).

4. Mini-Rift: The Drifter can, for a base cost of 125 P.P.E. and one full melee of concentration, create a one-way dimensional portal permitting himself to pass through (it is no more than nine feet/2.7 m tall). For every other person he allows through this portal, it costs an additional 25 P.P.E. The portal will remain open for, at most, one minute (four melee rounds), and the P.P.E. cost must be paid up front. In general, five people per melee can pass through the portal by the time it closes, so long as all they do is line up to pass through, rather than waste time hanging around, but this is very expensive (20 people = 125 + (19 x 25) = 600 P.P.E.).

The Drifter cannot designate specific people to go through, so an enterprising stowaway can jump through the portal and thus deny another person passage. Note that this cannot be done to the Drifter, but restraining the Drifter is a viable alternative. Finally, this ability need not target only the Drifter's home dimension. Instead it can target his home dimension, a random dimension, or a dimension visited by the Drifter in the past.

When targeting a random dimension, the portal is completely random within the resulting dimension, except that it is drawn to high P.P.E. places like planets, which are rich in P.P.E. because of their resident life forms. So it is exceedingly rare that a random portal will appear in the depths of space or on a completely lifeless planet. However, this does not mean that it is guaranteed to be safe, as places like Primorder (see *The Rifter® #3*) support life yet are inhospitable to a vast majority of outside life forms.

When targeting his home dimension or a previously visited dimension, the Drifter can try to travel to any location visited previously. **Base Skill:** 10% +5% per level of experience. The Atlantean Drifter receives an additional +10% O.C.C. bonus on this skill, making him more accurate than the average Shifter. Rolling under his skill level indicates the Rift appears only 1D20 miles (1.6 to 32 km) from the desired geographic destination. Rolling over his skill level places the Rift at a random location upon that planet that is relatively ideal for his species, i.e. not in the ocean and probably not in a hostile desert. If his starting point is a dimensional pyramid, the Drifter is +30% to target a specific location. If the location he is targeting is a dimensional pyramid, he is +20% and if he makes the roll it appears directly on/in the pyramid. If both the starting and ending locations are pyramids then he automatically makes the roll and the Rift appears directly on/in the target pyramid. **Note:** He may also utilize the pyramid's dimensional powers (see Operate Dimensional Pyramids above),

but his own power may cost less P.P.E. depending on the number of people to be transported.

For greater accuracy or taking a large number of passengers, the spell Dimensional Portal is recommended, especially if the Drifter has the time to perform the ritual described in Dimensional Travel below.

5. Dimensional Travel: The Drifter knows a special ritual of meditation that halves the P.P.E. cost of *Dimensional Portal* and *Re-Open Gateway*. The ritual takes 1D6x10+15 minutes to perform. In addition, the ritual enables the Drifter to hold the Rift open for one minute per level of his experience, close it in a heartbeat at will, and manipulate the size of the portal to whatever he wants, from that of a man-sized doorway to 10 feet (3 m) tall and 10 feet (3 m) wide per level of experience.

6. Dimensional Teleport Home: Identical to the Shifter (*Rifts® Ultimate Edition*, page 122).

7. Teleportation Hitchhiking: Identical to the Ley Line Rifter (*Rifts® Ultimate Edition*, page 117).

8. Sense Rifts: Identical to the Shifter (*Rifts® Ultimate Edition*, page 122).

9. Magic Tattoos: The typical first level Atlantean Drifter will start with four tattoos. Including:

- Flaming Sword (M.D. weapon).
- Power: Protection from Vampires (heart impaled by stake).
- Two of choice from any category.

Drifters usually prefer Magic Weapon, Monster, and Power tattoos since they have the P.P.E. to fully power them. An experienced Drifter (4th level or higher) can often get one or two additional tattoos from an Atlantean Tattoo Master, especially if he has proven his skill and willingness to help other Atlanteans and those in need. Never gets more than six total tattoos since he would lose all spell casting and other O.C.C. abilities.

10. P.P.E.: The Drifter is a living battery of mystic energy that he can draw on to perform his magic. Permanent Base P.P.E.: 2D6x10+40 plus P.E. attribute number. Add 3D6 P.P.E. per additional level of experience. In addition, add six P.P.E. for each magic tattoo. Of course, the Drifter can draw P.P.E. from ley lines, nexus points, pyramids, and other people.

11. O.C.C. Bonuses: +6 to save vs Horror Factor and an additional +1 to save vs Horror Factor at levels 3, 6, 9, 12 and 15. +2 to save vs magic at level 1 and an additional +1 to save vs magic at levels 3, 7, 10 and 13. +1 to Spell Strength (the number others must save against when you cast a spell) at levels 4, 7, 10 and 13. These bonuses include the Atlantean's racial bonuses. Bonuses from physical conditioning and magic: +2 P.E., +6 Spd, +3D6+10 S.D.C.

Alignment: Any, but most True Atlanteans are good or selfish.

Attribute Requirements: I.Q. 12, M.E. 14, P.E. 12 or higher.

Racial Requirements: True Atlanteans only.

O.C.C. Skills:

Language & Literacy: Dragonese/Elf, American, and Greek at 98%.

Language & Literacy: Choice of one additional (+15%).

Language: Speak two additional languages of choice (+15%).

Basic Math (+20%)

Lore: Dimensions (+20%, see *Rifts® Megaverse® Builder*, page 46)

Lore: Geomancy and Ley Lines (+15%)

Land Navigation (+15%)

Wilderness Survival (+15%)

Swimming (+5%)

W.P. Sword

W.P.: One of choice.

Hand to Hand: Basic; can be changed to Expert at a cost of one O.C.C. Related Skill or Martial Arts (or Assassin if an evil alignment) for the cost of two.

O.C.C. Related Skills: Select eight other skills, but at least two must be selected from Communications, Horsemanship, Pilot, Pilot Related, or Wilderness. Plus, select two additional skills at levels three, six, nine, twelve, and fifteen. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

Communications: Radio: Basic, Surveillance Systems, and TV/Video only (+5%).

Cowboy: None.

Domestic: Any (+10%).

Electrical: Basic only.

Espionage: Intelligence only (+5%).

Horsemanship: General, Equestrian, and Exotic Animals only (+10%).

Mechanical: Basic only.

Medical: First Aid, Holistic Medicine, or Paramedic only (+5%).

Military: None.

Physical: Any, except Wrestling, Gymnastics, and Acrobatics.

Pilot: Any except Robots, Tanks, or Jets.

Pilot Related: Any (+10%).

Rogue: Any (+5%).

Science: Any (+5%).

Technical: Any (+10%).

W.P.: Any.

Wilderness: Any (+5%).

Secondary Skills: The character also gets to select four Secondary Skills from the Secondary Skills List found on page 300 of *Rifts® Ultimate Edition*, and one additional at levels 4, 8 and 15. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get any bonuses, other than any possible bonus for having a high I.Q. All Secondary Skills start at the base skill level.

Standard Equipment: Portable language translator, notebook, sketch pad or blank paper, a dozen pencils and markers, normal binoculars, set of traveling and a set of dress clothes, survival knife, knapsack, backpack, pocket laser distancer, a long-range radio, and personal items. Any electronics may be powered by TW batteries rather than conventional (requires 2 P.P.E. or less to recharge).

Starts with one weapon for each W.P. plus 1D4 E-Clips/magazines for each weapon if appropriate. Body armor can be of any type, but lean toward light or none so they can carry more books and artifacts.

The vehicle can be any non-military type of ground vehicle the Drifter is skilled to use. Many rely only on their own two feet.

Money: 4D6x1000 in precious gems or artifacts.

Cybernetics: None. If cybernetics are required at a later date, the character will strive to get Bio-Systems, because mechanical bionics will reduce the potency of his magic. Even a single mechanical arm or leg will reduce the effect, range, damage, and duration of the magic by 25%.

Experience: Use the same experience table as the T-Monster Man.



Sunaj Assassin

The typical Sunaj is an Aerihman Atlantean operating as an assassin, spy, or secret operative working with the Splugorth and other enemies of True Atlanteans. Over the last 50 years, since the Sunaj first surfaced, they have gained a reputation for being extremely deadly and merciless in combat. Some even offer their services on the open market as mercenaries and assassins. Such employment is a ruse to get themselves positions of power or to gather information from other civilizations, businesses and individuals (all for the empire). **Author's Note:** Updated from *Rifts®: Atlantis* with additional abilities and rules clarifications.

Garax, in the second story above, is an example of a Sunaj Assassin.

Atlantean Characteristics as They Apply to Sunaj Assassins:

1. Magic Tattoos Denote Heritage: Each Sunaj Assassin has a Skull with Glowing Eyes (Charisma) tattoo on his right wrist and a flaming sword tattoo on the left wrist to create a magic M.D.C. weapon. The tattoo is placed on an Aerihman child at age five or six. The clan crest is part of the sword's hilt. These "Marks of Heritage" are magic tattoos and can be activated at will; the standard tattoo rules apply. The Marks are just two of the 9 to 16 tattoos that cover their body.

2. Increased P.P.E. from Magic Tattoos: Base P.P.E. is 1D4x10+10 for all Sunaj Assassins, males and females. Add 8 P.P.E. points for each level of experience and six P.P.E. points for each tattoo. The typical first level Assassin will start with ap-

proximately 74 to 104 P.P.E. Remember, the character can also draw energy from ley lines and nexus points.

3. Increased P.P.E. Recovery: The Assassin's P.P.E. replenishes itself at the rate of 10 points for every hour of rest or sleep, twice as fast as normal humans.

4. M.D.C. Transformation: Sunaj Assassins have a base M.D.C. of 2D4x10. Each additional tattoo beyond six instills the male Assassin with 11 M.D.C. points and female with 13 M.D.C. points. Most Assassins start with nine tattoos, giving them 2D4x10+33 physical M.D.C. points (or 2D4x10+39 M.D.C. for females).

5. Cannot Be Physically Transformed by Any Means: Including, but not limited to, metamorphosis potions and spells, the Transformation ritual, vampire transformation, Petrification, Turn to Mist, Growth or reduction/shrinking by spells, potions, or any other form of magic or supernatural transformation spell, curse, wish, or enchantment.

6. Continue to Grow as Adults: After reaching adulthood at about age 25, True Atlanteans grow about an inch (2.5 cm) every century or so, which gives them an average height of six feet, six inches to about seven feet (1.95 to 2.1 meters).

7. Sense Vampires: Can sense the presence of vampires and Vampire Intelligences within a 1,000 foot radius (305 m), but cannot pinpoint exact source/person responsible for the sensation. Recognizes vampires by visual identification/appearance: 10% per level of experience.

8. Operate Dimensional Pyramids: All Atlanteans are seasoned dimensional travelers who know how to operate the pyramids created by the Stone Masters for the purpose of communication and dimensional teleportation. Base skill is 30% +5% per level of experience. Note that the average Sunaj Assassin does not know exactly how Stone Magic works or how to build pyramids.

9. Sense Ley Lines: Same as the Line Walker.

10. Sense Rifts: Same as the Line Walker.

11. Ley Line Phasing: Same as the Line Walker.

Special Powers of the Sunaj Assassin:

1. Magic Tattoos: A Sunaj Assassin starts with nine total tattoos, including six Power tattoos. The reason that Power tattoos are made available over the others is that the careful and concealed use of Power tattoos is less likely to reveal that they are True Atlanteans. This is also one of the reasons they openly associate with the Splugorth. This association with the Alien Intelligence will suggest that the Splugorth bestow any magic tattoos they have. Tattoos available:

- Flaming Sword (M.D. weapon, often with a blue, black or purple flame).
- Power: Charisma (Skull with Glowing Eyes).
- Power: Death Touch (Skull and Thorns).
- Power: Black Crescent Dripping Blood (Critical Strike).
- One additional Magic Weapon of choice.
- Four additional Power tattoos of choice.

Every two new levels of experience (levels 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13 and 15), the character's clan elder or Tattoo Master will add one new Power tattoo. This is likely to require traveling to the clan's home world or a different dimension, so the character may have to disappear for a few days. The number of Power tattoos an Assassin can get at any one time is two. There must be at least six

months between the acquisition of another pair of tattoos. Note that receipt of a new tattoo may be withheld indefinitely as punishment by the clan elder or Tattoo Master, usually under orders from Lord Aerihza, for acts of cowardice, stupidity or failure.

2. Reduced Tattoo P.P.E. Cost: Sunaj Assassins specialize in certain Power tattoos that are especially useful in their line of work. At first level, halve the P.P.E. cost of the Death Touch tattoo. At fourth level, eighth level, and twelfth level, the Assassin chooses another power tattoo from the following list. Thereafter, he may activate the chosen tattoo at half P.P.E. cost: *Black Crescent Dripping Blood (Critical Strike)*, *Black Sun (Darkness Powers)*, *Cracked or Broken Skull (Mental Attack)*, *Ear Wrapped in Chains (Globe of Silence)*, *Eye with Dagger in It (Blind)*, *Heart in Two Pieces (Strength Drain)*, *Heart Wrapped in Thorns (Poison Touch)*, *Skull Coiled with Thorns (Death Touch)*, and *Wolf's Head with Glowing Eyes (Hunting Prowess)*.

3. Psionics: All Sunaj Assassins are Major Psychics. Select eight powers from one psionic power category or a total of six from any category. Sunaj Assassins may only select powers from the categories of Healer, Physical and Sensitive. I.S.P. equals M.E. attribute plus 4D6. Add 1D6+1 I.S.P. for each level of experience.

4. Other Bonuses: +2 to save vs magic of all kinds (in addition to P.E. bonuses), +4 to save vs Horror Factor, +1 to initiative at levels 1, 3, 6, 9, 12 and 15.

Alignment: Any, but most Sunaj are selfish or evil.

Attribute Requirements: I.Q. 10 or higher, M.E. 12 or higher, P.E. 14 or higher and Major Psionics!

Racial Requirements: Clan Aerihman True Atlanteans only.

O.C.C. Skills:

Language & Literacy: Dragonese/Elf, American, and Greek at 98%.

Language: Speaks three additional languages of choice (+10%).

Basic Math (+25%)

Disguise (+20%)

Intelligence (+15%)

Tracking (people; +20%)

Land Navigation (+15%)

Wilderness Survival (+20%)

Lore: Demons & Monsters (+10%)

Gymnastics

Boxing

Prowl (+10%)

Swimming (+5%)

W.P. Archery & Targeting

W.P. Blunt

W.P. Sword

W.P. Energy Pistol

W.P. Energy Rifle

Hand to Hand: Assassin

O.C.C. Related Skills: Select six other skills from the following list. Plus select two additional skills at levels four, eight, and twelve. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

Communications: Any (+10%).

Cowboy: None.

Domestic: Any.

Electrical: Basic Electronics only.

Espionage: Any (+10%).

Horsemanship: General, Equestrian, and Exotic Animals only.

Mechanical: None.

Medical: First Aid only (+5%).

Military: Any (+10%).

Physical: Any.

Pilot: Any (+10%).

Pilot Related: Any (+10%).

Rogue: Any (+5%).

Science: None.

Technical: Any (+10%).

Weapon Proficiencies: Any.

Wilderness: Any (+5%).

Secondary Skills: The character also gets to select four Secondary Skills from the Secondary Skills List found on page 300 of *Rifts® Ultimate Edition*, and one additional at levels 4, 8 and 15. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get any bonuses, other than any possible bonus for having a high I.Q. All Secondary Skills start at the base skill level.

Standard Equipment: Weapons typically include a laser pulse rifle, a particle beam or plasma rifle, an energy pistol, a Vibro-Sword or Vibro-Claws, Vibro-Knife or Neural Mace, laser scalpel, two silver-plated throwing knives, and a cross of some kind. They adore magic and magic weapons! Consequently, they will acquire and use Techno-Wizard weapons and other types of magic weapons whenever they can. Body armor will include a suit of Sunaj Assassin Armor and one other type of lighter armor (Sunaj Scout or Black-Suit, or non-Sunaj design for disguise).

The vehicle can be just about anything from jet pack or hover cycle to robot horse or a monster riding animal (Gryphon, etc.). The vehicle or animal is usually suitable for traveling over rough and varied terrain.

Other equipment will often include disguise makeup, at least one complete disguise (wig, prosthetics applications, makeup, etc.), backpack, 1D4 sacks/bags, utility belt, ammo belt, sleeping bag, sunglasses and goggles, air filter, gas mask, 100 feet (30.5 m) of rope, pocket tool kit, flashlight, canteen, compass, and pocket calculator. Additional equipment may also include lock picking tools, more makeup and disguises, clothes and props for disguises, surveillance equipment, and so on.

Money: 6D6x1000 in credits and 1D6x1000 in gold, precious gems or artifacts. Sunaj can accumulate vast fortunes, but they are not motivated by wealth. They are dedicated to destroying True Atlanteans and acquiring power. Most will donate 2D4x10% of their fortunes to the building of the empire.

Cybernetics: None. If cybernetics are required at a later date, the character will strive to get Bio-Systems, because mechanical bionics will reduce the potency of his magic. Even a single mechanical arm or leg will reduce the effect, range, damage, and duration of the magic by 25%.

Experience: The experience table for the Sunaj Assassin appears in *Rifts® Atlantis*, page 68.

Sunaj Slayer

Fifty years ago, Lord Ahziree Aerihza decreed that clan Aerihman's warriors would no longer be trained to combat vampires, but to combat all who would oppose their dreams of conquest. To



that end, the clan changed the focus of its Undead Slayer academies and a new breed of soldier was born. Only Aerihman bearing the new Marks of Heritage (skull with glowing eyes) can train to be a Sunaj Slayer. The Sunaj Slayer differs from the Undead Slayer only slightly, but if anything, is more deadly. They have less training combating the undead, but more hand to hand training, including alien fighting techniques. Their initial tattoos also reflect their new focus.

Sunaj Slayers often accompany Sunaj Assassins, supporting them with heavy firepower. The Slayers who've embarked on missions thus far have proven their worth by killing other Atlanteans and bringing victory in stand-up battles. The Slayers wear armor similar to Sunaj Assassins, in order to better conceal their identities and abilities. Many opponents have already underestimated their prowess, mistaking them for stealthy Assassins.

Tel-Deja and Huhdau, in the second story above, are examples of Sunaj Slayers.

Atlantean Characteristics as They Apply to Sunaj Slayers:

1. Magic Tattoos Denote Heritage: Each Sunaj Slayer has a Skull with Glowing Eyes (Charisma) tattoo on his right wrist and a flaming sword tattoo on the left wrist to create a magic M.D.C. weapon. The tattoo is placed on an Aerihman child at age five or six. The clan crest is part of the sword's hilt. These "Marks of Heritage" are magic tattoos and can be activated at will; the standard tattoo rules apply. The Marks are just two of the 18 to 50 tattoos that cover their body.

2. Increased P.P.E. from Magic Tattoos: Base P.P.E. is 2D4x10 for all Sunaj Slayers, males and females. Add 10 P.P.E. points for each level of experience and six P.P.E. points for each tattoo. The typical first level Slayer will start with approximately 162 to 222 P.P.E. Remember, the character can also draw energy from ley lines and nexus points.

3. Increased P.P.E. Recovery: The Slayer's P.P.E. replenishes itself at the rate of 20 points for every hour of rest or sleep, four times as fast as normal humans!

4. M.D.C. Transformation: Sunaj Slayers have a base M.D.C. of 2D4x10. Each additional tattoo beyond six instills the male Slayers with 11 M.D.C. points and females with 13 M.D.C. points. Most Slayers start with eighteen tattoos, giving them 2D4x10+132 physical M.D.C. points (2D4x10+156 M.D.C. for females).

5. Cannot be Physically Transformed by Any Means: Including, but not limited to, metamorphosis potions and spells, the Transformation ritual, vampire transformation, Petrification, Turn to Mist, Growth or reduction/shrinking by spells, potions, or any other form of magic or supernatural transformation spell, curse, wish, or enchantment.

6. Continue to Grow as Adults: After reaching adulthood at about age 25, True Atlanteans grow about an inch (2.5 cm) every century or so, which gives them an average height of six feet, six inches to about seven feet (1.95 to 2.1 meters).

7. Sense Vampires: Can sense the presence of vampires and Vampire Intelligences within a 1,000 foot radius (305 m), but cannot pinpoint exact source/person responsible for the sensation. Recognizes vampires by visual identification/appearance: 10% per level of experience. They are not as skilled as Undead Slayers at recognition.

8. Operate Dimensional Pyramids: All Atlanteans are seasoned dimensional travelers who know how to operate the pyramids created by the Stone Masters for the purpose of communication and dimensional teleportation. Base skill is 30% +5% per level of experience. Note that the average Sunaj Slayer does not know exactly how Stone Magic works or how to build pyramids.

9. Sense Ley Lines: Same as the Line Walker.

10. Sense Rifts: Same as the Line Walker.

11. Ley Line Phasing: Same as the Line Walker.

Special Powers of the Sunaj Slayer:

1. Magic Tattoos: The typical first level Sunaj Slayer will start with 18 tattoos. Including:

- Flaming Sword (M.D. weapon, often with a blue, black or purple flame).
- Bow and Arrow or Crossbow. The four arrows are in flames (M.D.) and have wings (triple range and magically returns; counts as two tattoos).
- Power: Charisma (Skull with Glowing Eyes).
- Power: Darkness (Black Sun).
- Power: Fear (Black Skull in Circle).
- Power: Critical Hit (Black Crescent Dripping Blood).
- Power: Invulnerability (Heart in Chains).
- Power: Lightning (Lightning Bolts).
- Power: Healing Aura (Bloody Wreath).
- Two additional Power tattoos of choice.
- Two Simple Weapons of choice.
- Two Magic Weapons of choice.

- One Animal of choice.
- One Monster of choice.

Each new level of experience, the character's clan elder or a clan Tattoo Master will add two more simple tattoos (Animal or Simple Weapon) or one major tattoo (Power, Monster, or Magic Weapon). Note that this is likely to require traveling to the clan's home world or a different dimension, so the character may have to disappear for a few days. The number of tattoos a Slayer can get at any one time is two. There must be at least six months between the acquisition of another pair of tattoos. Note that receipt of a new tattoo may be withheld indefinitely as punishment by the clan elder or Tattoo Master, usually under orders from Lord Aeriha, for acts of cowardice, stupidity or failure.

2. Other Bonuses: +4 to save vs magic of all kinds (in addition to P.E. bonuses), +8 to save vs Horror Factor. Attribute bonuses from physical training and magic: +2 to M.E., +2 to P.E., +2 to P.S., and +6 to Spd. Sunaj Slayers are considered to be supernatural beings.

Alignment: Any, but most Sunaj are selfish or evil.

Attribute Requirement: I.Q. 10, M.E. 20, P.S. 12, P.P. 14, P.E. 12 or higher. Those who lack talent cannot become Sunaj Slayers.

Racial Requirements: Clan Aeriha True Atlanteans only.

O.C.C. Skills:

- Radio: Basic (+10%)
- Language & Literacy: Dragonese/Elf, American, and Greek at 98%.
- Language: Speak three additional languages of choice (+10%).
- Basic Math (+20%)
- Intelligence (+10%)
- Tracking (people; +15%)
- Wilderness Survival (+15%)
- Lore: Demons & Monsters (+20%)
- Gymnastics
- Boxing
- Swimming (+5%)
- W.P. Archery & Targeting
- W.P. Knife
- W.P. Sword
- W.P. Energy Pistol
- W.P. Energy Rifle
- Hand to Hand: Commando

O.C.C. Related Skills: Select four other skills from the following list. Plus select three additional skills at levels four, eight, and twelve. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

- Communications: Any (+5%).
- Cowboy: None.
- Domestic: Any.
- Electrical: Any.
- Espionage: Any (+10%).
- Horsemanship: General, Equestrian, and Exotic Animals only (+10%).
- Mechanical: Any.
- Medical: Any (+10%).
- Military: Any (+10%).
- Physical: Any.
- Pilot: Any, except robot and power armor skills (+10%).
- Pilot Related: Any (+10%).

Rogue: Any (+5%).

Science: Any (+5%).

Technical: Any, except computer skills.

Weapon Proficiencies: Any.

Wilderness: Any (+5%).

Secondary Skills: The character also gets to select six Secondary Skills from the Secondary Skills List found on page 300 of *Rifts® Ultimate Edition*, and one additional at levels 4, 8 and 12. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get any bonuses, other than any possible bonus for having a high I.Q. All Secondary Skills start at the base skill level.

Standard Equipment: Weapons typically include a laser pulse rifle, a particle beam, plasma rifle, or Black Lance, an energy pistol, eight E-Clips or E-Spheres for each, a Vibro-Sword or Vibro-Claws, Vibro-Knife or Neural Mace, six grenades of choice, 1D4 silver-plated knives, and a cross of some kind. They adore magic and magic weapons! Consequently, they will acquire and use Techno-Wizard weapons and other types of magic weapons whenever they can. Body armor will include a suit of Sunaj Assault Armor and one other type of lighter armor (Sunaj Scout or Assassin, or non-Sunaj design for disguise).

The vehicle can be just about anything from a jet pack or hover cycle to a robot horse or a monster riding animal (Gryphon, etc.). The vehicle or animal is usually suitable for traveling over rough and varied terrain.

Other equipment will often include a backpack, 1D4 sacks/bags, two signal flares, survival knife, utility belt, ammo belt, sleeping bag, sunglasses and goggles, air filter, gas mask, 100 feet (30.5 m) of rope, pocket tool kit, walkie-talkie (10 mile range), flashlight, canteen, compass, and pocket calculator.

Money: 6D6x1000 in credits and 1D6x1000 in gold, precious gems or artifacts. Sunaj can accumulate vast fortunes, but they are not motivated by wealth. They are dedicated to destroying True Atlanteans and acquiring power. Most will donate 2D4x10% of their fortunes to the building of the empire.

Cybernetics: None. If cybernetics are required at a later date, the character will strive to get Bio-Systems, because mechanical bionics will reduce the potency of his magic. Even a single mechanical arm or leg will reduce the effect, range, damage, and duration of the magic by 25%.

Experience: Use the same experience table as the Sunaj Assassin.

Sunaj Warrior Thrall

Using the Splugorth as an example, Clan Aeriha has begun training slaves as tattooed soldiers to fight in future wars. Few have heard of these soldiers in bondage because they are so new and because the Sunaj seek to keep them a secret as long as possible. Since Clan Aeriha has not yet developed as much infrastructure or slave culture as the Splugorth to keep slave soldiers properly loyal, they prefer to only train young generational slaves (whose parents, and usually grandparents, were slaves) as Warrior Thralls. The few exceptions are usually far removed from Clan Aeriha society and information about their true masters is kept secret.

Warrior Thralls usually begin training in their early to mid-teens and receive combat training as well as magic tattoos over a one to two year period. Their training culminates in the receipt of the *Runic Pattern* tattoo. Warrior Thralls differ from Splugorth

Tattooed Men in several ways. First, they take less time to develop since they only have seven tattoos total to start. Second, they receive a more modern education as an infantry soldier. Third, they use modern equipment, such as small arms, half suits of armor, and combat radios and sensors. However, few learn how to use heavy combat vehicles and large weapon systems, since the Sunaj do not possess such weapons in any great numbers at this time.

The Typical Sex and Racial Divisions among Warrior Thralls:

- 44% Nog Males.
- 3% Nog Females.
- 16% Human Males.
- 12% Human Females.
- 25% Ogre Males.

(Particular units may have all one type of race and/or sex or may be mixed.)

The Magic Powers of Warrior Thralls:

1. M.D.C. Transformation: Each tattoo beyond the *Runic Pattern* tattoo instills male Thralls with 10 physical M.D.C. points and each female with 11 M.D.C. points, making them Mega-Damage creatures. **Note:** One to six tattoos does not change the physical structure of ordinary humans. The *Runic Tattoo* counts as six tattoos for the purpose of calculating M.D.C.

2. P.P.E.: Base P.P.E. is at 5D6 for the transformation of adult males, plus six for adult females, 1D4x10 for children and teenage males, 1D4x10+8 for females.

Add 10 P.P.E. points for each level of experience and six P.P.E. points for each tattoo. **Note:** The *Runic Pattern* tattoo counts as six tattoos for purposes of calculating P.P.E.

Most Warrior Thralls complete training by age 16 to 18, and will start with approximately 92 to 122 P.P.E. for males, 100 to 130 for females. Remember, the character can also draw energy from ley lines and nexus points.

3. Magic Tattoos: The typical first level Warrior Thrall will start with 7 tattoos. Including:

- The *Runic Pattern* Power tattoo.
- One Simple Weapon of choice.
- One Magic Weapon of choice.
- One Animal of choice.
- One Monster of choice.
- One Power of choice.
- One of choice from any category.

With each new level of experience (starting at level two), his master, typically the Sunaj, will add two more simple tattoos (Animal or Simple Weapon) or one major tattoo (Power, Monster, or Magic Weapon). Note that renegades will find it virtually impossible to get new tattoos since very few beings possess the secret knowledge of Tattoo Magic. The number of tattoos any T-man, even a Warrior Thrall, can get at any one time is two. There must be at least six months between the acquisition of another pair of tattoos.

G.M. Option: If the character is starting as a first or second level runaway slave, the G.M. may, at his sole discretion, allow the player character to select as many as six additional tattoos from any of the categories, but only with the understanding that

the character is never likely to acquire any additional tattoos from that day forward!

4. Increased P.P.E. Recovery: The Thrall's expended P.P.E. replenishes itself at the rate of 10 points for every hour of rest or sleep, twice as fast as normal.

5. Bonuses: +10 M.D.C., +2 to save vs magic of all kinds (in addition to P.E. bonuses), +6 to save vs Horror Factor. Attribute bonuses from physical training and magic: +2 to M.E., +2 to P.E., +1 to P.S., and +6 to Spd.

Alignment: Any, but most Thralls take after their masters and are selfish or evil.

Attribute Requirements: P.E. 9 or higher. A high P.S., P.P., and Spd are also suggested but not mandatory.

Racial Requirements: Only those that can accept magic tattoos: Humans, Ogres, Elves, Nogs, and True Atlanteans.

O.C.C. Skills:

Language: Native at 95%.

Language: Dragonese and one of choice (+10%).

Radio: Basic (+10%)

Body Building

Climbing (+5%)

Running

Physical: One of choice (+5%).

W.P. Energy Pistol

W.P. Energy Rifle

W.P.: One Ancient of choice.

W.P.: One of choice (any).

Hand to Hand: Expert; can be changed to Hand to Hand: Martial Arts (or Assassin if an evil alignment) for the cost of one O.C.C. Related Skill.

O.C.C. Related Skills: Select six other skills. Plus select two additional and a W.P. at level three, two additional at levels five and seven, and one additional at levels nine, eleven and fourteen. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

Communications: Any (+5%).

Cowboy: None.

Domestic: Any.

Electrical: Basic Electronics only.

Espionage: Any.

Horsemanship: General only.

Mechanical: Basic and Automotive Mechanics only.

Medical: First Aid or Paramedic (counts as two skills) only.

Military: Any (+10%).

Physical: Any.

Pilot: Any, except robot, power armor and spacecraft.

Pilot Related: Any.

Rogue: Any (+5%).

Science: Math: Basic only.

Technical: Any.

W.P.: Any.

Wilderness: Any (+5%).

Secondary Skills: The character also gets to select four Secondary Skills from the Secondary Skills List found on page 300 of *Rifts® Ultimate Edition*, and one additional at levels 4, 8 and 12. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get any bonuses, other than any possible bonus for having a high I.Q. All Secondary Skills start at the base skill level.

Standard Equipment: Warrior Thrall armor (non-EBA, 60 M.D.C., short-range radio in helmet: 5 miles/8 km, -10%

Prowl penalty), energy rifle, such as the Black Light carbine, and energy side arm of choice, four extra E-Clips or E-Spheres for each, two grenades, two signal flares, survival knife, utility belt, air filter and gas mask, walkie-talkie (10 mile/16 km range), uniform, combat boots, canteen, and an additional non-energy weapon of choice.

Money: None! Slaves are provided with everything they need. Loyal and high ranking slaves may be given a personal allowance – the amount varies with each situation, commander, and character.

Cybernetics: None. If cybernetics are required at a later date, the character will strive to get Bio-Systems, because mechanical bionics will reduce the potency of his magic. Even a single mechanical arm or leg will reduce the effect, range, damage, and duration of the magic by 25%.

Experience: Use the same experience table as the Ley Line Walker.

Insanity: The Warrior Thralls are often emotionally and psychologically traumatized and suffer from one or more insanities. Roll once on the following table. Of course, if you really want your character to be crazy, pick one. Furthermore, roll on the Warrior Thrall Insanity Table once for every six additional tattoos.

Warrior Thrall Insanity Table

Roll percentile dice.

01-40 No insanity.

41-48 Obsession: Fighting and competition; loves it.

49-50 Obsession: Fighting; hates it and tries to avoid it.

51-57 Obsession: Danger; loves it – takes needless risks.

58-63 Phobia: Tattoos; cannot stand to get another one, and must be restrained in order to get a new tattoo (even an ordinary one).

64-68 Phobia: Sunaj.

69-70 Phobia: Alchemists and Tattoo Masters.

71-75 Roll for random affective disorder.

76-80 Roll for random phobia.

81-85 Roll for random obsession.

86-95 Roll for random insanity.

96-00 Roll twice on this table.

Sunaj Slaver

A newer occupation among Clan Aerihman, Sunaj Slavers specialize in the capture, handling, and bartering of slaves. Many in Clan Aerihman consider the Slaver to be an underachiever and look down on them. Despite this, the Slaver performs an important economic function in the new Aerihman order. Many Slavers are wealthy from their profession, and the occupation is growing.

Atlantean Characteristics as They Apply to Sunaj Slavers:

1. Magic Tattoos Denote Heritage: Each Sunaj Slaver has a Skull with Glowing Eyes (Charisma) tattoo on his right wrist and a flaming sword tattoo on the left wrist to create a magic M.D.C. weapon. The tattoo is placed on an Aerihman child at age five or six. The clan crest is part of the sword's hilt. These "Marks of Heritage" are magic tattoos and can be activated at will; the



standard tattoo rules apply. The Marks are just two of the 4 to 11 tattoos that cover their body.

2. Increased P.P.E. from Magic Tattoos: Base P.P.E. is 1D4x10+10 for all Sunaj Slavers, males and females. Add 1D6 P.P.E. points for each level of experience and six P.P.E. points for each tattoo. The typical first level Slaver will start with approximately 45 to 75 P.P.E. Remember, the character can also draw energy from ley lines and nexus points.

3. Increased P.P.E. Recovery: The Slaver's P.P.E. replenishes itself at the rate of 10 points for every hour of rest or sleep, twice as fast as normal humans.

4. Increased S.D.C. from Magic Tattoos: Each tattoo provides the Slaver an additional 10 physical S.D.C. points. **Note:** One to six tattoos does not change the physical structure of an ordinary human into a Mega-Damage being like the Sunaj Slaver.

5. M.D.C. Transformation: Sunaj Slavers can get more than six magic tattoos without losing their abilities or changing their class. When the Slaver gets his seventh tattoo he turns into a minor Mega-Damage being with a base M.D.C. equal to his P.E. Each additional tattoo beyond six instills the male Slaver with 10 M.D.C. points and female with 11 M.D.C. points.

6. Cannot Be Physically Transformed by Any Means: Including, but not limited to, metamorphosis potions and spells, the Transformation ritual, vampire transformation, Petrification, Turn to Mist, Growth or reduction/shrinking by spells, potions, or any other form of magic or supernatural transformation spell, curse, wish, or enchantment.

7. Continue to Grow as Adults: After reaching adulthood at about age 25, True Atlanteans grow about an inch (2.5 cm) every century or so, which gives them an average height of six feet, six inches to about seven feet (1.95 to 2.1 meters).

8. Sense Vampires: Can sense the presence of vampires and Vampire Intelligences within a 1,000 foot radius (305 m), but

cannot pinpoint exact source/person responsible for the sensation. Recognizes vampires by visual identification/appearance: 10% per level of experience.

9. Operate Dimensional Pyramids: All Atlanteans are seasoned dimensional travelers who know how to operate the pyramids created by the Stone Masters for the purpose of communication and dimensional teleportation. Base skill is 30% +5% per level of experience. Note that the average Sunaj Slaver does not know exactly how Stone Magic works or how to build pyramids.

10. Sense Ley Lines: Same as the Line Walker.

11. Sense Rifts: Same as the Line Walker.

12. Ley Line Phasing: Same as the Line Walker.

Special Powers of the Sunaj Slaver:

1. Reduced Tattoo P.P.E. Cost: Sunaj Slavers specialize in certain magic tattoos that assist in the handling of slaves. Halve the P.P.E. cost of the following magic tattoos: *Beautiful Dancer (Hypnotic Gaze)*, *Brain Encircled by Collar on Leash (Entrance)*, *Cracked or Broken Skull (Mental Attack)*, *Heart in Two Pieces (Strength Drain)*, *Heart Wrapped in Nets (Magic Net)*, and *Wolf's Head with Glowing Eyes (Hunting Prowess)*.

2. Magic Tattoos: The typical first level Sunaj Slaver will start with four tattoos. Including:

- Flaming Sword (M.D. Weapon).
- Power: Charisma (Skull with Glowing Eyes).
- Power: Brain Encircled by Collar on a Leash (Entrance) or Heart Wrapped in Nets (Magic Net); choose one.
- One other Slaver tattoo from the list given above under Reduced Tattoo P.P.E. Cost.

At every other level of experience, starting at level two, an Aeriehman Tattoo Master will give the Slaver a new magic tattoo. He may select a Simple Weapon, Magic Weapon, Animal, Monster, or Slaver tattoo (using the list given under Reduced Tattoo P.P.E. Cost above). A Slaver who has distinguished himself may be granted a Power tattoo not listed as a Slaver tattoo above (G.M.'s discretion). Note that getting a new tattoo may require traveling to a different dimension, so the character may have to disappear for a few days from time to time. It is possible that circumstances will not allow the character to get the tattoos immediately after attaining the appropriate level of experience. The most tattoos the Slaver can get at any time is two. There must be at least six months between the acquisition of another pair of tattoos.

3. Other Bonuses: +2 to save vs magic of all kinds (in addition to P.E. bonuses), +6 to save vs Horror Factor.

Alignment: Any, but most Sunaj are selfish or evil.

Attribute Requirements: P.E. 10.

Racial Requirements: Clan Aeriehman True Atlanteans only.

O.C.C. Skills:

Language & Literacy: Dragonese/Elf, American, and Greek at 98%.

Language: Speak two additional languages of choice (+10%).

Athletics (General)

Barter (+16%)

Basic Math (+20%)

General Repair and Maintenance (+10%)

Land Navigation (+10%)

Lore: D-Bee (+20%)

Pilot: Automobile (+10%) or Hovercraft (+10%) or Horsemanship: General (+10%); pick one.

Rope Works (+15%)

Streetwise (+10%)

Tracking (people; +5%)

Wilderness Survival (+10%)

W.P. Sword

W.P.: Two of choice.

Hand to Hand: Basic; can be changed to Expert at a cost of one O.C.C. Related Skill, or Martial Arts (or Assassin if an evil alignment) for the cost of two.

O.C.C. Related Skills: Select eight other skills from the following list. Plus select one additional skill at levels three, six, nine, twelve, and fifteen. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

Communications: Any (+5%).

Cowboy: Any (+10%).

Domestic: Any (+10%).

Electrical: Any (+5% to Basic Electronics).

Espionage: None.

Horsemanship: General, Equestrian, and Exotic Animals only (+5%).

Mechanical: Any (+5% to Automotive Mechanics).

Medical: Any (except Medical Doctor and Cybernetics).

Military: None.

Physical: Any.

Pilot: Any (except Robots and Power Armor; +5%).

Pilot Related: Any (+5%).

Rogue: Any (+5%).

Science: Any.

Technical: Any (+10%).

W.P.: Any.

Wilderness: Any (+5%).

Secondary Skills: The character also gets to select six Secondary Skills from the Secondary Skills List found on page 300 of *Rifts® Ultimate Edition*, and one additional at levels 4, 8 and 12. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get any bonuses, other than any possible bonus for having a high I.Q. All Secondary Skills start at the base skill level.

Standard Equipment: A suit of light or medium M.D.C. body armor. Often wears Sunaj Scout armor. Starts with one weapon appropriate for each W.P. and four E-Clips/magazines for each (or other ammo, if appropriate). Set of wilderness clothes and a set of city clothes. Sunglasses or tinted visor, air filter, first aid kit, knapsack, backpack, utility/ammo belt, 100 feet (30.5 m) of quality rope, a dozen handcuffs or manacles, box of 100 plastic wrist binders, survival knife, Vibro-Knife, hammer and mallet, infrared binoculars with digital distancing readout, passive nightvision goggles. May start with an old or shabby looking, but reliable vehicle that matches Piloting skill. Any electronics may be powered by TW batteries rather than conventional (requires 2 P.P.E. or less to recharge).

Money: 4D6x1000 in precious gems or artifacts.

Cybernetics: None. If cybernetics are required at a later date, the character will strive to get Bio-Systems, because mechanical bionics will reduce the potency of his magic. Even a single mechanical arm or leg will reduce the effect, range, damage, and duration of the magic by 25%.

Experience: Use the same experience table as the T-Monster Man.

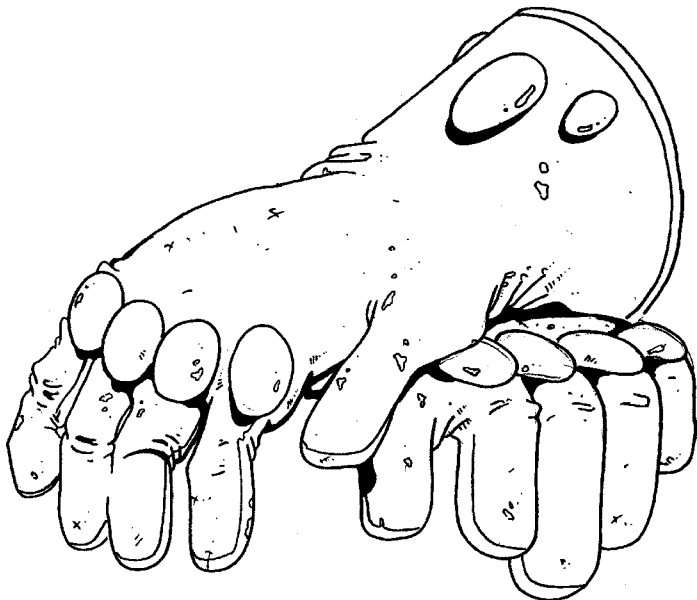
Atlantean Equipment

Campsite Crystal

This spherical composite gem can replace a variety of campsite equipment. The user can activate the following:

- Ignite Fire (6 P.P.E. or 12 I.S.P.).
- Watchguard (10 P.P.E. or 20 I.S.P., lasts 10 hours).
- Sheltering Force (20 P.P.E. or 40 I.S.P., lasts 10 hours).

Cost: 98,000 credits.



Climbing Gloves

These leather gloves make climbing as easy as walking. The user simply expends the necessary P.P.E. or I.S.P. and the spell *Climb* is activated for 15 minutes.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 3 (or 6 I.S.P.).

Cost: 24,000 credits.

Explorer's Cloak

This cloak appears completely normal, but hides a number of enhancements travelers find useful. First, it never gets dirty. It sheds water, mud, and grime and keeps the wearer completely dry. Second, it keeps the wearer cool in warm weather and warm in cool weather. Even severe freezing or scorching sun has half the normal effects (no added benefit against M.D. heat or cold). Third, the wearer resists all poisons and toxins (+4 to save, and half damage, duration, and effect), including inhaled gases. Lastly, the cloak slows the wearer's descent if he falls (half damage). These benefits are always in effect and require no P.P.E. to activate.

Cost: 200,000 credits.

Navigator's Globe

This crystal sphere is the size of a grapefruit and is used to aid in navigation. It contains a swirling storm of blue-green liquid. The user holds it in his hand and concentrates on what he wants to detect. The liquid turns purple near the surface of the globe in the proper direction. The larger and darker the discoloration, the closer or stronger the desired target. It does not require the

expenditure of P.P.E. or I.S.P. and anyone can use it with proper training. The globe can detect the following:

- Magnetic north - no range limit.
- Nearest ley line - 100 mile (160 km) maximum range.
- Nearest magic pyramid - 500 mile (800 km) maximum range.
- Nearest Rift or active dimensional portal - 50 mile (80 km) maximum range.
- Nearest sentient life form - 10 mile (16 km) maximum range; excludes anyone within 10 feet (3 m) of the globe.

Cost: 260,000 credits.

Nordor's Boots

These sturdy leather boots are named after a legendary Atlantean nomad. They offer excellent traction and are incredibly durable (6 M.D.C. each in environments with high levels of magic). More importantly, they double the wearer's Speed attribute up to a maximum of 44 (30 mph/48 km), double his jumping distance, and halve his fatigue while they are worn. The wearer also gains a +2 bonus to dodge due to his enhanced mobility. These effects are always active as long as the boots are worn and require no P.P.E. to activate.

Cost: 550,000 credits.

TW Explorer Light

This two inch (5 cm) diameter globe is mounted on a small turret and radiates light like a flashlight or lantern. The base of the turret can be affixed to any surface by spending 4 P.P.E. (or 8 I.S.P.) and cannot be removed by any means until another 4 P.P.E. (or 8 I.S.P.) is spent to detach it. The globe can be adjusted up to 360 degrees around and up to 180 degrees up, enabling it to point in any direction. Channeling 1 P.P.E. (or 2 I.S.P.) into the device will cause it to emit a flashlight or spotlight-like beam of light. The intensity can be adjusted from a 50 to 300 watt light bulb and it can be adjusted wide (10 feet/3 m maximum width) or focused (300 feet/91.4 m maximum distance) or anywhere in between. Alternately, the user can channel 2 P.P.E. (or 4 I.S.P.) into the light to activate a 24 foot (7.3 m) radius *Globe of Daylight* that not only provides excellent all around visibility but will also keep vampires at bay. The flashlight lasts for 1 hour per each activation, while the *Globe of Daylight* will only last for 6 minutes per each activation. Wearers often attach the device to their helmet, shoulder pad, or even belt buckle for ease of use.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 1 (or 2 I.S.P.) for light beam or 2 (4 I.S.P.) for *Globe of Daylight*.

Requirements to Make: Lantern Light (1), *Globe of Daylight* (2), Carpet of Adhesion (10), 1 quartz crystal (180 credits) and 1 amethyst crystal (400 credits).

Cost: 3,000 credits.

TW Force Shield

This forearm bracer has a crystal projector that, when activated, produces a hovering shield of force the same as the spell *Magic Shield*. The shield can be adjusted to face parallel to the forearm for melee combat or forward of the fist when using a rifle (the barrel sticks out over the top of the shield). In addition to the spell's normal uses, once per activation the wearer can attempt to block a projectile weapon with no penalty (and no bonus) rather

than the usual -8 penalty associated with the *Magic Shield* spell. The shield lasts for 10 minutes.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 6 (or 12 I.S.P.).

Requirements to Make: Magic Shield (6), Beat Insurmountable Odds (70), 1 amethyst crystal (3,200 credits), 1 sapphire (16,000 credits).

Cost: 40,000 credits.

TW Universal Forearm Launcher

This forearm bracer telekinetically fires a multitude of projectiles. It can launch high-tech or TW rifle grenades, normal grenades (typically rigged to activate when launched), wooden stakes (2D6 S.D.C. damage, double H.P. damage to vampires), or any other object up to 2 inches (50 mm) in diameter. The launcher forms a telekinetic barrel sized to the projectile. The typical universal launcher has three separate chambers that can launch three different projectiles. Unlike a normal TW device, the launcher's P.P.E. cost is paid when the projectile is loaded into the chamber. Then, hours, days, or weeks later, just depress the firing button to fire without P.P.E. cost.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 8 (or 16 I.S.P.) for each of the three projectiles.

Weight: 4 pounds (1.8 kg) unloaded.

Mega-Damage: By projectile type. A launched rock deals 1D8 S.D.C. damage.

Rate of Fire: Single shot only, each shot counts as one melee attack.

Effective Range: 800 feet (244 m).

Payload: Three shots.

Requirements to Make: Telekinesis (8), 3 opals (3,000 credits).

Cost: 26,000 credits. Can be easily integrated into a suit of body armor for an additional 2,000 credits.

Slayer Modular Armor

Many Atlantean Undead Slayers don't wear any armor at all. Among those who do, most prefer partial suits that provide access to, and more importantly, let them show off, their magic tattoos. Atlantean Techno-Wizards have been constructing customizable armor to their liking for millennia.

Slayer Modular Armor typically consists of enchanted metal or Ironwood plates custom designed to cover particular areas of the wearer. No two suits of armor are alike and individual suits can be stripped down or added to in a matter of minutes. Unlike a normal suit of armor, modular armor's M.D.C. by location is dependent on the particular pieces worn. The wearer can combine any or all of the following pieces. M.D.C. for the same location (such as an arm) is cumulative. Movement penalties are also cumulative (add up every piece's penalty together for the final penalty) and apply to Physical skills such as Acrobatics, Climbing, Gymnastics, Prowl, Pick Pockets, Swimming and similar. Modular armor is non-environmental and typically does not have any high-tech features (but can be further customized for added cost).

Half or Full Cuirass

Includes a breast and back plate. The full cuirass completely covers the torso. The half cuirass only covers half the torso.

Main Body M.D.C.: Full: 80; Half: 45.

Weight: 12 pounds (5.4 kg), fair mobility, -10% movement penalty for full cuirass; 8 pounds (3.6 kg), good mobility, -5% movement penalty for half cuirass.

Cost: 20,000 credits for a half cuirass; 25,000 credits for a full cuirass.

Gorget

Provides added protection to the neck.

M.D.C.: Adds 8 M.D.C. to a cuirass's Main Body M.D.C. If no cuirass is worn then provides 8 M.D.C. against Called Shots to the neck only.

Weight: 2 pounds (0.9 kg); excellent mobility, no movement penalty.

Cost: 6,000 credits.

Helm

Protects the head. A light helm may not cover the face or ears. A full helm often looks like a knight's or Greek hoplite's helm.

Head M.D.C.: Light Helm: 35; Full Helm: 50.

Weight: 2 pounds (0.9 kg) for the light helm and 3 pounds (1.35 kg) for the full helm; excellent mobility and no movement penalty for either. The full helm imposes a -2 penalty to Perception Rolls.

Cost: 12,000 credits for a light helm; 18,000 credits for a full helm.

Vambrace, Couter, Rerebrace, and Pauldron

A vambrace protects the forearm, a couter the elbow, a rerebrace protects the upper arm, while a pauldron protects the shoulder.

Arm M.D.C.: Vambrace: 10; Couter: 8; Rerebrace: 10; Pauldron: 12; (all four combined give the arm 40 M.D.C.).

Weight: Roughly half a pound (0.23 kg) each; good mobility, -1% movement penalty if more than two pieces are worn on the arm, -2% if both arms have more than two pieces.

Cost: 3,000 credits for a vambrace or rerebrace; 2,000 credits for a couter; 4,000 credits for a pauldron; purchase for each arm separately.

Gauntlet

Protects the hand and wrist with articulated plates.

Hand M.D.C.: 8

Weight: Half a pound (0.2 kg) each; excellent mobility, no movement penalty, but imposes a -10% penalty on skills requiring manual dexterity (Pick Pockets, Pick Locks, etc.).

Cost: 8,000 credits; purchase for each hand separately.

Half or Full Greave

A half greave protects the lower leg while a full greave protects the entire leg.

Leg M.D.C.: Half Greave: 35; Full Greave: 60.

Weight: 2 pounds (0.9 kg) for a half greave and 3 pounds (1.35 kg) for a full greave; good mobility, -1% movement penalty for each half greave and -2% penalty for each full greave. An extra -5% penalty if the legs do not match!

Cost: 6,000 credits for a half greave, 9,000 credits for a full greave; purchase for each leg separately.

Solleret

An armored shoe or boot.

Foot M.D.C.: 8

Weight: Half a pound (0.23 kg) each; good mobility, -1% movement penalty for each boot, but an extra -10% penalty if the boots don't match!

Cost: 4,000 credits; purchase for each foot separately.

Atlantean Armor Additions

Atlantean armor is often customized by its wearer. The following are often added to an Atlantean's armor. The costs are for the open market. Techno-Wizard modifications may cost three to five times more at locations where Techno-Wizardry is rare or illegal.

Anti-Vampire Spikes or Blades: Wood spikes or blades can be attached to the armor and then enchanted with the Ironwood spell. Ironwood spikes and blades are tougher than steel and deal more damage than normal wooden weapons. Small spikes/blades deal 2D6 S.D.C. (double H.P. damage to vampires). Large spikes/blades deal 3D6 S.D.C. (double H.P. damage to vampires). Does not count against the normal limit of four maximum TW functions available for a suit of body armor. Cost: 12,000 credits and adds 1 pound (0.45 kg) for small spikes or blades on each fist, forearm, shoulder, foot, or helmet. 21,000 credits and 2 pounds (0.9 kg) for small spikes or blades on each arm, leg, torso front, or torso back. Double cost and weight for long spikes or blades.

Built-in Flashlight: Located on the wrist, chest, shoulder, or head. Activated by a small button or voice command. Can be tuned to any color, bright white light, or infrared spectrums. May be powered by either a normal or TW rechargeable battery (cost 1 P.P.E. or 2 I.S.P. to recharge). Cost: 3,000 credits.

Healing Band: A reinforced band around the arm or leg that's designed to stay in place even after the armor has been shredded. Just slap the activator and it injects IRMSS nano-bots (*Rifts® Ultimate Edition*, page 263) into the bloodstream followed 30 seconds later by a Greater Healing spell. Two melee rounds after activation the wearer heals 3D4x10 S.D.C. or 2D4 M.D.C. (if an M.D.C. creature). The band also features a computer controlled Bio-Comp monitor (*Rifts® Ultimate Edition*, page 263) that senses the wearer's vital signs. The band can be programmed to activate a specified period of time after a set condition happens to the wearer's body, such as 30 seconds after falling unconscious. Has four charges, and then needs to be reloaded with new IRMSS 'bots and 24 P.P.E. Counts towards the four maximum TW features that the armor can have. Cost: 50,000 credits.

Mystic Exoskeleton: The armor adds +6 to P.S. (and it's Supernatural), +12 to Spd, and doubles the wearer's jumping distance. Also, he fatigues at half the usual rate. Uses a combination of Superhuman Strength, Superhuman Speed, Energize Spell, Talisman, and several secret incantations. Does not require P.P.E. to activate (always active) nor count against the normal limit of four maximum TW functions available for a suit of body armor. Cost: 405,000 credits.

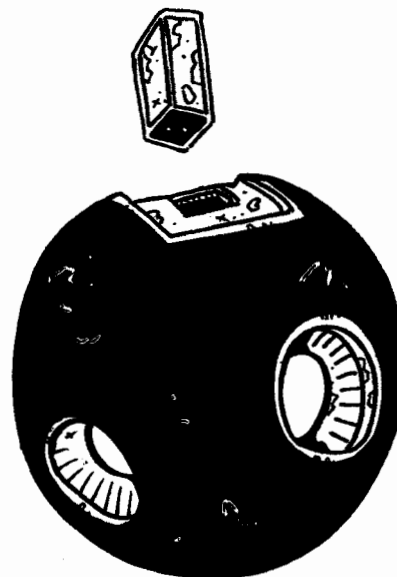
Nightvision Lenses: Fitted to the inside of the face mask, these provide passive nightvision with a range of 1,200 feet (366 m). Constructed with an efficient and simple combination of con-

ventional technology, Techno-Wizardry, and Stone Mastery (the lenses are actually custom shaped gems). Cost: 3,000 credits.

Self Sealing Armor: A TW feature that automatically repairs 2D6 M.D.C. to the armor every time the wearer spends 30 P.P.E. (or 60 I.S.P.). Utilizes the spells Mend the Broken and Create Steel. Counts towards the four maximum TW features that the armor can have. Cost: 40,000 credits.

Other TW Features: Atlanteans often add a variety of TW features to their armor. The following are the most common: Magic Optics System (*Rifts® Ultimate Edition*, page 136), Armor of Ithan, Breathe without Air, Invisibility: Simple & Superior, Shadow Meld, Sustain (very common), Swim as the Fish: Superior, Fly as the Eagle, Impervious to Energy, Invulnerability, and Invincible Armor. A maximum of four can be added.

Aerihman/Sunaj Equipment



DRK-E4 "Black Ball" E-Sphere

Like much of Clan Aerihman technology, the E-Sphere was invented by mysterious alien allies of the Sunaj. It appears as a black plastic ball about the size of an apple. Four circular indentations are spaced equally around its equator, while a circular depression on top hooks into its married weapon. Each E-Sphere contains roughly the same energy as a standard E-Clip. However, the reason the Aerihman like the E-Sphere is that it can be used as a highly explosive grenade, turning extra ammunition into another weapon.

Like much of Clan Aerihman technology, it's manufactured at one of their main cities, which is located in a dimension with a universal energy matrix (see *Rifts® Megaverse® Builder*, page 9). This makes the Black Ball compatible with almost all dimensions and alien technologies.

Mega-Damage: 6D6 M.D. to a 20 foot (6 m) area. However, if any amount of energy is used from the E-Sphere, even one shot, its damage is reduced by half. If over half the energy has been used then it fails to explode.

Effective Throwing Range: About 40 yards/120 feet/36 m.

Market Cost: 5,000 credits (expensive for a grenade, but the Aerihman don't seem to mind).

E-Sphere Bandoleer

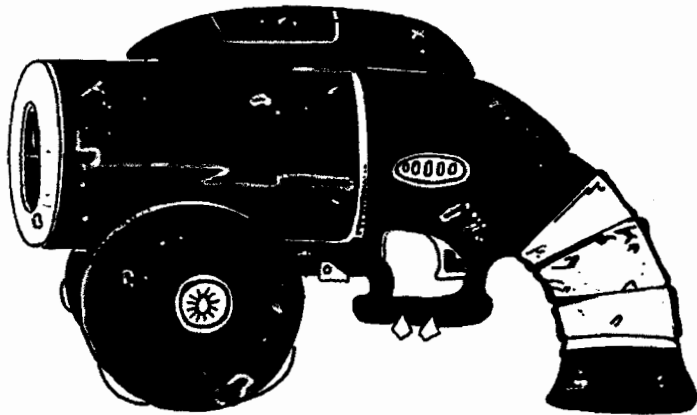
This simple strap holds four E-Spheres and is used to provide ammunition for energy weapons as well as quick access to the explosive E-Spheres. The strap has a variety of clips and fasteners and can be worn around the waist, over the shoulder, or hooked to a backpack or other gear. Each E-Sphere plugs into the bandoleer, which is connected to a weapon through a cable. The bandoleer automatically draws power from the first E-Sphere until it is fully drained and then switches to the next without interruption. The bandoleer always draws from the E-Spheres in the same order, so the user will know which are fully charged and which are used.

When the E-Spheres are loaded onto the bandoleer they become primed as grenades as well. A quick release mechanism allows the user to swiftly retrieve and throw an E-Sphere (one melee attack). Also, a small armored box on the end of the bandoleer contains a TW charger. By channeling 60 P.P.E. into the charger, a user will completely recharge one E-Sphere. It automatically recharges E-Spheres in the reverse order that it drains them.

Like much of Clan Aerihman technology, it's manufactured at one of their main cities, which is located in a dimension with a universal energy matrix (see *Rifts® Megaverse® Builder*, page 9). This makes the Black Ball compatible with almost all dimensions and alien technologies.

Weight: 14 lbs (6.3 kg).

Market Cost: 55,000 credits, largely due to the Techno-Wizard charger.



DRK-66 "Black Light" Pulse Particle Carbine

Manufactured by Atlantean Clan Aerihman for their Warrior Thrall slave soldiers, the Black Light is a durable energy rifle that fires pulses of particles (similar to Transgalactic Empire weapons). Like much of Clan Aerihman technology, it's manufactured at one of their main cities, which is located in a dimension with a universal energy matrix (see *Rifts® Megaverse® Builder*, page 9). This makes the weapon compatible with almost all dimensions and alien technologies.

The carbine has a relatively short, very thick barrel located directly in front of the pistol grip. It's connected to the grip by a short, curving bar underneath and the power regulator on top. The whole weapon is encased in a sloping plastic alloy and the various components seem to flow and meld into one another in an almost organic fashion. The power regulator is oblong, about a third as thick as the barrel, and has a targeting sight on its rear. Two E-Spheres hook into the full sized stock from the bottom. It

normally comes in a jet-black color with gray, dark blue, or dark purple highlights. The carbine is about twice as durable as an equivalent rifle (45 M.D.C.), and makes a good club in a pinch.

Clan Aerihman sometimes sells the rifle to backwater dimensions at inflated prices. However, they do not make enough quantities to turn a profit in dimensions where comparable technology exists.

Weight: 9.5 lbs (4.3 kg).

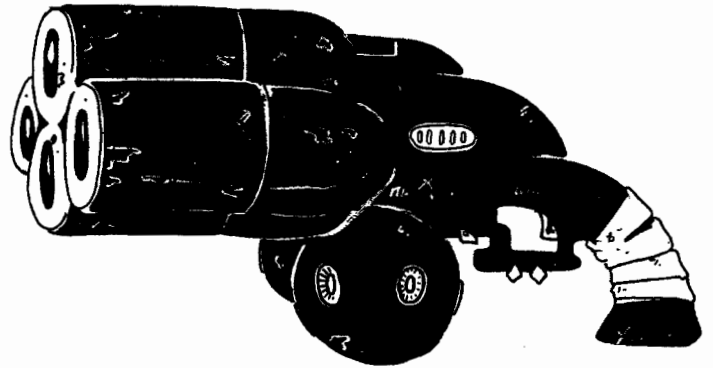
Mega-Damage: 3D6+6 M.D. per single blast. 1D6x10+10 M.D. for a three round burst (counts as one melee attack).

Rate of Fire: Equal to the number of attacks of the user; each blast or burst counts as one melee action/attack.

Effective Range: 2,000 feet (610 m).

Payload: 30 blasts from each E-Sphere, for a total of 60 blasts. A separate power cord can also be attached to the bottom of the handle and connected to an E-Sphere bandoleer. A bandoleer has four E-Spheres, for a total of 120 blasts, and weighs 14 pounds (6.3 kg). The E-Spheres in the stock kick in automatically when the bandoleer is exhausted.

Market Cost: 50,000 to 60,000 credits on Rifts Earth (rare). 25,000 to 30,000 credits in the Three Galaxies (rare). More often the carbine is sold in primitive dimensions for the equivalent of 100,000 to 200,000 credits each.



DRK-444 "Blackout" Gatling Particle Cannon

Similar to Clan Aerihman's Black Light energy carbine, the Blackout Gatling cannon functions as an infantry support weapon. It is a favorite of Ogre Warrior Thralls, who typically utilize it with a pair of bandoleers (one on the hip, one strapped to their backpack). Like much of Clan Aerihman technology, it's manufactured at one of their main cities, which is located in a dimension with a universal energy matrix (see *Rifts® Megaverse® Builder*, page 9). This makes the weapon compatible with almost all dimensions and alien technologies.

The cannon has four somewhat short, very thick barrels located directly in front of the pistol grip. They're connected to the grip by a short, curving bar underneath and the power regulator on top. The power regulator is oblong, about half as thick as the barrels, and has a targeting sight on its rear. Like the Black Light carbine, the Blackout is encased in a sloping plastic alloy and the various components seem to flow and meld into one another in an almost organic fashion. Two E-Spheres hook into the full-sized stock from the bottom. However, its main source of power is an E-Sphere bandoleer connected via cable. It normally comes in a jet-black color with gray, dark blue, or dark purple highlights.

Weight: 26 lbs (11.7 kg).

Mega-Damage: 3D6+6 M.D. per single blast. 1D6x10+10 M.D. for a three round burst (counts as one melee attack). 2D6x10+20 M.D. for an eight round burst (counts as two melee attacks). The user can also spray an eight round burst over a 10 foot (3 m) area, doing 3D6+6 M.D. to each target in the area (counts as two melee attacks).

Rate of Fire: Equal to the number of attacks of the user; each blast or three round burst counts as one melee action/attack. Each eight round burst or spray counts as two melee attacks.

Effective Range: 4,000 feet (1,219 m).

Payload: 30 blasts from each E-Sphere, for a total of 60 blasts. A separate power cord can also be attached to the bottom of the handle and connected to an E-Sphere bandoleer. A bandoleer has four E-Spheres, for a total of 120 blasts, and weighs 14 pounds (6.3 kg). The E-Spheres in the stock kick in automatically when the bandoleer is exhausted.

Market Cost: 100,000 to 120,000 credits on Rifts Earth (rare). 75,000 to 90,000 credits in the Three Galaxies (rare). A power pack costs between 60,000 and 120,000 credits.



DRK-1200 Black Lance

Manufactured by Atlantean Clan Aerihman for Sunaj Slayers and Assassins, the Black Lance is a durable energy pole arm with a powerful, high intensity laser integrated into it. It's an ingenious combination of sophisticated technology (on par with the Three Galaxies) and subtle Techno-Wizardry. Like much of Clan Aerihman technology, it's manufactured at one of their main cities, which is located in a dimension with a universal energy matrix (see *Rifts® Megaverse® Builder*, page 9). This makes the weapon compatible with almost all dimensions and alien technologies.

The Black Lance comes in a variety of styles and configurations. However, it always resembles a pole arm with one or more long blades on the end. Nestled among the blades is an inconspicuous laser nozzle that can fire a single long-range, sniper-like laser blast, a shorter-range laser burst, or create a two foot laser-like energy blade for hand to hand combat (like the Wilk's laser knife and sword; extends well past the conventional blades). Also, the conventional blades are silvered for use against the supernatural. The butt end of the weapon widens out to accommodate two E-Spheres or a single E-Clip. The weapon itself is almost always black, occasionally with silver, gold, sapphire, or amethyst highlights.

The weapon's a sensation among the Sunaj, and Aerihman artificers cannot keep up with demand. So far, no Black Lances have been sold on the open market for this reason.

Weight: 13 lbs (5.85 kg), but well balanced when used two-handed.

Mega-Damage: 5D6+6 M.D. per single blast. 1D6x10+10 M.D. for a three round burst (counts as one melee attack). The laser blade inflicts 5D6 M.D. per strike. The silvered blades inflict 2D6 to 3D6 S.D.C. (depending on the number and length of blades). A strike with the butt deals 1D8 S.D.C.

Rate of Fire: Equal to the number of attacks of the user; each blast or burst counts as one melee action/attack.

Effective Range: 6,000 feet (1,829 m) for a single blast, 2,000 feet (610 m) for a burst.

Bonuses: +1 to strike on an Aimed shot.

Skills to Use: W.P. Heavy M.D. Weapon for ranged attacks and W.P. Pole Arm for hand to hand.

Payload: 30 blasts from each E-Sphere, for a total of 60 blasts. 30 blasts from a standard E-Clip or 40 blasts from a long E-Clip. The laser blade drains one blast for each minute of use.

A separate power cord can also be attached to the bottom of the handle and connected to an E-Sphere bandoleer. A bandoleer has four E-Spheres, for a total of 120 blasts, and weighs 14 pounds (6.3 kg). The E-Spheres in the stock kick in automatically when the bandoleer is exhausted. Note, however, that the weapon is -1 to strike and -2 to parry in hand to hand combat when the power cord is attached due to restricted range of motion.

Market Cost: Not sold on the open market. The Black Market might have one available for 100,000 to 200,000 credits, but would be extremely rare. Sunaj target those who possess Black Lances for elimination, knowing that they probably came by them through foul play.

Sunaj Body Armor

Although Sunaj Assassin armor is the most famous garb worn by the Sunaj, they have a variety of body armor available for their operatives. Black-Suit armor, the lightest, consists of a high-tech mesh of super strong fibers and alloys. It offers maximum flexibility, is very lightweight, and can be easily folded or crumpled up into a relatively small ball when not worn (ideal for concealment). Scout armor combines a flexible mesh with strategic plates protecting the chest, back, thighs, and head. It is slightly heavier than the Black-Suit, but still very comfortable. Assassin armor consists of a full suit of form fitting plates and is the most common armor. Assault armor, like Assassin armor, is composed entirely of plates, but is heavier and provides more protection. Sunaj Slayers prefer Assault armor.

All Sunaj armor covers the wearer from head to toe and usually has a demonic face mask with polarizing goggles. Colors are exclusively black, with occasional dark gray, blue, or purple highlights. Distinguishing between the different types of armor can be difficult, especially at first glance or when partially concealed by a cape or cloak.

They are also specially constructed to allow the wearer to cast spells unimpeded. However, spellcasters usually prefer the Black-Suit or Scout armor for comfort. The armor is also very easy to modify using Techno-Wizardry. Techno-Wizards are +10% to skill rolls and -10% for time needed to add a Techno-Wizard device to the armor. Lastly, like much of Clan Aerihman technology, the armor is manufactured at one of their main cities, which is located in a dimension with a universal energy matrix (see *Rifts® Megaverse® Builder*, page 9). This makes the armor's electronics and high-tech features function in almost any dimension. As full environmental armor, all Sunaj armors have the properties common to environmental armor listed in *Rifts® Ultimate Edition*, page 267.

Sunaj Black-Suit Body Armor

M.D.C. by Location: Main Body: 50, Helmet: 40, Arms: 30 each, and Legs: 40 each.

Weight: 9 pounds (4.05 kg); superior mobility, no movement penalty.

Black Market Cost: 100,000 credits*.

Sunaj Scout Body Armor

M.D.C. by Location: Main Body: 75, Helmet: 65, Arms: 40 each, and Legs: 60 each.

Weight: 12 pounds (5.4 kg); excellent mobility, -5% movement penalty.

Black Market Cost: 130,000 credits*.

Sunaj Assassin Body Armor

M.D.C. by Location: Main Body: 110, Helmet: 70, Arms: 50 each, and Legs: 70 each.

Weight: 16 pounds (7.2 kg); fair mobility, -10% movement penalty.

Black Market Cost: 180,000 credits*.

Sunaj Assault Body Armor

M.D.C. by Location: Main Body: 135, Helmet: 80, Arms: 70 each, and Legs: 80 each.

Weight: 22 pounds (9.9 kg); fair mobility, -15% movement penalty.

Black Market Cost: 240,000 credits*.

* Very rare; the cost represents rarity and not actual, marketable value. Sunaj agents in good standing can usually acquire armor appropriate to their O.C.C. at no cost. **Note:** Sunaj hunt down and destroy imposters with prejudice.

Sunaj Armor Additions

Sunaj armor is often customized by its wearer. The following are often added to Sunaj armor. The costs are for the open market. Techno-Wizard modifications may cost three to five times more at locations where Techno-Wizardry is rare or illegal. Sunaj also have access to armor additions used by other Atlanteans as well. Individual Sunaj agents who have proven themselves can often purchase additions at half cost.

Concealed, Retractable Vibro-Knife: A favorite of Assassins and often located in odd places (knee, boot, elbow, etc.). Deals 1D6 M.D. Springs out when a secret switch is depressed or upon voice activation. Can be used while protruding from its housing or pulled out for normal use. Cost: 6,000 credits.

Secret Compartment: Between three to twelve inches (8-30 cm) wide and long depending on its location, but flat (one inch/2.5 cm deep). Great for concealing documents, computer discs/chips, laser scalpels, candy bars, flat knives (1D4 M.D. or S.D.C.), etc. Up to two large compartments in the torso, one large and one small in each leg, and one small in each arm. Cost: 1,000-2,500 each, depending on size.

Multi-Optics Eyes: Same as the Multi-Optics Helmet (*Rifts® Ultimate Edition*, page 264) built into the face mask. Usually designed to look like one or more oversized, monstrous eyes. Cost: 8,000 credits.

Communications Web: Wired throughout the armor just below the surface. Increases radio range to 90 miles (144 km). Includes computer-controlled multi-scrambler (+10% to Electronic Countermeasures skill). A common addition to Sunaj acting as part of a larger unit or doing reconnaissance. Cost: 2,400 credits.

Battle Coordination Computer: Located on the forearm, a combination of a normal portable computer (*Rifts® Ultimate Edition*, page 262) with a sizable touch screen and a Techno-Wizard sensor. The computer is typically loaded with data files on the enemy, maps of the surrounding terrain, and similar useful tools for an officer. It also has a gyroscopic inertial navigation system that, when combined with a map of the area, gives a +20% bonus to Navigation and Land Navigation skills while traveling by foot.

When activated with 10 P.P.E., the TW sensor displays dots on the screen (similar to a radar screen) for each sentient life form within a 300 foot (91 m) radius. It continues to display and track creatures for one hour. A maximum of 60 creatures will be displayed and tracked (the 60 closest). Any creature with hostile intent shows up as a red dot. Other creatures show up as blue dots. By touching the computer to a creature and spending 5 P.P.E. (or 10 I.S.P.), it will thereafter recognize that creature and he will show up as a green dot. The user can program a name into the computer that will float above that particular green dot (the default is a number, 1 through 12). The computer can remember (no time limit) up to 12 creatures in this way. After twelve, to remember a new creature an old one must be erased. The sensor does not detect buildings, vehicles, robots, or terrain, but does give distance and bearing for each creature. A map of the area can overlay the sensor screen, giving the user a rough idea of where the sensed creatures are in relation to features on the map. Utilizes a combination of the spells *Locate*, *Watchguard*, and *Second Sight*.

The Sunaj Slayers have big plans for this device and are testing it by giving it to Sunaj Slayers leading squads of Warrior Thralls. The Slayer has the computer remember each Warrior Thrall in his squad as well as one or two other Slayers in the same unit (platoon leader, fellow squad leader, etc.). He then coordinates his troops to flush out hidden enemies, prevent ambushes, etc. Counts towards the four maximum TW features the armor can have. Cost: 50,000 credits.

Security Band: A reinforced band around the arm or leg that's designed to stay in place even after the armor has been shredded. The band features a computer controlled Bio-Comp monitor (*Rifts® Ultimate Edition*, page 263) that senses the wearer's vital signs. The band is typically programmed to activate a specified period of time after the wearer falls unconscious. When activated, a plasma or fusion explosion is triggered, completely destroying the wearer's body and possibly damaging those nearby. A plasma security band deals 1D4x10 M.D. to everything in a 12 foot (3.6 m) radius. A fusion security band deals 1D6x10 M.D. to everything within 10 feet (3 m). The wearer takes double damage and his body is destroyed beyond recognition. Even wearers with tough M.D.C. flesh, such as Sunaj Slayers, will have their skin burned off and suffer disfigurement. Security bands are typically only used by the most zealous of Sunaj to prevent True Atlanteans or others from discovering their identity (completely destroys face, fingerprints, skin/tattoos, teeth, and usually everything else). Cost: 18,000 credits.

Stealth Armor: A TW feature that camouflages the wearer (as per the spell Chameleon) and renders him absolutely silent. For purposes of hearing, the wearer automatically makes all Prowl rolls. For purposes of visual detection, see the Chameleon spell. A favorite of Assassins. Takes 10 P.P.E. to activate and lasts 15 minutes. Cost: 20,000 credits.

Other TW Features: Sunaj often add a variety of TW features to their armor. The following are the most common: Magic Optics System (*Rifts® Ultimate Edition*, page 136), Armor of Ithan, Breathe without Air, Invisibility: Simple & Superior, Shadow Meld, Sustain (very common), Swim as the Fish: Superior, Fly as the Eagle, Impervious to Energy, Invulnerability, and Invincible Armor. A maximum of four can be added, and most Sunaj have one for every three full levels of experience (one at 3rd level, two at 6th level, etc.). Also, high level Sunaj often have TW features that can hold enough of a P.P.E. charge for one use, enabling them to spend the P.P.E. to activate the feature days, weeks, or months in advance.

Sunaj Mobile Pack

This rather simple Techno-Wizard device has become a staple among Sunaj military units. It consists of an armored, rigid backpack with a built-in TW flight system. The TW flight system, based off the spell Fly, isn't very fast, maneuverable, or capable of high altitude flight. It is, however, very easy to make and effective over long distances. Thus, entire platoons can be equipped with this pack, greatly increasing their mobility. Since the pack also doubles as a survival backpack, it has proven very handy to soldiers on the go.

Weight: 32 lbs (14.4 kg) fully loaded.

Pack M.D.C.: 30

TW Flight Capabilities:

Maximum Speed: 35 mph (56 km).

Maximum Altitude: 1,000 feet (305 m).

Duration: 8 hours maximum per activation.

Maneuverability: Hover stationary or fly in any direction without restriction. However, no extra bonuses to parry or dodge. Flight is completely noiseless.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 15 (or 30 I.S.P.).

Standard Pack Contents:

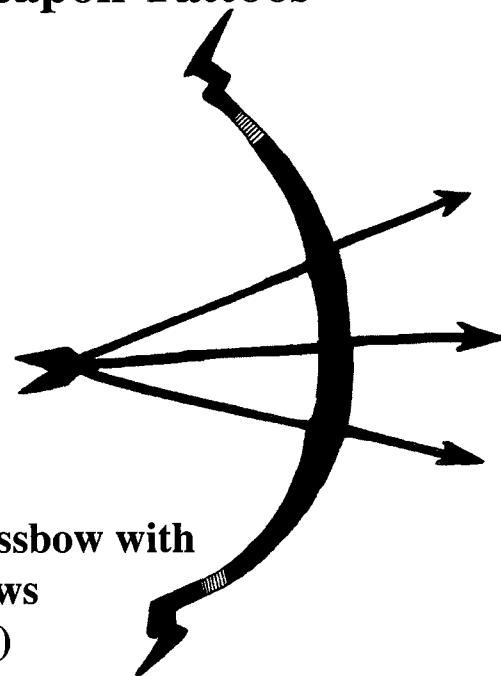
- A lightweight sleeping bag.
- Two-Person Tent: Folded, it's the size of a paperback book. Unfolded it can sleep two people comfortably. Offers protection against the cold and rain – insulates and keeps people inside relatively warm at temperatures up to -40 degrees Fahrenheit (-40 Centigrade). The tent has a water collection system to help the user(s) survive in desert climates as well. The tent collects all moisture that evaporates from the occupants, basically increasing any water supplies the user carries by 20% (with the tent, eight days of water will last ten days).
- Flashlight with concealed pocket knife and TW rechargeable battery (1 P.P.E. charges the battery for 48 hours of continuous use). Typically stored in the right side pocket.
- Compass/Inertial Mapper: Lets you know how far you've traveled and in which direction(s): +10% to Land Navigation rolls. The compass has a mirror finish on one side and can use the sun to signal others or send Morse Code messages. Typically stored in the right side pocket.
- Mini-First Aid Kit (1): A roll of gauze, 48 adhesive bandages (different sizes), roll of medical tape, pair of small scissors, pocket knife, small bottle of disinfectant, and a tube of protein healing salve. Typically stored in the left side pocket.

- Hunting and Fishing Kit: Wires, fishing line and several hooks and pulleys, useful both for fishing and setting snares for small game (not to mention traps).
- One Gallon (3.8 l) Water Bladder: Built-in with excellent insulation and puncture resistant M.D.C. material. Complete with sip tube to drink while on the go.
- TW Heater/Cooler Brick: A metal box the size of a small brick with an emitter coil behind a grille on one side and several dial controls beneath a transparent cover on the bottom. Set the controls to burning hot, freezing cold, or anywhere in between and pump 2 P.P.E. (or 4 I.S.P) into it. Grille will radiate heat like a fire or cold like a freezer for two hours. Can start a fire by sticking combustibles through the grille. Can be set to a low level and affixed to the inside of the pack in such a way to keep the water bladder hot or cold.
- Bar of soap and a washcloth.
- Food ration bag.
- Survival knife, typically stored in a sheath on the right chest strap.
- Multi-Smoke Grenade: Combines different chemicals to produce different colors of smoke. Twist the dial to blue, black, gray, purple, or green, pull the pin and throw. Covers a 30 foot (9 m) area. Typically stored on the left chest strap.
- Two signal flares.
- A wooden cross.

Market Cost: 35,000 credits for Clan Aerihman members and allies. Double for everyone else (minimum).

New Tattoos

Magic Weapon Tattoos



Bow or Crossbow with Three Arrows (Rapid-Fire)

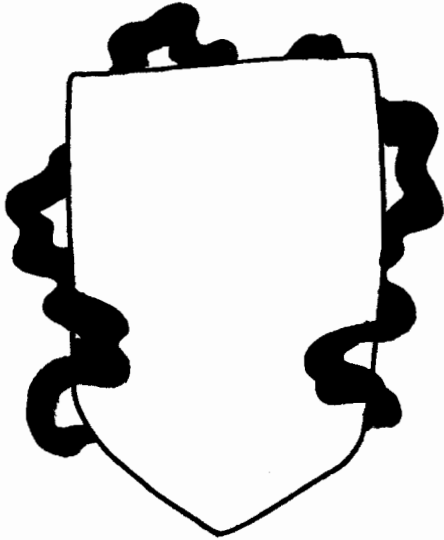
P.P.E. to Activate: 30 (15 for the Tattoo Archer O.C.C.)

Duration: Fifteen minutes per level of experience.

Power: When arrows are fired from the bow they magically transform into three arrows while in flight. When a crossbow is used it rapid-fires three arrows for each pull of the trigger. The result is triple damage for each attack.

This tattoo can be combined with any other Magic Weapon Tattoo. Simply add up the P.P.E. costs and effects. When combined with Weapon Dripping Blood Tattoo, double the damage of each arrow before tripling for burst fire. For example: Ariel has a Flaming Bow with Three Arrows with Wings, all Dripping Blood. It costs 50 P.P.E. to activate, deals 1D6x10+6 M.D. (2D6 doubled to 4D6, then tripled), 2,000 foot (610 m) range (triple normal), and never runs out of ammunition (arrows magically return). Like all Magic Weapon Tattoos, it lasts 15 minutes per level of experience.

Availability: Uncommon, but known by both True Atlanteans and the Splugorth.



Floating Shield (Ghost Shield)

P.P.E. to Activate: 10

Duration: Fifteen minutes per level of experience.

Power: Creates the shield illustrated, floating before the T-Man. The shield has 600 S.D.C. (6 M.D.C.) and automatically floats between the T-Man and incoming attacks. It quickly floats out of the way when the T-Man makes an attack and does not impede his movement in any way. It attempts to block the first four attacks leveled against the T-Man every melee round. It is +6 to parry melee attacks, and can even attempt to parry energy blasts and projectiles, but at a -2 penalty. It takes one-quarter damage from any attack it parries, but full damage if the shield itself is targeted (a Called Shot with no penalty).

This tattoo can be combined with the Flaming Shield tattoo. The combined tattoo costs 25 P.P.E. to activate, lasts 15 minutes per level of experience, is indestructible, and is +8 to parry (no bonus or penalty to parry ranged attacks).

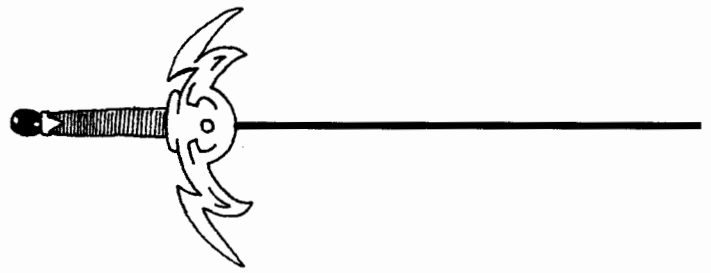
Availability: Common among Chiang-Ku, uncommon among True Atlanteans, unknown among Splugorth.

Weapon with Paper Thin Blade (Thinblade)

P.P.E. to Activate: 15

Duration: Fifteen minutes per level of experience.

Power: The bladed weapon inflicts the Mega-Damage equivalent of double the usual S.D.C. damage to any physical object or



creature. It inflicts the Mega-Damage equivalent of half the usual S.D.C. damage to any non-physical target, such as force fields, protective magic auras, etc. If a supernatural effect conjures a physical object, including the spell *Invincible Armor* and the tattoo *Knight in Full Body Armor*, the blade deals double damage.

This tattoo cannot be combined with the tattoo *Weapon Covered in Flames*, but can be combined with other magic weapon tattoos. When combined with Weapon Dripping Blood, it deals triple damage to physical objects or creatures and normal damage to non-physical targets.

Availability: Common among most Chiang-Ku, uncommon among True Atlanteans, rare everywhere else. This tattoo is most often seen in oriental regions and is believed to be the creation of the Chiang-Ku.

Power Tattoos



Black Crescent Dripping Blood (Critical Strike)

P.P.E. to Activate: 25

Duration: Two minutes per level of experience.

Power: The tattoo user scores a Critical Strike on a roll of a Natural 16 or greater, and all Critical Strikes deal triple damage. This applies to any attack requiring an attack roll, including magical attacks.

Availability: The Aerihman True Atlantean clan developed this tattoo. Knowledge of its creation has not spread to the Splugorth yet. Unknown among other True Atlanteans or Chiang-Ku.



Black Skull in a Circle (Fear)

P.P.E. to Activate: 25

Duration: Two minutes per level of experience.

Power: All who meet the tattoo user's gaze are struck with mind numbing terror. The tattoo user has Horror Factor 16. In addition, anyone who fails their save vs Horror Factor must make a second save vs magic or flee in terror away from the user. The user can elect to exclude friends and allies from the tattoo's effect.

Availability: The Aerihman True Atlantean clan developed this tattoo. Knowledge of its creation has not spread to the Splugorth yet. Unknown among other True Atlanteans or Chiang-Ku.

Black Sphere (Sphere of Destruction)

P.P.E. to Activate: 180

Duration: One melee round per level of experience.

Power: The tattoo user creates a floating, jet-black sphere that destroys everything it touches. The sphere's size depends on the tattoo user's level. At first level it is only the size of a baseball. By tenth level it's the size of a beach ball. The sphere floats in a slow orbit around the tattoo user at a distance of 3-6 feet (0.9-1.8 m). Once per melee round, he can direct the sphere to fly towards any target within 200 feet (61 m) and strike it (counts as one melee attack/action for the tattoo user, roll to strike the target with a +3 bonus – no other bonuses apply; the target may dodge, but not parry). Hit or miss, the sphere then flies back to the tattoo user's side within a few seconds.

While orbiting the tattoo user, the sphere moves too slowly to be a hindrance to hand to hand combat. However, at the end of the melee round, if the tattoo user did not direct the sphere to strike a target, it will attempt to strike one random target within five feet (1.5 m) of the user. This target may be a foe, friend, or inanimate object (never the tattoo user himself) – the G.M. rolls randomly to determine the target and then rolls to strike (with a +3 bonus). The target may dodge the attack, but cannot parry the sphere.

Anything struck by or even accidentally touching the sphere takes 1D6x10 M.D. If the damage exceeds the target's M.D.C., it is completely vaporized! More experienced tattoo users produce a larger sphere, which does more damage. At third level, and every

other level after, increase the damage by 1D6x10 M.D. (2D6x10 M.D. at third level, 3D6x10 M.D. at fifth level, etc.).

Availability: Rare, but known among True Atlanteans, Splugorth, and Chiang-Ku. Usually reserved for proven veterans, champions, and warriors of renown.



Black Void with Star Field (Space Powers)

P.P.E. to Activate: 25

Duration: Two minutes per level of experience or until cancelled.

Power: Power over vacuum and space. Can use the following for the duration of the tattoo:

- *Resist Vacuum:* Same as the spell, active for the duration of the tattoo (*The Rifter*® #10, page 86).
- *Vacuum Speech:* Same as the spell, active for the duration of the tattoo (*The Rifter*® #10, page 88).
- *Create Vacuum:* Same as the spell (*The Rifter*® #10, page 84).
- *Spaceflight: Superior:* Same as the spell (*The Rifter*® #10, page 87).
- *Cosmic Awareness:* Intuitively recognize star patterns and use them to sense position/location. Thus, the T-Man can navigate without the need of using instruments. Effectively gives the character Navigation: Space skill of 89% and Land Navigation of 92% (but only when stars are visible, such as on a clear night).

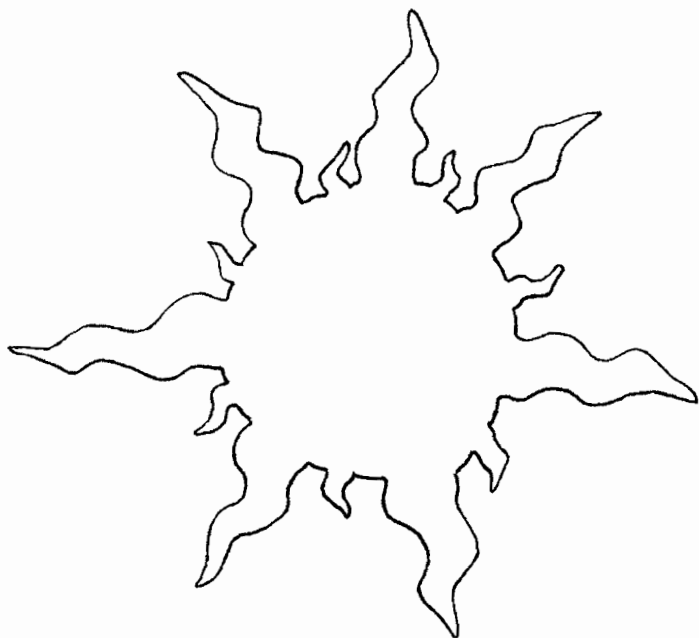
Availability: The Acherean True Atlantean clan of Alexandria in the United Worlds of Warlock developed this tattoo. It is most common among Atlanteans hailing from the Three Galaxies.

Blazing Sun (Light Powers)

P.P.E. to Activate: 35

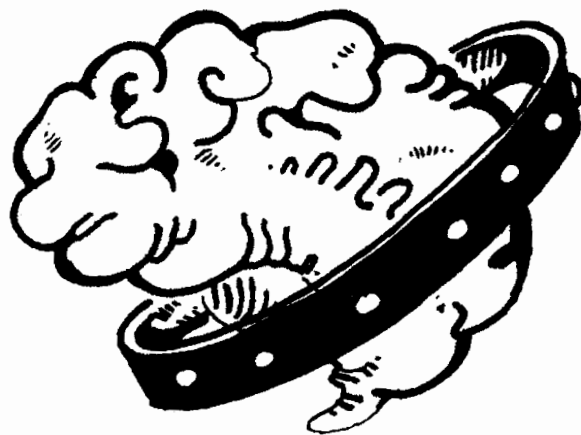
Duration: One minute per level of experience or until cancelled.

Power: Power over light. Can use the following for the duration of the tattoo:



- **Blinding Flash:** Same as the spell.
- **Globe of Daylight:** Same as the spell.
- **Chameleon:** Self only, same as the spell.
- **Polarized Vision:** Cannot be blinded by bright lights and +10% to sense of direction, active for the duration of the tattoo.
- **Fire Beams of Light from Hands or Eyes:** Range: 500 feet (152 m) plus 100 feet (30.5 m) per level of experience. Rate of Fire: Equal to the number of hand to hand attacks per melee. Damage: 1D6 M.D. per level of experience (deals double damage to vampires and others vulnerable to sunlight). Bonuses: +3 to strike in addition to P.P. bonus (no other bonuses apply).

Availability: Common among True Atlanteans. Rare otherwise. Popular among those who battle vampires.



Brain Encircled by Collar on a Leash (Entrancement)

P.P.E. to Activate: 30

Duration: One minute per level of experience.

Power: While this tattoo is active the user can entrance others as the *Trance* spell as often as once per melee (takes one melee attack).

Availability: The Aerihman True Atlantean clan developed this tattoo to better control slaves. However, knowledge of its creation has spread to the Splugorth as well. Unknown among other True Atlanteans or Chiang-Ku.

Brain with Energy Aura (Psionic Activate)

P.P.E. to Activate: 10

Duration: Instant.

Power: When activated, the tattoo user instantly activates one psionic power he knows costing 20 I.S.P. or less. He does not spend any I.S.P. to activate the power and the power functions immediately as if he had used his action that activated the tattoo to activate the psionic power.

Availability: Common among True Atlanteans. Uncommon otherwise.



Brain Composed of Brilliant Energy (Psionic Boost)

P.P.E. to Activate: 20

Duration: Two minutes per level of experience.

Power: While this tattoo is active, all of the user's psionic powers function as if he was three levels higher.

Availability: Common among True Atlanteans and Chiang-Ku. Uncommon otherwise.



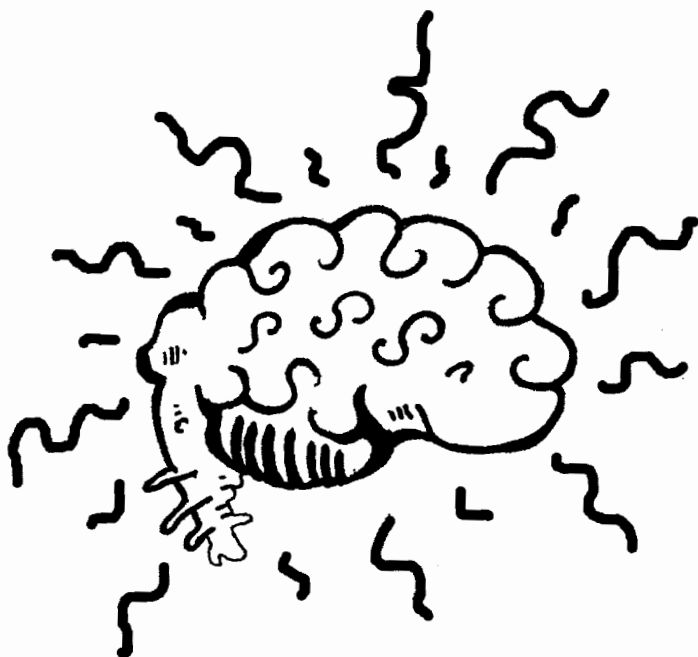
Brain Radiating Energy (Psionic Burst)

P.P.E. to Activate: 25

Duration: One minute per level of experience.

Power: While this tattoo is active, the first 6 I.S.P. the user spends to activate psionic powers each melee round are not subtracted from his current I.S.P. In essence, the first 6 I.S.P. used to activate powers are provided by the tattoo (but do not accumulate to later rounds if not used).

Availability: Common among True Atlanteans and Chiang-Ku. Uncommon otherwise.



Brain Radiating Sonic Waves (Telepathic Transmission)

P.P.E. to Activate: 20

Duration: Instant.

Power: The tattoo user can send a short, 100 word or less, telepathic message to one or more persons within a one mile (1.6 km) radius. He must have met the intended recipient previously or they must be in line of sight. He can send the message to a maximum of one person per level of experience, and they may be in different locations as long as they are in range. Any recipients beyond range simply do not receive the message. Also, any recipient with an active Mind Block will not receive the message either. (Psychics with Mind Block Auto-Defense can choose to receive the message, and will know it is only a message and not a psionic attack.) Unfortunately, the message is a one-way transmission unless the other person has a similar means of communicating back. The time lapse between sending and receiving the message is only a matter of seconds.

If the tattoo user activates the tattoo while on a ley line, the range is increased to the entire length of the line. However, the message then cannot extend beyond the borders of the line, such as when the tattoo user is standing on the edge of the line and an intended recipient is only a couple hundred feet away off the line.

The only danger is that a telepath (psionic or magic) within the range of the transmission (one mile or on the ley line) may be able to listen in on the message. There is a 01-20% chance that any psionic or magic character with the Telepathy power or spell will sense a transmission coming through, and there is a 01-31% chance that they too can receive the message. There is no way for the sender to know if others have eavesdropped on his message. Nor is there any way to scramble the message. However, smart tattoo users can prearrange special codes with comrades, reducing a potential eavesdropper's understanding of the message.

Availability: Common among all tattoo artists.



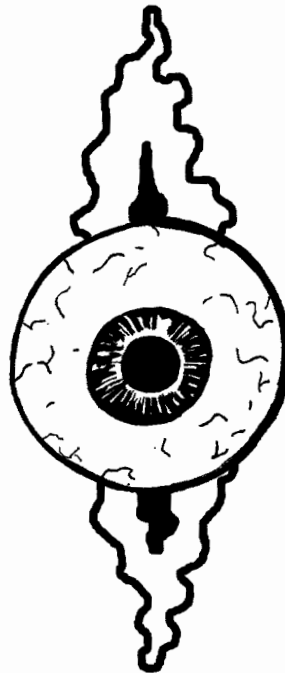
Ear Wrapped in Chains (Globe of Silence)

P.P.E. to Activate: 20

Duration: One minute per level of experience.

Power: Creates a Globe of Silence, as per the spell (*Rifts® Book of Magic*, page 115), centered on the tattoo user. Unlike the spell, the Globe created by the tattoo cannot be targeted away from the user.

Availability: The Aerihman True Atlantean clan developed this tattoo, but knowledge of its creation has recently spread to the Splugorth as well. Unknown among other True Atlanteans or Chiang-Ku. It is very common among Sunaj Assassins.



Eye Emerging from a Rift (See/Sense Dimensional Anomaly)

P.P.E. to Activate: 30

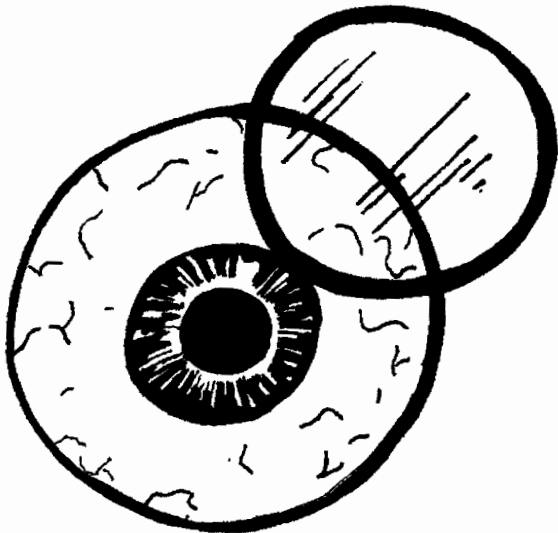
Duration: Five minutes per level of experience.

Power: While this tattoo is active the user senses the following:

- The opening, closing and general location of dimensional Rifts within a 50 mile (80 km) area.

- The opening and closing of mystic portals, dimensional teleportation, Ley Line Storms, and time holes within one mile (1.6 km).
- The opening, closing, and general location of dimensional envelopes within 100 feet (30.4 m).
- The opening, closing, and general location of dimensional pockets within 10 feet (3 m).
- Senses when a space warp (teleportation), wink-out, or time warp is occurring within a 100 foot (30.4 m) radius.
- Senses the presence/essence of Astral Beings, two and four dimensional beings, Entities and Alien Intelligences within a 100 foot (30.5 m) radius. Cannot pinpoint their location.
- In addition, once the general location of a dimensional anomaly is known, the user can see it. Dimensional envelopes and pockets are visible, as well as characters transformed into four dimensional beings, two dimensional beings, and the invisible energy essence of Alien Intelligences and Entities.

Availability: Common among all tattoo artists. Originally invented by the Splugorth, its creation has spread to other tattoo masters.



Eye Partially Covered by Magnifying Monocle (Telescopic and X-Ray Vision)

P.P.E. to Activate: 30

Duration: Five minutes per level of experience.

Power: While this tattoo is active the user has super sharp, crystal clear, long distance vision as well as x-ray vision.

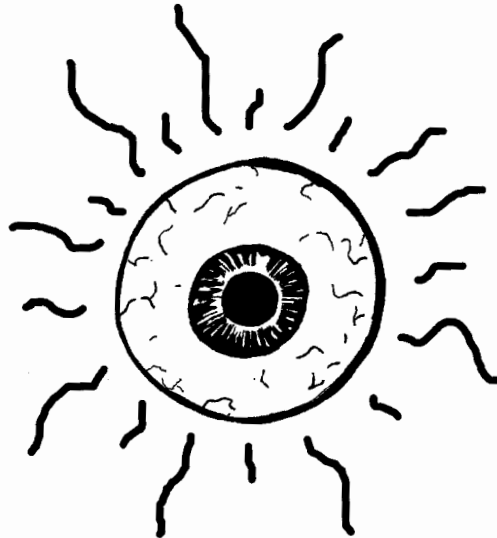
Distancing Vision: Is not unlike that of an eagle's. Although not exactly telescopic, the vision is so sharp that the T-Man can read a small sign or recognize a face/costume up to two miles away. Range: Two miles (3.2 km), plus one mile (1.6 m) for every level of experience beyond level two. Also intuitively senses the distance to a target, much like laser distancing. Can accurately tell the distance to within a yard/meter.

X-Ray Vision: Enables the T-Man to see through most substances. Lead, lead alloys, other super dense materials, and force fields will block x-ray vision. It requires a few moments of concentration to see through various substances:

- See through fabric or paper up to four inches (10 cm) thick instantly.
- See through up to one foot (0.3 m) of wood, plaster, fabric, paper, vegetation; requires one melee round (15 seconds).
- See through six inches (15 cm) of brick, stone, concrete or metal; requires two melee rounds (30 seconds).
- See through three inches (7.6 cm) of Mega-Damage alloys; requires two melee rounds (30 seconds). Cannot see through substances with more than 500 M.D.C.; too thick or dense.

Bonuses: +2 to strike with ranged attacks (no extra bonus in hand to hand).

Availability: Uncommon, but known among all tattoo artists.



Eye Radiating Energy Ripples (Radar Sense)

P.P.E. to Activate: 35

Duration: Ten minutes per level of experience.

Power: While this tattoo is active the user can sense the location of people, objects, movement and the general shape of the environment in all directions around him.

Range: 800 feet (244 m).

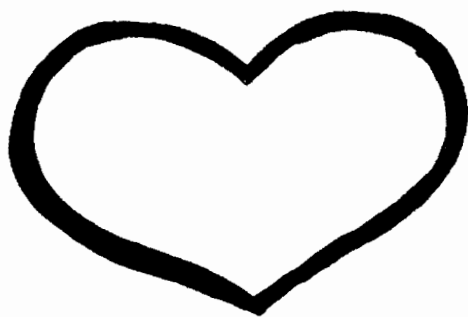
Accuracy: Interpreting Shapes: 80%, Estimate Distance: 86%, Estimate Direction: 86%, Estimate Speed: 66%, Estimate Exact Location: 76%.

Bonuses: +4 to initiative, +2 to parry and dodge, +2 to strike, one additional attack per melee, cannot be surprised from behind. No minuses apply when blinded or in darkness.

Limitations: Does not go through cloth, wood, glass, metal or people. Consequently, the T-Man cannot see through walls or doors. Likewise, while he may sense a car, estimate its speed, direction and distance, he cannot tell how many people are inside it. Totally fouled in the rain, snow, dust or sandstorms, and by obscuring conditions. No bonuses apply under these conditions, including no additional attack per melee. If these conditions exist at night/dark or while blinded, the radar is ineffective and the character is blind and suffers all the penalties that usually apply. Smoke and fog also foul radar sense, but not as severely as the

aforementioned conditions. Bonuses and accuracy are reduced as follows: +2 to initiative, +1 to strike, parry and dodge, no additional attack per melee, -30% to all accuracy rolls.

Availability: Uncommon, but known among all tattoo artists.



Heart (Regeneration)

P.P.E. to Activate: 65

Duration: Five minutes per level of experience.

Power: The tattoo user automatically Bio-Regenerates 2D6 M.D.C. (or S.D.C. if not a T-Man) every melee round. If one of the tattoo user's extremities is severed, he can press it back on and it will reattach, good as new, in one to five minutes (depending on its size). This tattoo is so powerful that the user will continue to Bio-Regenerate after being incapacitated and reduced below 0 M.D.C. (much like a vampire).

There are only two ways to kill the tattoo user while this tattoo is active. The first is to inflict so much damage that the user cannot Bio-Regenerate it all before the magic's duration expires (probably several hundred M.D.C.). The second is to inflict 5 M.D.C. to the section of skin containing the *Heart* tattoo (requires a Called Shot, and with a -8 penalty if the tattoo user is not incapacitated). This ends the magic of the tattoo, but does not destroy the tattoo itself (in the case that the tattoo user is resurrected later, he retains the *Heart* tattoo).

Availability: Common among True Atlanteans. Rare otherwise.



Heart Encircled by Vines (Endurance)

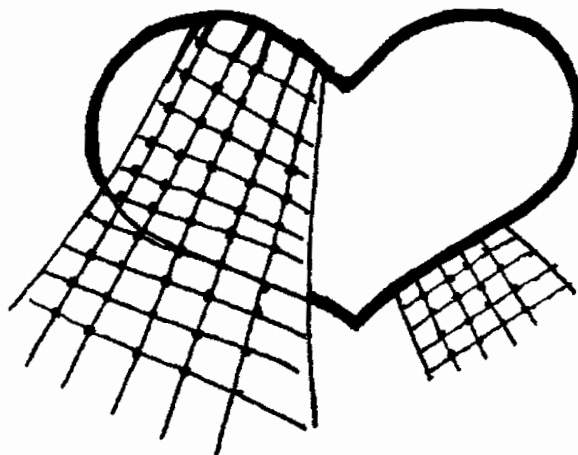
P.P.E. to Activate: 15

Duration: 30 minutes per level of experience.

Power: The tattoo user gains superhuman endurance. He can engage in any type of strenuous activity without getting tired in the least. At the end of the magical duration, the character will feel

fresh, but without magic, fatigues at his normal rate. This means the user could run for the tattoo's duration, non-stop, without getting tired or losing strength; it's easy and fun. The tattoo user can also lift and carry 10% more than usual, is +4 to save vs disease, poison, and toxins, and automatically Bio-Regenerates 2D6 S.D.C. (or 1D6 M.D.C. if an M.D. creature) every five minutes.

Availability: Common among True Atlanteans. Rare otherwise.



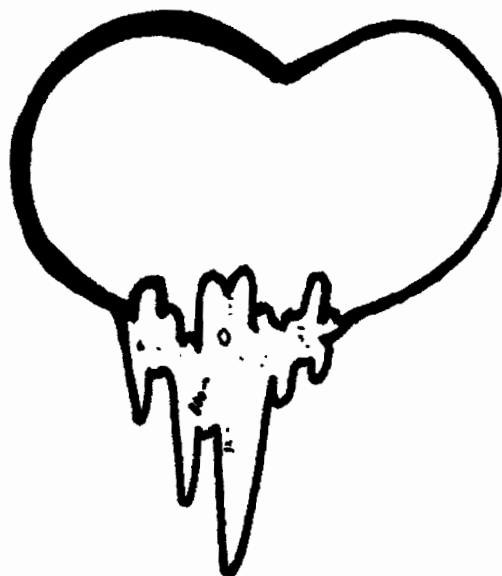
Heart Wrapped in Nets (Magic Net)

P.P.E. to Activate: 20

Duration: One minute per level of experience.

Power: While this tattoo is active the user can cast the *Magic Net* spell as often as once per melee (takes one melee attack).

Availability: The Aerihsman True Atlantean clan developed this tattoo to better control slaves. However, knowledge of its creation has spread to the Splugorth as well. Unknown among other True Atlanteans or Chiang-Ku.



Icy Heart (Ice Powers)

P.P.E. to Activate: 25

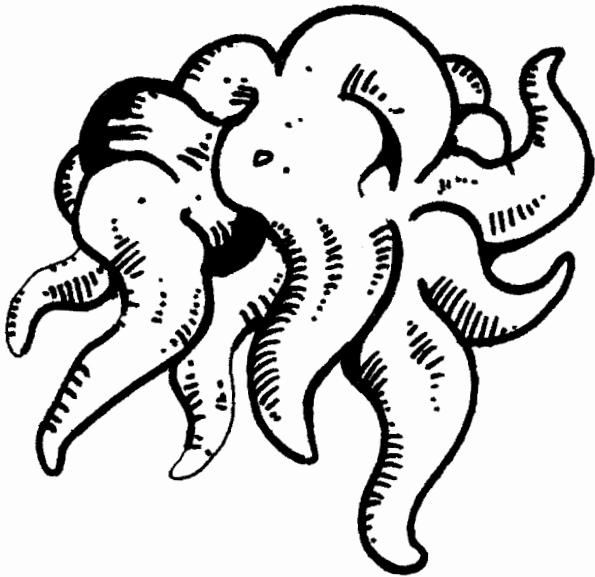
Duration: One minute per level of experience or until cancelled.

Power: Power over cold and ice. Can use the following for the duration of the tattoo:

- *Orb of Cold:* Same as the spell.
- *Frostblade:* Same as the spell.
- *Ice:* Same as the spell.

- **Resist Cold:** Same as the Warlock spell, active for the duration of the tattoo.

Availability: Common among all tattoo artists.



Mass of Tentacles (Tentacles)

P.P.E. to Activate: 50

Duration: Ten minutes per level of experience.

Power: The tattoo user conjures two or more tentacles that sprout from the location on his body where the tattoo is. The tentacles can have a variety of appearances, but are always between one and six inches (2.5-15 cm) thick. They may have cosmetic affectations, such as small spines, suckers, mouths, fins, or blades. Such affectations do not enhance their abilities in any way. The tentacles are under the complete control of the T-Man and work like an extra pair of arms or prehensile tails. The tentacles have the following statistics:

Tentacle Length: 6 feet (1.8 m) plus one foot (0.3 m) per each level of experience after level one. He cannot alter the size or shape of the tentacles.

Number of Tentacles: Two per level of experience. He cannot elect to create fewer than the maximum number of tentacles when activating the tattoo.

Tentacle M.D.C.: 50 M.D.C. each. Hitting a tentacle requires a Called Shot with no penalty in hand to hand combat, but a -2 penalty to strike with ranged attacks. If a tentacle is severed or destroyed (loses all M.D.C.), the T-Man suffers 3D6 damage directly to Hit Points or M.D.C. (as appropriate). The damage is cumulative for each tentacle destroyed, but may be healed as normal. The T-Man can re-create lost tentacles by activating the Tentacle tattoo again, but doing so costs double the normal P.P.E. until eight hours have passed.

Tentacle P.S.: Equal to the tattoo user's normal P.S., but is Supernatural. Tentacle strikes or squeezes do damage equal to a restrained or normal punch. Tentacles cannot do the equivalent of a power punch. If the T-Man's P.S. is magically (but not technologically) enhanced, the Tentacles' P.S. is also affected.

Combat: Each pair of tentacles provides one additional attack per melee round, in addition to the T-Man's normal number of attacks. However, the tentacles must perform these attacks. If a tentacle is destroyed, the T-Man's extra number of attacks is reduced appropriately. They are roughly equivalent to prehensile

tails. They can strike, grab, or pin an opponent. They can also pick up and hold objects, but cannot wield weapons effectively. They strike and parry with the T-Man's normal hand to hand bonuses, but are -15% to perform skills requiring dexterity or a delicate touch.

Tentacle Movement: At second level, the T-Man may allocate four (or more) tentacles to enhance his movement. Doing so enables him to run with a Spd equal to the Tentacles' P.S., climb with a base skill of 72%, and swim with a base skill of 84%. He can also lift himself up off the ground a distance roughly equal to the length of the tentacles. Allocating more than four tentacles to movement has no added benefit. In any melee round that the T-Man has allocated tentacles for movement, he does not count those tentacles for purposes of determining extra attacks per melee round.

Availability: The Splugorth developed this tattoo, and it is very popular in some Splugorth kingdoms. Some Splugorth consider the tattoo a mark of distinction and reserve it as a reward for loyal T-Men. Rare among other tattoo artists. Most True Atlanteans find it distasteful and will never willingly get this tattoo. However, rumors state an unknown clan has been using the tattoo, except all their tentacles appear as wisps of energy.

Runic Pattern (Tattoo Boost)

P.P.E. to Activate: None, always active.

Duration: Not applicable.

Power: This tattoo has no power to activate, but increases the prowess of Tattooed Men by fundamentally adding to their magic reserves and toughness. For purposes of calculating additional P.P.E. and M.D.C., the Runic Pattern tattoo counts as *six* magic tattoos. So it adds 36 P.P.E. to the T-Man's P.P.E. base instead of 6, and it counts as his first six tattoos when calculating his M.D.C. Having just a Runic Pattern tattoo by itself will not turn someone into a T-Man, but getting one additional tattoo will (he is then considered to have seven tattoos total).

Availability: The Aerihman True Atlantean clan developed this tattoo. Knowledge of its creation has not spread to the Splugorth yet. Unknown among other True Atlanteans or Chiang-Ku.

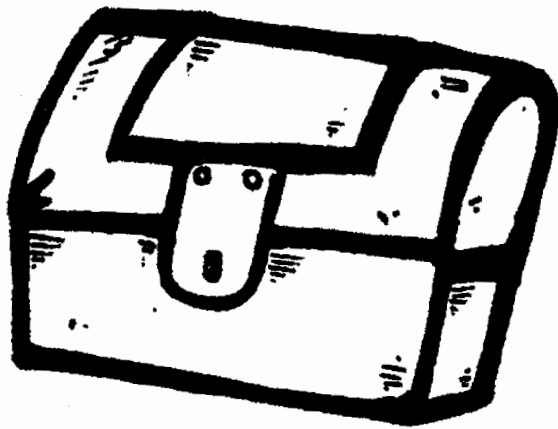


Silver Chest (Dimensional Pocket)

P.P.E. to Activate: 40

Duration: Special, container lasts for one melee round per level of experience or until cancelled.

Power: The tattoo user conjures a silver chest (no lock) out of thin air. He may place anything desired into the chest. Its size depends on his power level - two cubic feet (0.057 cubic meters) of internal space per level of experience. When the container's duration expires, or the tattoo user cancels it, the chest disappears along with all inanimate objects placed inside it (must be able to close the lid, objects overflowing the lid will not disappear). Animate objects, including creatures and even machines not turned

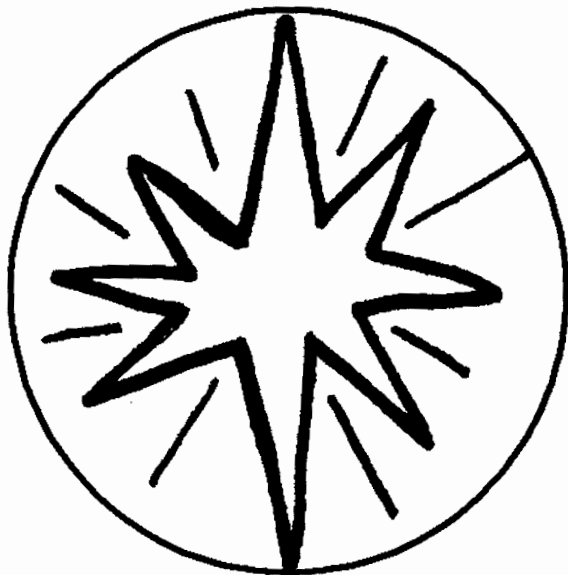


off, will not disappear with the chest, but simply stay in the location vacated by the container.

At any time in the future, hours, days, or years, when the tattoo user conjures the container again, the objects will reappear in the chest when it is summoned. For the objects, no time will have passed (i.e. foodstuffs will not spoil, a lit fuse will not burn, etc.).

The container need not actually be a silver chest. Any container with a lid or that can be closed will do, such as a barrel, box, or bag. Every tattoo tends to appear different.

Availability: Rumored to have been developed by the Chiang-Ku, this tattoo is quite rare. It is only common among Chiang-Ku knowledgeable in Temporal Magic and select True Atlantean Tattoo Masters.



Shining Star in a Circle (Cosmic Armor)

P.P.E. to Activate: 45

Duration: Ten minutes per level of experience.

Power: Silvery, Mega-Damage body armor appears on the body of the tattoo user. The T-Man's hand can pass right through the armor, like it was liquid, in order to touch and activate other tattoos or retrieve equipment. However, to all others the armor is as solid as M.D.C. alloys! The armor is weightless and does not restrict movement in any way.

M.D.C. of the Armor: 120 M.D.C., plus 30 M.D.C. per level of the T-Man's experience. Also, he can Breathe without Air (*Rifts® Book of Magic*, page 96) and Resist Vacuum (*The Rifter® #10*, page 86), as per the invocations, and is immune to radiation, as long as the armor persists. Lastly, the armor is impervious to all fire and heat (even Mega-Damage and magic fire/heat and plasma), and takes half damage from all other energy attacks.

Availability: The Acherean True Atlantean clan of Alexandria in the United Worlds of Warlock developed this tattoo. They were inspired by the Cosmo-Knights of the Three Galaxies. It is most common among Atlanteans hailing from the Three Galaxies. Undead Slayers from Clan Acherean can opt to switch the Heart Wrapped in Chains tattoo (Invulnerability) for this tattoo at first level.



Skull with Glowing Eyes (Charisma)

P.P.E. to Activate: 15

Duration: Two minutes per level of experience.

Power: The tattoo user appears more powerful and charismatic. He appears to be three levels higher (to anyone using See Aura), 50% stronger, gains a bonus of 1D4+2 to M.A., and has a minimum chance to invoke trust or intimidate of 45% (if modified M.A. is less than 17).

Availability: The Aerihman True Atlantean clan developed this tattoo. However, knowledge of its creation has recently spread to the Splugorth as well. Unknown among other True Atlanteans or Chiang-Ku. Fifty years ago, Lord Ahziree Aerihza authorized this tattoo to replace the heart impaled by a stake as one of the clan's Marks of Heritage, in accordance with clan Aerihman's new world view.

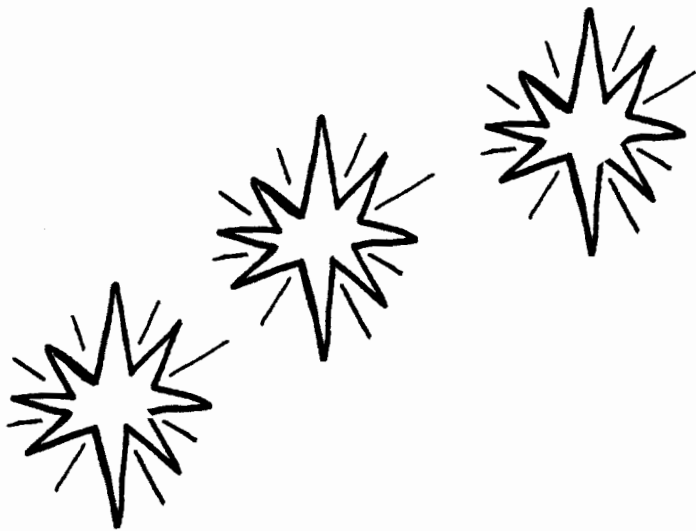
Three Shining Stars (Star Powers)

P.P.E. to Activate: 120

Duration: Two melee rounds per level of experience or until cancelled.

Power: Power over star-like energy. Can use the following for the duration of the tattoo:

- *Starlight:* Same as the spell (*The Rifter® #10*, page 87).



- *Starblade*: Same as the spell (*The Rifter*® #10, page 87).
- *Energy Field*: Same as spell. Glows silvery-white, rather than blue-white.
- *Star Burst*: Fires one, two, or three motes of starlight from the hands.

Range: 50 feet (15.2 m) per level of experience.

Number of Attacks: Equal to the number of hand to hand attacks per melee (a burst of two or three stars still counts as one melee attack). Can strike different targets with each star or the same target, as desired (still only counts as one melee attack, but roll to strike separately for each target).

Damage/Effect: Depends on the target's alignment. Good (Principled and Scrupulous) targets heal 1D6 S.D.C. or M.D.C. (as appropriate for the target) per level of the T-Man, per star that successfully strikes. Selfish (Unprincipled and Anarchist) or unaligned (robots, objects, etc.) must save vs spell magic (12 or higher) or become stunned, losing initiative and their next melee attack for each star that successfully strikes. Loss of melee attacks accumulate, even into following melee rounds, for each star that hits and the save is failed. Evil (Miscreant, Aberrant and Diabolical) targets take 1D6 S.D.C. or M.D. (as appropriate for the target) per level of the T-Man, per star that successfully strikes.

Bonuses: +4 to strike in addition to P.P. bonus (no other bonuses apply). The star motes swerve and spiral unerringly towards their target(s).

Availability: The Acherean True Atlantean clan of Alexandria in the United Worlds of Warlock developed this tattoo. It is most common among Atlanteans hailing from the Three Galaxies. Usually reserved for proven veterans, champions, and warriors of renown.

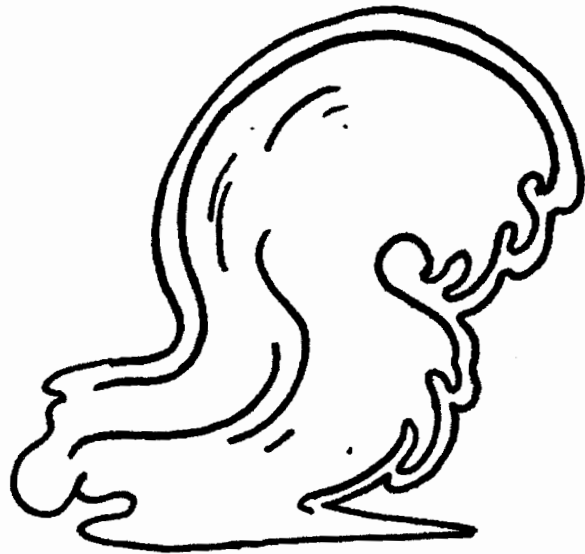
Tidal Wave (Water Powers)

P.P.E. to Activate: 25

Duration: One minute per level of experience or until cancelled.

Power: Power over water. Can use the following for the duration of the tattoo:

- *Create Fog*: Same as the Warlock spell.
- *Create Water*: Same as the spell.



- *Circle of Rain*: Same as the Warlock spell.
- *Swim as the Fish: Superior*: Active for the duration of the tattoo.

Availability: Common among True Atlanteans. Rare otherwise. Popular among those who battle vampires.

Tree Wrapped in Chains (Plant Powers)

P.P.E. to Activate: 20

Duration: Five minutes per level of experience or until cancelled.

Power: Power over plants. Can use the following for the duration of the tattoo:

- *Create Wood*: Same as the Warlock spell.
- *Identify Plants*: Same as the Warlock spell.
- *Animate Plants*: Same as the Warlock spell.
- *Wall of Thorns*: Same as the Warlock spell.
- *Speak with and Understand Intelligent Plants*: Can understand and speak with all sentient plant life, including Elementals currently in a plant form. Grants no special affinity other than the ability to communicate.

Availability: Common among True Atlanteans. Rare otherwise.

Wreath of Rose Thorns Dripping Blood (Healing Aura)

P.P.E. to Activate: 35

Duration: Two minutes per level of experience.

Power: The tattoo user radiates an invisible aura that heals other magic tattoo users. The aura has a radius of ten feet (3 m) and only heals creatures that possess magic tattoos, including the owner of this tattoo. Each melee round, each creature that possesses a magic tattoo will heal 1 S.D.C./ Hit Point (if an S.D.C. creature) or 1 M.D.C. (if an M.D.C. creature) for each tattoo that creature possesses. (The Runic Pattern Tattoo counts as six tattoos for this purpose.) If the creature only spends a portion of a melee round within the ra-



dius, he does not heal. The tattoo user cannot chose who receives healing and who does not – so an enemy T-Man will receive healing if he spends the entire melee in the radius.

In addition, any creature (including the tattoo user) that possesses a magic tattoo and spends four full consecutive melee rounds in the aura also recovers from any fatigue as if they had rested for a full hour (physical fatigue only, does not recover P.P.E. or I.S.P.).

Availability: The Aerihman True Atlantean clan developed this tattoo. Knowledge of its creation has not spread to the Splugorth yet. Unknown among other True Atlanteans or Chiang-Ku.

Flux Tattoos

Flux Tattoos represent the pinnacle of tattoo development. They were probably developed by ancient Chaing-Ku dragons, and are only available to those who associate with the Chaing-Ku (England? Manoa?). The defining characteristic of Flux Tattoos is that they modify one or more other tattoos.

Receiving Flux Tattoos requires supernatural endurance. Only M.D.C. beings (Chaing-Ku and T-Men with more than 6 tattoos) can get a Flux Tattoo without risking death. The recovery time from receiving a Flux Tattoo is also very long. Thus, one cannot get more than a single Flux Tattoo in any one-year period, and is restricted to a maximum of one Flux Tattoo for each level of experience. Also, each Flux Tattoo has a minimum number of magic tattoos the recipient must possess before receiving it. (**Note:** The Runic Pattern tattoo *does* count as six tattoos for the purpose of meeting a Flux Tattoo's minimum tattoo requirement.) The damage and recovery time for receiving a Flux Tattoo is as follows (half for children):

Damage: 1D6x10 M.D.C. damage.

Recovery/Penalties: First 48 hours – Speed is reduced to 3 (can barely walk), only 1 attack per melee, NO bonuses. Next full week – Speed, attacks per melee, and bonuses are at one-half.

Flux Tattoos are not recommended for Elves. Each Flux Tattoo reduces an Elf's I.Q. and M.E. by one and ages him 40 years.

Each Flux Tattoo has one or more base tattoos that it modifies. A T-Man can still choose to activate the base tattoo without activating the Flux Tattoo. Even though it modifies another tattoo, the Flux Tattoo still counts as a separate tattoo and therefore adds to the T-Man's M.D.C. and P.P.E.

Flux Tattoo Descriptions

Brilliant Energy Creature

Base Tattoo: One Animal or Monster tattoo.

Description: A brilliant aura of energy surrounding the base tattoo.

Minimum Number of Tattoos: 22

P.P.E. to Activate: Equal to the base tattoo times one and a half (round up).

Duration: Equal to the base tattoo.

Effect: Creates a creature just like the base tattoo but with a brilliant energy aura surrounding it (the creature sheds light). All



rules of the base tattoo apply. The brilliant aura gives the creature 20 extra S.D.C. (for animals) or M.D.C. (for monsters) per level of the T-Man, and it takes half damage from energy attacks. Also, the creature's hand to hand attacks inflict an extra 2D6 energy damage in addition to its normal damage (S.D.C. for animals, M.D. for monsters).

The Brilliant Energy Creature tattoo cannot be combined with the Swarm tattoo. They could both enhance the same base tattoo, but only one could be used at a time.

Availability: Super rare! Only Chiang-Ku are rumored to know how to create Flux Tattoos.

Brilliant Energy Weapon

Base Tattoo: One Simple Weapon or Magic Weapon tattoo.

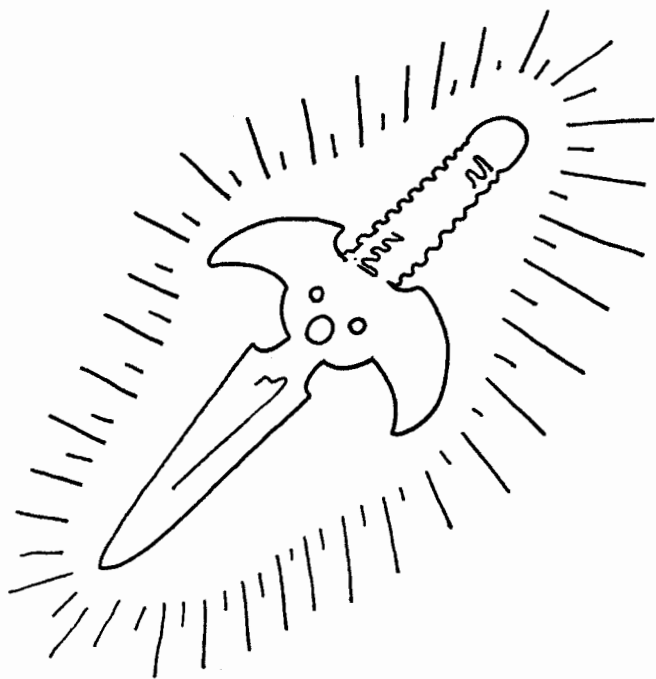
Description: A brilliant aura of energy surrounding the base tattoo.

Minimum Number of Tattoos: 22

P.P.E. to Activate: Equal to the base tattoo times one and a half (after all other modifiers).

Duration: Equal to the base tattoo.

Effect: Creates a weapon just like the base tattoo but with a brilliant energy aura surrounding it (sheds light). The type of dice of damage rolled for the weapon increases by two levels. D4s become D8s. D6s become D10s. D8s become D12s. D10s each become 2D8s. D12s each become 3D6s. For example: A sword that normally inflicts 2D6 damage would inflict 2D10 damage.



Alternately, a Brilliant Energy Shield takes half damage from energy attacks.

The Brilliant Energy Weapon tattoo can be based on a multi-magic weapon tattoo. For example, a Flaming, Blood Dripping, Brilliant Energy two-handed sword inflicts 4D10 M.D. (2D6, doubled to 4D6 for dripping blood, increased to 4D10 for brilliant energy, and M.D. for flaming), and costs 23 P.P.E. to activate (15 from flaming and dripping blood, times one and a half).

Availability: Super rare! Only Chiang-Ku are rumored to know how to create Flux Tattoos.

Link

Base Tattoos: Two non-Flux Tattoos of the same category (2 Monster, 2 Power, etc.).

Description: Chain, vine, rope, bands of energy, or the like, surrounding and connecting the base tattoos.

Minimum Number of Tattoos: 12

P.P.E. to Activate: The cost of both the base tattoos added together.

Duration: Equal to the base tattoo with the longer duration.

Effect: This Flux Tattoo links two tattoos of the same type together. Activating the Link tattoo automatically activates the base tattoos as if they had been activated individually. The only difference in the base tattoos is that both use the longer duration of the two (if applicable). The main advantage of the Link tattoo is that it requires only one action to activate two tattoos, which can be vital in combat. Also, since only one tattoo was activated (the Flux Tattoo), up to five more can be active at the same time (rather than four).

A T-Man cannot link 3 or more tattoos together, or link Flux Tattoos. However, a non-Flux Tattoo can be part of more than one link.

Players and G.M.s should feel free to describe the cosmetic effects of the Link tattoo in creative ways. For Example: Cho-Ye, in the first story above, has the Heart Encircled by Chains

(Invulnerability – a blue aura) and Skull Engulfed in Flames (Fire Powers) tattoos Linked. When he activates the Link tattoo (for 95 P.P.E.) he is surrounded in a blue, flaming aura and can shoot blue flames from his hands. Duration for both is 10 minutes per level of experience. Other statistics of the underlying tattoos do not change.

Availability: Super rare! Only Chiang-Ku are rumored to know how to create Flux Tattoos.

Shadow

Base Tattoo: Any one non-Flux Tattoo.

Description: An indistinct copy of the base tattoo, behind and partially overlapped by the base tattoo.

Minimum Number of Tattoos: 26

P.P.E. to Activate: Double the base tattoo, with a minimum of 50.

Duration: The Shadow tattoo can stay energized indefinitely. Once an energized Shadow tattoo is activated, the base tattoo's effects last as long as the base tattoo's normal duration.

Effect: When activated, this Flux Tattoo becomes "energized" or charged with magical power. The picture of the tattoo is clear and distinct while energized. It can remain energized for an unlimited amount of time. Once energized, it can be activated again (just like activating any tattoo – one melee action), but for no P.P.E. cost (it was paid when energizing it). Activating an energized Shadow tattoo duplicates the effects of the base tattoo.

The Shadow tattoo allows the T-Man to pay the P.P.E. cost for the base tattoo days, weeks or months in advance. In essence, it extends his P.P.E. supply when attached to an often-used tattoo.

Availability: Super rare! Only Chiang-Ku are rumored to know how to create Flux Tattoos.

Swarm

Base Tattoo: One Animal or Monster tattoo.

Description: Multiple pictures of the base tattoo, next to (overlapping) the base tattoo.

Minimum Number of Tattoos: 26

P.P.E. to Activate: Double the cost of the base tattoo.

Duration: Equal to the base tattoo.

Effect: Activating the Swarm tattoo creates 1D4+1 copies of the base tattoo's creature (roll each time the Swarm is activated). Each is just like the creature created by the base tattoo. Note that when each creature is killed, it inflicts damage on the T-Man just as killing the creature from the base tattoo does. However, the T-Man can dispel each creature individually without dispelling the others (as if canceling the creature created by the base tattoo). For Example: The T-Man could make all of the creatures that have taken heavy damage disappear. The others remain until cancelled or the duration expires. The T-Man has to spend twice the P.P.E. (four times the base tattoo cost) to reactivate the Swarm tattoo if any of the creatures in the swarm were destroyed. Otherwise, after four (animal) or eight (monster) hours, the P.P.E. cost returns to normal.

Availability: Super rare! Only Chiang-Ku are rumored to know how to create Flux Tattoos.



Cannibal Magic

Optional Source Material for the Palladium Fantasy RPG®

By Paul Herbert

One hundred men stood primed, brave and true, poised on the borders of the Old Kingdom. The members of Rogiers Cohort were known for their exceptional esprit-de-corps, especially for Llornian mercenaries. But one of them stood alone. He was not fired up and battle ready as the other men were. He stood still, silent, with a look of doubt on his pale face.

Another soldier approached him in annoyance. "Look lively, soldier," he snapped. "They're nearly here."

He turned to face his commanding officer, his lips trembling as he spoke. "S-s-sorry Corporal, b-but--"

"But what, man?! This is no time to get squeamish, Brookes."

Brookes did not reply.

"You're one of our finest warriors. The Cohort needs you to be strong. You'll worry the others. Now pull yourself together! That's an order!"

"Darkmoon." Announced Brookes unexpectedly.

"What's that supposed to mean, man? I don't have the patience for this," barked Corporal Alyss.

Brookes raised his voice. Corporal Alyss could hear him clearly. "I heard the captain. I heard him say a name."

"This 'Darkmoon,' is that supposed to mean something to me?" questioned the corporal.

"I've heard of him – Lord Darkmoon. He leads these monsters. We... we... cannot..." His voice faded out as he spied the captain up ahead, positioning himself ready for the charge.

"What have you heard, Brookes?" asked Corporal Alyss.

Brookes composed himself.

"He stands as tall as Mount Nimro and as broad as the Old Kingdom River. He has united the lowland tribes under his tyrannical reign and conquered the warlords of the highlands. The mere mention of this foe makes Titans tremble and Dwarvenkind flee to the underground of their ancestors.

"It is said that those he kills in combat do not die. Instead he absorbs their strength, their knowledge, their magic and their experience from their cold carcass and uses it against anyone in his path.

"To face Lord Darkmoon is to face the power of a thousand generals! To face Lord Darkmoon... is to lose your very soul!"

Ninety-eight men charged into battle that day. Two men stood on the outskirts of the battlefield frozen with fear as they saw the Troll warlord slaughter their comrades – friends – with the power and ease of which the legend spoke.

Only two members of Rogiers Cohort survived to convey what had passed.

Only two soldiers kept their souls.

Cannibal Mages, such as the Troll conqueror Lord Darkmoon above, are a very rare breed. They are usually of the Troll species, as the secrets of this gruesome practice are passed down from one generation to the next, and not all races can stomach what it takes to master its full potential. Some of the habits and customs

most associated with Trolls stem from the Time of a Thousand Magicks, when every Troll community would have at least one "soul eater" among their tribe.

Despite the myths, and widespread belief among Trolls and others, Cannibal Mages do not actually consume the souls of their victims. In fact, that is about the only thing that a Cannibal Mage doesn't eat!

The mage derives his power from the dissection, preparation and consumption of various body parts of their victims. Each part must be fresh (or possibly preserved) and cooked appropriately. During the process of cooking, the Cannibal Mage uses long forgotten magicks to enchant the "meal" for himself. (Or herself. During the Time of a Thousand Magicks, at least 40% of Cannibal Mages were female.) Once the prepared body part is consumed (swallowed), the enchantment will take effect.

The Secret Behind Cannibal Magic

Cannibal Mages crave the attributes, knowledge and abilities of their enemies. They are jealous of their power and desire nothing more than to take it for themselves, which they often do. The lost secret behind this ancient magic, and the reason that these mages are so rare, is that the enchantment ritual uses an otherwise unknown power word:

Al-Vil.

Al-Vil is the name of one of the fabled Old Ones, creators of magic, races, and evil in all its forms. He is the symbol of envy & jealousy, and even though he sleeps, his name still empowers the Cannibal Mages and enables them to conduct their disturbing rites.

Cannibal Mage O.C.C. Abilities & Bonuses:

1. Enchanting Body Parts for Consumption: All body parts must be fresh. This means that they must be prepared either soon after they are extracted from the corpse, or preserved until required. If they are not preserved properly, the magic will simply not work. Using the right ingredients and tools (vinegars, brine, preservatives and the containers necessary), body parts can be stored for days. Magical restoration applicable to food will also help to enable re-use of the part.

The selected body part(s) must be boiled in an iron cauldron and stirred with an iron or steel sword for a minimum of two hours (depending on how well done you like your tongue). This boiling usually makes the body part shrink slightly. During the boiling, the power words are invoked and the P.P.E. is spent, enchanting the body part while making it ready to be eaten. Multiple body parts can be enchanted at the same time using the same ritual, as long as the Cannibal Mage spends the correct amount of P.P.E. to include all body parts.

The P.P.E. cost for enchanting each body part is as follows:

Tongue: 40 P.P.E.

Brain: 40 P.P.E.

Heart: 50 P.P.E.

Eyes (includes both): 30 P.P.E.

Ears (includes both): 30 P.P.E.

Stomach: 35 P.P.E.

Kidney: 35 P.P.E.

Liver: 35 P.P.E.

Lungs: 30 P.P.E.

Spleen: 35 P.P.E.

Appendix: 100 P.P.E.

The enchantment will not last for long, as the “food” must be eaten while still warm (actually, within 30 minutes). However, through the right means (a Preserve Food skill roll), the parts may be preserved (again, using any vinegars, brine, preservatives and the containers necessary) for up to one hour per level of the Cannibal Mage. This is partly due to the enchantment, and although the “food” will keep, the taste will diminish over this time. Once enchanted, if the body part was not used, it cannot be re-enchanted, and once the duration of the enchantment/preservation has lapsed, it no longer has any magical value to the mage.

All body parts must be eaten in full (hence why not everyone can stomach it). And the magical effects will only work for the Cannibal Mage who evoked the enchantment (except banquets; see below). It will take the Cannibal Mage several minutes to eat (chew and swallow) the body part(s) and thus activate the magical effects. This will require double the time if the body part is of a giant-sized individual (7 feet/2.13 m and above), and half the time if the body part is of a particularly small person (3 feet/0.91 m or under). However, Trolls and other giant-sized beings only require half this length of time to eat. Remember, all Cannibal Mages are proficient chewers, and regularly eat meat (human or otherwise) as the basis of their daily diets.

The length of time (in minutes) to eat the body parts is as follows:

Tongue: 2 minutes.

Brain: 5 minutes.

Heart: 4 minutes.

Eyes (includes both): 2 minutes.

Ears (includes both): 2 minutes.

Stomach: 5 minutes.

Kidney: 4 minutes.

Liver: 4 minutes.

Lungs: 5 minutes.

Spleen: 4 minutes.

Appendix: 2 minutes.

Once a body part is consumed, the granted effects will last for 10 minutes per level of the Cannibal Mage! All applications of being on or near a ley line or ley line nexus (such as increasing the duration of effects) apply to the effects of Cannibal Magic.

Each body part described below will grant the Cannibal Mage the corresponding powers:

Tongue – Grants the skill knowledge of the victim. The Cannibal Mage instinctively knows all the deceased’s O.C.C. Skills, O.C.C. Related Skills, Secondary Skills and special skills (including all O.C.C. bonuses) at the current level of the victim or the Cannibal Mage, whichever is *lower* (e.g., if a 6th level Cannibal Mage eats the prepared tongue of a 10th level Thief, he will gain all the Thief’s skill knowledge but at 6th level, not 10th). Attribute and combat bonuses from skills do not apply and should not be added. In addition, if the victim had any learned magical knowledge (such as spell magic, circles, wards, etc.), the Cannibal Mage will now also be able to utilize that knowledge (although additional P.P.E. will not be gained from the tongue – see Heart).

Brain – Raises the mental attributes (if applicable) to those of the victim (I.Q., M.E., M.A.), as well as adding the I.S.P. and the use of psionic powers known by the deceased!

Heart – Widely considered the most powerful of the body parts. Raises the physical attributes (if applicable) to those of the victim (P.S., P.P., P.E., P.B. and Spd), as well as adding the P.P.E. of the victim! In addition to those powers, it also grants the natural abilities of that person (e.g., Changeling metamorphosis, Natural A.R., underground sense of direction, Cobbler magic knowledge, etc.). Some physical transformation may be noticeable, such as tough or lumpy skin, increased muscle mass and increased beauty. These alterations are only applicable if the transformation is of a boon to the mage (i.e. the mage’s beauty will never decrease).

Eyes (both must be eaten) – Grants any vision based abilities of the victim, such as nightvision, seeing the invisible, advanced sight, etc.

Ears (both must be eaten, but only the lobes/fleshy parts, not the cartilage) – Grants any hearing based abilities of the victim, such as the advanced hearing of the Wolfen.

Stomach – Grants an impressive +6 bonus to save versus Horror Factor (plus any bonuses to Horror Factor that the victim possessed himself).

Kidney – Will negate the effects of *any* poison, including magical ones.

Liver – Will negate the effects of *any* disease, including magical ones.

Lung (just one needs to be eaten) – Grants the ability to breathe without air. Effects are identical to the spell of the same name. See *Palladium Fantasy RPG®*, page 192.

Spleen – Will instantly heal the Cannibal Mage for 4D6 Hit Points or S.D.C.

Appendix – Will stop the natural aging process for one day per level of the Cannibal Mage. Continual consumption of people’s appendixes in this way can effectively make the Cannibal Mage immortal! This ability is not available until the Cannibal Mage reaches *sixth level* proficiency.

Any increases to attributes are not added to the mage’s normal attributes. They simply replace the mage’s attributes with those of the victim (if applicable). If the Cannibal Mage’s attributes are already higher, then they will remain at their usual level. (For example, if the Cannibal Mage has a P.S. of 20 and his victim had a P.S. of 22, the mage’s new P.S. would be 22 after eating his prepared heart. If the victim’s P.S. was 18, then the mage’s P.S. would remain at 20.)

Other than learned magic and skills relating to magic, any *bestowed* magic, or magic which comes from an outside source, is NOT available. This includes, but is not limited to, that of magic O.C.C.s such as the Warlock, Witch, and Priest.

2. The Blood Banquet: Another unique area of knowledge known by the Cannibal Mage is the creation of what has become known as the Blood Banquet. This ritual requires an extremely large cauldron filled with water. Added to the water are twenty pints (9.5 liters) of blood, which must all be from the same race. The next addition required to create a horrific broth is that a member of the same race as the blood must be added and boiled alive! Only Miscreant or Diabolic alignments would even consider boiling someone alive, although the powers gained can justify the means to these twisted individuals. If the water is already at boil-

ing point, the victim will take 1D6x10 damage per melee round and will be dead in a matter of minutes (from shock). Diabolic mages may wish to prolong the torture and bring the water to a boil with the victim in it!

The cauldron's contents must be maintained at a slow boil for two hours, at the end of which the Cannibal Mage must speak the relevant incantation and expend 250 P.P.E. to enchant the broth. The P.P.E. is usually provided by the other participants, but can also be gained from ley lines, nexus points or the boiled victim (doubled P.P.E. at the time of death). Additional, non-magical herbs, spices and other ingredients can be added for flavor and will not impede the enchantment.

The effects of the broth are extremely useful to any tribe, mercenary company or army. The broth can be divided into 20 portions, and these can be placed in small vials, cups, bottles or other containers to drink immediately or at a later time. Once drunk, the broth will grant the drinker (whoever that may be) heightened combat prowess. It adds one additional attack per melee round and bonuses of +2 to strike, parry, dodge and damage! In addition, it also grants the drinker a bonus of +5 to save vs Horror Factor! The effects of the Blood Banquet broth will last for ten minutes per level of the Cannibal Mage once drunk. Any portions kept for later will remain valid for 1 hour per level of the Cannibal Mage.

3. See & Use Ley Lines: Same as Wizard O.C.C.

4. Recognize Enchantment: Same as Wizard O.C.C. Base Skill: 35% +5% per level.

5. Magic Bonuses: +1 to save vs magic at levels three, six, ten and thirteen. +2 to save vs Horror Factor at levels one, five, ten and fifteen.

6. P.P.E.: Like all practitioners of magic, Cannibal Mages are living batteries of mystic energy. The character draws from this energy to create magic. **Permanent P.P.E. Base:** 2D4x10 in addition to the P.E. attribute number. Add 2D6 P.P.E. per each level of experience starting at level one. The Cannibal Mage can also draw on P.P.E. from ley lines, nexus points, and other people when they are available.

The Ancestry of Trolls

Trolls are the true specialists in Cannibal Magic. They are as intelligent as humans and more capable of sorcery than other races give them credit for. Even though some body parts grant physical attribute bonuses, the average Troll will usually have high physical attributes so seldom gain any bonuses. They do, however, tend to have a low Mental Affinity. The M.A. attribute gives a bonus to intimidation (useful when in the front of a battle), and therefore Gnomes, with their typically high M.A. attributes, have always been a favorite delicacy of Troll Cannibal Mages. This delicacy remains the same to this day and is an infamous dish among Trolls in general.

Trolls also make exceptional Cannibal Mages because they are one of the few beings who can eat a whole brain in a matter of minutes and not throw up!

There are rumors, however, of what could be possible trails to other users of Cannibal Magic. The "Shrunken Head" tribe of headhunters in the Yin Sloth Jungles are heavily into cannibalism and, it is said, they are unrivaled in jungle combat. Have they

joined the art of shrunken heads with shrinking the body for easy consumption?

Diabolus has been experimenting with a form of Cannibal Magic in Hades. Little does he know that he is on the verge of determining the enchantment! He is only short of the key power word to activate the incantation. If he were to learn that Al-Vil's name was the power word required, then he would use Cannibal Magic (especially the Blood Banquet) to empower Modeus' demon troops! Could this discovery affect the outcome of the Minion War?

Author's Note: Game Masters are also encouraged to explore whether additional body parts can be used by Cannibal Mages for magical purposes. While writing this I explored the possible inclusion of using Flesh, Blood, Intestines, Bone Marrow, and others.

The Cannibal Mage O.C.C.

Alignment: Selfish or evil only (almost always evil). Characters of a good alignment will never dissect dead bodies and use the body parts for their own gain.

Attribute Requirements: I.Q. 10 or higher, P.E. 10 or higher.

Racial Requirements: Members of any race can become Cannibal Mages provided they meet the minimum attribute requirements. However, it is generally passed on from generation to generation, nearly limited exclusively to the Troll community, and extremely rare even among Trolls. Therefore, finding a tutor willing to teach it to a member of a different race is nigh on impossible.

O.C.C. Skills:

Languages: Native Tongue at 98% plus one of choice (+20%).

Lore: Magic (+20%)

Lore: One of choice (15%).

Cook (+20%)

Biology (+20%)

Preserve Food (+20%)

W.P. Sword

W.P.: One of choice.

Hand to Hand: Basic

Hand to Hand: Basic can be changed to Expert at the cost of two O.C.C. Related Skills, or Martial Arts/Assassin at the cost of three.

O.C.C. Related Skills: Select a total of six other skills. Plus one additional skill at levels six, nine and twelve. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

Communications: Any (+5%).

Domestic: Any (+5%).

Espionage: Any.

Horsemanship: General or Exotic only.

Medical: Any (+5%).

Military: None.

Physical: Any except Acrobatics, Gymnastics, Boxing and Wrestling.

Rogue: Any.

Science: Any (+5%).

Scholar/Technical: Any (+10%).

Weapon Proficiencies: Any.

Wilderness: Any.

Secondary Skills: The character also gets to select four Secondary Skills from the previous list at level one, and two additional skills at levels two, five, seven, ten and thirteen. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get the advantage of the bonuses listed in parentheses. All Secondary Skills start at the base skill level. Also, skills are limited (any, only, none) as previously indicated in the list.

Starting Equipment: Two sets of clothing, a cloak or robe with a hood, boots, a pair of soft leather gloves, belt, bedroll, backpack, a medium sized to large satchel, two small sacks, a water skin, a small cauldron (enough to cook one body part), set of

1D4 butchering knives, meat cleaver, kindling, 1D4 candles, a wooden cross, small mirror and a flint & tinder box.

Armor: Starts with Soft Leather (A.R. 10, S.D.C. 20).

Weapons: A knife, a steel sword of choice, and one additional weapon of choice. All weapons are basic S.D.C. weapons of good quality. Magic weapons and additional items must be acquired later.

Money: The character starts with 120 in gold. Additional money will come from payment for services rendered and/or the acquisition of booty.

Experience: Uses the same experience table as the Diabolist.

From Ruins to Runes

Optional Source Material for the Palladium Fantasy RPG®

By Travis Guerrero

With a groggy groan, an Elf rubs his head. "I wonder how long I've been asleep," he wonders to himself. He's on the floor with his back perched against the rocky cave. When he stands, he feels his legs tremble. For a moment it feels as if his legs are going to give way under him, causing him to hunch over, using the cave wall as a brace. His legs are weak; his whole body is weak. Now that he's awake, his strength will come back soon, but it's not a good sign. This means he must've been asleep longer than he thought. Using the wall for support, he reaches down and picks up his sword off the ground. He doesn't need to look; he knows exactly where it is.

One hand still pressed against the rock wall for support, he makes his way towards the exit. It's been a long time, but he still remembers the way. Light up ahead, he must be getting close. Finally he makes it to the opening outside. The sun is shining brightly. There mustn't be a cloud in the sky. At first it hurts his eyes. To help shield them he takes his hand off of the wall and partially covers them, not letting go of his sword for a moment. For a moment he wavers, but it lasts only a moment. His strength is already returning and his eyes starting to adjust.

He lowers his hand and lets the warm light of the sun caress his face. As he lifts his head towards the sky his long, flowing blonde hair falls away from his face, revealing sapphire blue eyes. The sun glints off his golden armor and sword, highlighting the runes that line its blade and causing them to sparkle. For a while, he stands there doing nothing but enjoying the moment. After a time, he's not sure how long, he lowers his head and prepares to set off on his journey. It's been a while, maybe a few thousand years with how different everything looks. Born as a tool of war, later hunted by Elves and Dwarves to help 'purify' the world, now it's time to see what this new world holds.

Living Rune Sword Creature of Magic

In the madness of the Elf-Dwarf War, it was becoming increasingly difficult to obtain strong souls to use as components in the most powerful Rune Weapons. While Lesser Rune Weapons could still be made, Greater and Greatest Rune Weapons were becoming nearly impossible. One Rune Smith devised a method to resolve the problem. Instead of making a strong Rune Weapon, he'd make a weak Rune Weapon and then allow it to grow stronger. At first this sounded like madness, but his idea did have reason behind it. The Rune Smith found a way to actually *train* a Rune Weapon.

It would be made with a soul strong enough to make a formidable lesser Rune Weapon, often an allied, powerful but old and dying or fatally wounded practitioner of magic. The item would possess a single ability, but one that is very unique and special. After over a hundred years of experimentation he perfected the method to bestow the ability into the weapon. This ability is a method for the soul within the Rune Weapon to create a body for itself. Using this body, the Rune Weapon could wield itself! These physical bodies became known as Living Rune Swords, even though not all weapons were swords.

By still living and training, the spirit of the Rune Weapon would continue to gain strength, making itself more powerful. As a magical item, its talent to develop new magical abilities proved remarkable. With this method a Lesser Rune Sword could train itself to become a Greater Rune Weapon, potentially even a Greatest Rune Weapon. This success exceeded the wildest expectations of its creator. Only a small number of these Living Rune Swords were created before the end of the Elf-Dwarf War. The method to make them became lost along with the other secrets of Rune Magic during the Millennium of Purification.

During the Millennium of Purification, Elves and Dwarves zealously destroyed as many forms of magic as they could. Rune Weapons were either destroyed or taken to places where they couldn't be recovered, such as the Fires of Mount Nimrod (see the adventure of the same name in *Palladium Fantasy® Book 10: Mount Nimro*, for more details on this particular reference). Knowing that their fate would be the same, the Living Rune Swords went into hiding. They retreated into isolated areas where they wouldn't be disturbed and hoped to never be found, or at least not for a very long time.

In exile, the Living Rune Swords dissipated their bodies and returned into their weapons. Their initial plan was to rest only until the destruction ended. However, a millennium is a long time to wait, even for an immortal. They grew bored and fell asleep. Some were found and destroyed, but others still remain hidden to this day. A Rune Sword can rest for thousands of years without ever noticing the passage of time. More recently, a few have begun to awaken, unsure of how long they've been asleep and wondering about the current fate of the world. Others continue to rest until the day they awaken on their own or their Rune Weapon is disturbed, either by the natural environment or someone finding it.

Living Rune Sword

Alignments: Any, but player characters usually lean towards good and selfish.

Attributes: I.Q. 3D6 (minimum 9), M.E. 4D6, M.A. 2D6, P.S. 3D6, P.P. 3D6+3, P.E. 4D6, P.B. 4D6, Spd 2D6. All attributes are considered to be supernatural.

Natural A.R.: 14

Hit Points: 2D4x10 plus P.E. attribute.

S.D.C.: 1D6x10, plus 2D6 per level of experience.

M.D.C.: Becomes a Mega-Damage being on Rifts Earth; 2D6x10, plus 2D6 per level of experience.

P.P.E.: 1D6x10+10 plus P.E. attribute number. Add 2D6 per level of experience. P.P.E. recovers at a rate of five points every three hours.

O.C.C.s Available to Living Swords: Only the R.C.C.s that follow.

O.C.C. Skill Notes: None.

Horror Factor: None.

Physical Appearance: Almost always humanoid, they usually appear as the same race as the original soul. This could be human, Elf, Dwarf, Wolfen, or other. Those who retain their ancient memories will retain their appearance from life, but all others will have the same Physical Beauty as the sword. The ancient Dwarves, especially when it comes to Rune Weapons, created some of the most finely crafted and beautiful weapons in history.

Size: Same as the racial image.

Weight: Same as the racial image.

Average Life Span: Effectively immortal.

Natural Abilities: Attractive, intelligent, resourceful, and completely independent. Can see the invisible, is resistant to fire,

cold, poison, toxins, drugs, and disease (all are half as effective, including damage and duration), and has nightvision 40 feet (12.2 m).

Hibernation: All Living Rune Swords have the ability to enter a *hibernation* state. This allows them to dissipate their host body and enter a sleep state. Once this is done, the host body cannot be reformed for at least 1D4x10 years, leaving it vulnerable and helpless during that time. In this state they are invulnerable to damage. The Rune Weapon will still appear as a typical Rune Weapon, but the consciousness inside will be silent and sleeping.

Two Forms, One Being: Though there are two forms (Rune Weapon and host body), the Living Rune Sword is still just one being. As a result, it is nearly impossible to separate a Rune Weapon from its host body. Doing so would be the same as removing an arm or a leg of most other beings. If ever separated, the two will be able to sense each other regardless of distance, knowing exactly where the other is at all times. As a result of this connection, any attempt to disarm the Rune Weapon from the host body is performed at a -4 penalty due to their natural connection. This penalty applies only to the Rune Sword and host body, and no others. It does not apply to a different wielder, even if the two have bonded. Also see *Vulnerabilities*.

Bonuses: +1 on initiative, +1 to strike, parry and dodge, +1 to all saving throws, +6 to save vs all types of mind control, and impervious to possession.

Vulnerabilities: Cannot recover health normally. Only by expending P.P.E. can the Living Sword repair the damage it has suffered. 1 P.P.E. recovers 1 Hit Point, or 2 P.P.E. for 1 S.D.C. (or M.D.C.). Only 10 H.P./S.D.C. (or M.D.C.) per level of the Living Rune Sword can be restored in a single melee round. If the body of the Living Sword is destroyed, it cannot make a new body and will be nothing more than a Rune Weapon from that point on.

Two Forms, One Being: While an advantage, this is also one of their main vulnerabilities. Unknown to most is that if ever separated from its Rune Weapon, the host body will start to die. The Rune Weapon is the source of its power, and without it the host body cannot be sustained. For every minute separated, the host body suffers 1D6 damage, starting immediately from a separation of more than 5 feet (1.5 m). Fortunately for the host body, all powers and abilities are retained (except for Hibernation, which requires close contact), including the ability to heal. While this can help to save the host body's life, it will only prolong the inevitable if the Rune Weapon cannot be regained.

Magic: By R.C.C. only.

Psionics: By R.C.C. only.

Enemies: As a Rune Weapon, its enemies are plentiful. Many Elves and Dwarves will wish its destruction due to its nature, while many others will covet its power. There are those who would give an entire kingdom for a Rune Weapon. The act of simply killing the living body of a Rune Sword to take its power is a small price to pay for many.



Allies: Most commonly those with similar goals. This depends primarily on the personality of the Rune Weapon. As a magical weapon, many creatures of magic will accept it as an equal.

Habitat: Dormant weapons are most commonly found sleeping in deserted, hard to find locations where they are not likely to be disturbed, such as deep in the mountains. Those awakened can be found anywhere in the world.

Favorite Weapons: The Rune Weapon it lives in.

Notes Common to All R.C.C.s

All Living Rune Weapons have certain traits in common. Having been in hibernation for the last 8,000 years, they have no additional weapons, armor, equipment, or money. The only item it owns at the start is itself, which can be more useful than any piece of ordinary equipment. Living Rune Weapons are naturally tough, resilient, and possess a powerful weapon. Most do not feel the need to obtain extra armor or weapons even when the chance arises.

Some Living Rune Weapons appear to be wearing armor naturally, but this is only part of the host body's appearance and offers no additional protection. This outer armor can be cast off, if so desired, by the Living Rune Weapon with no penalty. However, this will require it to be replaced with ordinary armor and clothing, which will not heal at the same rate as the Living Rune Weapon. For many, this is considered more effort than it's worth, preferring to rely on natural abilities instead.

Regardless of R.C.C., all Living Rune Weapons use the following table.

Experience Point Table:

1	0,000 – 2,400
2	2,401 – 4,600
3	4,601 – 9,200
4	9,201 – 18,400
5	18,401 – 28,300
6	28,301 – 48,000
7	48,001 – 78,000
8	78,001 – 110,000
9	110,001 – 150,000
10	150,001 – 200,000
11	200,001 – 250,000
12	250,001 – 310,000
13	310,001 – 380,000
14	380,001 – 470,000
15	470,001 – 600,000

Invoked R.C.C. (a.k.a. Sword of Spells)

Practitioner of Magic

Skilled in the arcane arts, these blades develop an array of spells to complement their arsenal. As the Living Rune Sword increases in experience its knowledge and understanding of magic also increases. There are those who consider this to be a weak type because its mastery over magic is not as powerful as a traditional Wizard. It is important to remember that this is not a traditional Wizard, but a Living Rune Sword with all its natural abilities. More importantly, to grow stronger involves strengthening the soul of the Living Rune Sword, which is far more difficult than traditional methods of spell casting. While far more difficult, it is necessary to increase the power of the Rune Sword and not just the physical form.

Rune Weapon

Type: Short swords, knives, and staves are the most common, but any weapon could be used.

Blade Color: Blue grey.

Damage: 4D6

Special Abilities: None to start. The weapon grows more powerful as it increases in experience. If its physical form is ever destroyed it can no longer increase in experience. See below for powers.

Basic; Level 1: The Living Rune Sword begins with a portion of its magical prowess. This early level power is common among all Invoked types, but as they increase in experience their powers grow considerably more and with greater diversity.

- **Magic Bonus:** +2 to save vs magic, +1 to save vs Horror Factor, +1D6+1 P.P.E. per level of experience starting at level one (in addition to the standard level bonus for Living Rune Swords), and P.P.E. recovers at twice the usual rate.

Lesser; Level 4: With the power of the Invoked continuing to grow, so do its abilities. Select one ability of choice from the list below.

- **Spell Magic:** The character learns a total of six spells. Spell selection is limited to invocation levels 1-3. These spells can be cast in any order and combination as often as the Invoked sees fit. The only limitation to these spells is the character's P.P.E. reserves.

- **Magic Bonus:** +1 to save vs magic, +2 to save vs Horror Factor, +2D6 P.P.E. (one time bonus), and +1 to Spell Strength.

- **Ley Line Knowledge:** The Invoked is able to use Ley Line Drifting, Ley Line Rejuvenation, See and Use Ley Lines, and draw on P.P.E. from ley lines and ley line nexuses. All abilities are the same as the Wizard O.C.C. (see *Palladium Fantasy*®, *Second Edition*, page 107).

- **Circles & Symbols:** Same as the Wizard O.C.C. ability (see *Palladium Fantasy*®, *Second Edition*, page 104).

Greater; Level 8: Select two new abilities at level eight. These abilities may be selected from the list of Lesser or Greater powers.

- **Spell Magic:** The Invoked can select five new spells selected from invocation levels 4-8. These spells can be cast in any order and combination as often as the Invoked sees fit. The only limitation to these spells is the character's P.P.E. reserves.
- **Magic Bonus:** +1 to save vs magic, +1 to save vs Horror Factor, and +2 to Spell Strength.
- **Damage Bonus:** Add 1D6 damage to the base damage of the weapon.
- **Aura of Dispel:** The weapon is capable of creating an aura that can render one spell useless against the Invoked. While in effect, the Invoked can walk over a Carpet of Adhesion, cut through a Magic Net, or safely parry an incoming Fireball spell. It can even cast spells in an Anti-Magic Cloud. Due to the nature of this power, its activation cannot be prevented by magical means. This power works only for the Invoked (or wielder) and not any allies. So while the Invoked can walk over a Carpet of Adhesion, the spell remains in effect and can trap allies and others. **Limit:** Two times per 24 hours, plus one additional use at levels eleven and fourteen. This aura counters only one specific spell each time it is created. Duration is one melee round (15 seconds) per level of the Invoked.

Greatest; Level 12: The Invoked is at the peak of its magical power. It may now select one new power. This ability may be selected from the list of Lesser, Greater, or Greatest powers.

- **Spell Magic:** Select a total of four spells selected from invocation levels 9-15. These spells can be cast in any order and combination as often as the Invoked sees fit. The only limitation to these spells is the character's P.P.E. reserves.
- **Magic Bonus:** +1D4x10+10 to P.P.E. (one time bonus) and +3 to Spell Strength.
- **Damage Bonus:** Add 2D6 damage to the base damage of the weapon.
- **Siphon Blade:** With each successful strike to an opponent the weapon is capable of siphoning an equal amount of P.P.E. from the victim as the damage dealt. More P.P.E. than the victim possesses cannot be siphoned, nor will it siphon P.P.E. if armor or shield is hit instead of a living being. If the Living Rune Sword is already at maximum, this extra P.P.E. can be held for up to 3 minutes, plus one melee round (15 seconds) per each additional level, starting at level thirteen.

Example: The weapon deals 4D6 damage to an Elven opponent and rolls 16 for damage. Up to 16 P.P.E. can be siphoned from the Elf (equal to the damage). For the example, the Elf victim had 20 P.P.E., loses 16 P.P.E., and has 4 P.P.E. remaining. The Elf activates an Armor of Ithan talisman. On its next turn, the Living Rune Sword successfully strikes again, but only hits the magical armor and rolls 23 for damage. No P.P.E. can be siphoned because the weapon made contact with the armor and not the victim.

Invoked R.C.C.

Attribute Requirements: I.Q. 11, a high P.E. is also recommended but not required.

Alignment: Any.

R.C.C. Skills:

Languages: Native tongue at 98% and two languages of choice (+20%).

Literacy: Two of choice (+15%).

Lore: Magic (+20%)

Mathematics: Basic (+10%)

Sign Language (+5%)

W.P.: Type of Rune Weapon.

Hand to Hand: Basic

Hand to Hand: Basic can be changed to Hand to Hand: Expert for the cost of one R.C.C. Related Skill, or Martial Arts for the cost of three R.C.C. Related Skills.

R.C.C. Related Skills: Select seven other skills at level one, plus select one additional skill at levels three, five, seven, nine and eleven. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

Communications: Any (+5%).

Domestic: Any.

Espionage: Forgery (+10%) and Intelligence (+5%) only.

Horsemanship: General or Exotic only.

Medical: Any.

Military: None.

Physical: Any, except Acrobatics and Boxing.

Rogue: Any.

Science: Any (+10%).

Scholar/Technical: Any (+10%).

Weapon Proficiencies: Any.

Wilderness Survival: Identify Plants & Fruits, Land Navigation, Preserve Food, and Wilderness Survival only.

Secondary Skills: The character also gets to select four Secondary Skills from the previous list at level one, and one additional skill at levels three, six, nine and twelve. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get the advantage of the bonus listed in the parentheses. All Secondary Skills are limited (any, only, none) as previously indicated in the list.

Elementalist R.C.C. (a.k.a. Sword of Nature)

Practitioner of Magic

Some believe the souls in these swords may be from Lesser Elemental Beings, but this concept is generally dismissed. These weapons have a growing bond with the forces of nature. Depending on development, some have a considerable mastery over one element while others will have a lesser mastery over multiple elements.

Rune Weapon

Type: Typically large swords (fire), chain weapons (water), staves (air), and war hammers (earth), but any weapon could be used.

Blade Color: Dark grey.

Damage: 4D6. Due to its elemental nature it inflicts double damage to vampires and other creatures with a basic weakness to the elements.

Special Abilities: None to start. The weapon grows more powerful as it increases in experience. If its physical form is ever destroyed it can no longer increase in experience. See below for powers.

Basic; Level 2: The Living Rune Sword has grown enough in power to develop its first ability. This early level power is common among all Elementalist types, but as they increase in experience their powers grow considerably more and with greater diversity.

- **Elemental Magic (Basic):** Select three *offensive* elemental spells, but cannot include the summoning of Lesser Elementals. Spell selection is limited to levels 1-2 only. All spells must be of the same elemental force (water, earth, air, or fire) and will be considered the character's *primary sign*. These spells can be cast in any order and combination as often as the Elementalist sees fit. The only limitation to these spells is the character's P.P.E. reserves.

Lesser, Level 5: With increasing power the Elementalist is able to learn new abilities. Select one ability of choice from the following list.

- **Elemental Magic (Lesser):** Select three *offensive* elemental spells, but cannot include the summoning of Lesser Elementals. Spell selection is limited to levels 1-4. All spells must be of the same elemental force (water, earth, air, or fire) as the character's *primary sign*. These spells can be cast in any order and combination as often as the Elementalist sees fit. The only limitation to these spells is the character's P.P.E. reserves.
- **Twin Signs (Lesser):** Instead of being limited to only one elemental sign, the Elementalist gains a second elemental sign. Select three *offensive* elemental spells, but cannot include the summoning of Lesser Elementals. Spell selection is limited to levels 1-2 only. All spells must be of the same elemental force (water, earth, air, or fire). This sign cannot be the same as the character's primary sign and will be considered the *secondary sign*. These spells can be cast in any order and combination as often as the Elementalist sees fit. The only limitation to these spells is the character's P.P.E. reserves.
- **Elemental Bond:** The Elemental Sword gains a better connection to its *primary sign*, granting the Elementalist the power to sense the elemental sign as well as other special abilities. Same as powers 9 (sense the nature of the life sign) and 10 (special abilities) of the Warlock O.C.C. (see *Palladium Fantasy*®, *Second Edition*, page 110).
- **Magic Bonus:** +1 to save vs magic, +2 to save vs Horror Factor (+6 against Elemental Beings), +2D6 P.P.E. (one time bonus), and P.P.E. recovers at twice the usual rate.

Greater; Level 8: At level eight, select two new abilities. These powers may be selected from the list of Lesser or Greater powers.

- **Elemental Magic (Greater):** Select three *offensive* elemental spells, but cannot include the summoning of Lesser Elementals. Spell selection is limited to levels 1-6. All spells must be of the same elemental force (water, earth, air, or fire) as the character's *primary sign*. These spells can be cast in any order and combination as often as the Elementalist sees fit. The only limitation to these spells is the character's P.P.E. reserves.
- **Twin Signs (Greater):** Select two *offensive* elemental spells, but cannot include the summoning of Lesser Elementals. Spell selection is limited to levels 1-4. All spells must be of the same elemental forces (water, earth, air, or fire) as the character's *primary sign* and/or *secondary sign*. These spells can be cast in any order and combination as often as the Elementalist sees fit. The only limitation to these spells is the character's P.P.E. reserves. **Requires:** Twin Signs (Lesser) to select.
- **The Third Sign (Lesser):** Instead of being limited to only one or two elemental signs, the Elementalist gains another elemental sign. Select three *offensive* elemental spells, but cannot include the summoning of Lesser Elementals. Spell selection is limited to levels 1-2 only. All spells must be of the same elemental forces (water, earth, air, or fire). This sign cannot be the same as the character's primary sign or secondary sign and will be considered the *third sign*. These spells can be cast in any order and combination as often as the Elementalist sees fit. The only limitation to these spells is the character's P.P.E. reserves. **Requires:** Twin Signs (Lesser) to select.
- **True Elemental:** The Elemental Sword is considered an Elemental brother by traditional Warlocks and Elemental Beings alike. It will be treated with equal courtesy and offer help when appropriate. Also, spell selections may now be selected from *any* of the elemental spells and are no longer limited to only the offensive ones. **Note:** This power does not grant any elemental spell magic, only the ability to remove the "offensive" limit when the other magic options are selected. It applies to any elemental spells learned at the same time or after this power is selected, but cannot be used to change powers selected at earlier levels.
- **Magic Bonus:** +1 to save vs possession, +1D6 P.P.E. per level of experience (in addition to the standard level bonus for Living Rune Swords), and +2 to Spell Strength.
- **Damage Bonus:** Add 1D6 damage to the base damage of the weapon. Due to its elemental nature, it inflicts triple damage to vampires and other creatures with a basic weakness to the elements.

Greatest; Level 12: Gaining mastery over the elements, the Elementalist is at the height of its power. It may now select one new ability. This ability may be selected from the list of Lesser, Greater, or Greatest powers.

- **Elemental Magic (Greatest):** Select three *offensive* elemental spells, but cannot include the summoning of Lesser Elementals. Spell selection is limited to levels 1-8. All spells must be of the same elemental force (water, earth, air, or fire) as the character's *primary sign*. These spells can be cast in any order

and combination as often as the Elementalist sees fit. The only limitation to these spells is the character's P.P.E. reserves.

- **Twin Signs (Greatest):** Select two *offensive* elemental spells, but cannot include the summoning of Lesser Elementals. Spell selection is limited to levels 1-6. All spells must be of the same elemental forces (water, earth, air, or fire) as the character's *primary sign* and/or *secondary sign*. These spells can be cast in any order and combination as often as the Elementalist sees fit. The only limitation to these spells is the character's P.P.E. reserves. **Requires:** Twin Signs (Lesser) to select.
- **The Third Sign (Greater):** Select three *offensive* elemental spells, but cannot include the summoning of Lesser Elementals. Spell selection is limited to levels 1-4 only. All spells must be of the same elemental forces (water, earth, air, or fire) as the character's *primary sign*, *secondary sign*, and/or *third sign*. These spells can be cast in any order and combination as often as the Elementalist sees fit. The only limitation to these spells is the character's P.P.E. reserves. **Requires:** The Third Sign (Lesser) to select.
- **All Elements:** The Elemental Sword has gained power over all four elemental signs. Select four *offensive* elemental spells, but cannot include the summoning of Lesser Elementals. Spell selection is limited to levels 1-2 only, but can be selected from any of the four elements. These spells can be cast in any order and combination as often as the Elementalist sees fit. The only limitation to these spells is the character's P.P.E. reserves. **Requires:** The Third Sign (Lesser) to select.

Elementalist R.C.C.

Attribute Requirements: M.E. 12 or higher, a high I.Q. is helpful but not required.

Alignment: Any.

R.C.C. Skills:

Dowsing (+10%)

Land Navigation (+10%)

Languages: Native tongue at 98% and two languages of choice (+20%).

Literacy: One of choice (+15%).

Lore: Faerie Folk (+20%)

W.P.: As per type of Rune Weapon.

Hand to Hand: Basic

Hand to Hand: Basic can be changed to Hand to Hand: Expert for the cost of one R.C.C. Related Skill, or Martial Arts for the cost of three R.C.C. Related Skills.

R.C.C. Related Skills: Select six other skills at level one, plus select one additional skill at levels three, six, nine and twelve. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

Communications: Any.

Domestic: Any (+10%).

Espionage: Intelligence only (+5%).

Horsemanship: General or Exotic only.

Medical: First Aid only.

Military: None.

Physical: Any, except Acrobatics, Boxing and Gymnastics.

Rogue: Any.

Science: Any (+10%).

Scholar/Technical: Any (+10% on Language, Literacy and Lore).

Weapon Proficiencies: Any.

Wilderness Survival: Any (+5%).

Secondary Skills: The character also gets to select three Secondary Skills from the previous list at level one, and one additional skill at levels two, five, seven, ten and thirteen. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get the advantage of the bonus listed in the parentheses. All Secondary Skills are limited (any, only, none) as previously indicated in the list.

Cleric R.C.C. (a.k.a. Healing Sword)

Clergy

These are Rune Weapons made with the intent to heal and cure. One of the rarest of Living Rune Swords, the Cleric is formed by taking the soul of a High Priest. While a priest is not usually powerful enough to be used as a component in a Rune Weapon, the Cleric is a special case. This union is forged with the blessing of both the priest and his god. The priest gains his abilities by having them bestowed and granted by a god, and this blessing of both allows some of this power and ability to be transferred to the Living Rune Sword. It is important to note that even though a Cleric was once a High Priest, it is no longer so, and does not retain the priestly abilities or skills.

In many ways, this bonding is similar to the way a god makes a Holy Weapon, but combined with elements of creating a Rune Weapon for something unique. Even after the transformation, the Cleric continues to worship the same gods as in life, and most continue to spread the word of their god through their deeds. This transformation is not seen as an ending, but as a new way to gain converts and aid their gods. The most common types of priests turned into Healing Swords are those who serve warrior gods or gods who specialize in life and healing.

Rune Weapon

Type: Swords and staves are the most common types of weapons, but any weapon could be used.

Blade Color: Dark red.

Damage: 4D6

Special Abilities: Inflicts double damage to vampires, Ghouls, Witches, and the occasional other menace vulnerable to Holy Water. The weapon grows more powerful as it increases in experience. If its physical form is ever destroyed it can no longer increase in experience. See below for additional powers.

Basic; Level 2: The Living Rune Sword has grown in power enough to develop very basic powers. This early level power is common among all Cleric types, but as they increase in experience their powers grow considerably more and with greater diversity.

- **Heal Wounds (Basic):** By touching an injury the Cleric, or the wielder of the Healing Sword, can heal 2D6 Hit Points and 2D6 S.D.C. These wounds must be minor physical wounds such as bruises, cuts, gashes, arrow wounds, burned flesh, or pulled muscles. It can *not* heal more severe injuries such as illness, internal damage to organs or nerves, broken bones, poison/drugs, etc. Limit: Three times per 24 hours, plus one additional time at levels three, six, nine and twelve.

Lesser; Level 5: At level five the powers of the Cleric have continued to expand. Select two abilities of choice from the following list.

- **Turn 4D6 Dead:** 01-50% chance of success, +5% per level of experience starting at level six. The Cleric is capable of repelling animated skeletons and corpses, mummies and Ghouls. This means they will stop whatever they are doing, turn around, and leave the area at once without harming the Cleric or anyone else in the immediate area. Those “turned” will not return for 4 hours. It may even hold vampires, ghosts, Wraiths, and Specters, but only cause them to hesitate for one or two melee rounds, and they are otherwise unaffected. Demons, Deevils, gods, and most other supernatural beings are not affected at all. Limit: Four times per 24 hours.
- **Cure Illness:** Identical to the invocation of the same name (see *Palladium Fantasy*®, *Second Edition*, page 198). Limit: Six times per 24 hours.
- **Negate Poison/Toxin:** Any poisonous substance can be rendered inert and harmless by touch from the Cleric. This must be a conscious act and will not affect a poison or toxin if the Cleric is completely unaware of its presence. The magic can also be used to instantly negate poison in the bloodstream, preventing further damage from the substance. Any damage caused by the poison prior to the negation cannot be reversed. Limit: Four times per 24 hours, plus one additional time at levels ten and fifteen. **Bonuses:** The Cleric, or its wielder, has a chance of instantly recognizing poison at 30% +4% per level of experience, and is +2 to save vs poisons/drugs. These bonuses are automatic and do not need activation or count against the ability’s limits.
- **Mend Bones:** By placing the hands over a broken bone the Cleric can set the bone so that it may heal properly. In addition, the bone will heal ten times faster than normal, meaning a leg fractured in several places will only take 8-10 days to heal instead of 11-15 weeks. Once healed, there will be no sign of having ever been broken. Limit: Four times per 24 hours.
- **Heal the Internal:** Internal injuries such as damage to nerves and organs as well as damage already inflicted from poisons and drugs can be repaired. Arrowheads and bullets can be removed from the body. This can be useful to help reduce old or poorly healed wounds to remove penalties suffered from chronic pain. Limit: Three times per 24 hours, plus one additional time at levels seven, ten and thirteen.
- **Bless Water:** The Cleric is capable of blessing water and turning it into Holy Water. Blessed water has no obvious effects on most people and can be used to wash or drink without difficulty. However, to vampires, Ghouls, and the occasional other supernatural menace, holy water is like acid! A single vial (6 ounces) will inflict 3D6 damage! Furthermore, a vampire or

any undead cannot enter a circle drawn in holy water. Blessed water retains the blessing indefinitely. Limit: Six times per 24 hours. The water must be in a container (can even be something as simple as cupped hands), and the maximum volume which can be blessed is one gallon (3.8 liters) per level of experience.

Greater; Level 9: At level nine the Cleric may select one new power. This power may be selected from the list of Lesser or Greater powers.

- **Purification:** Identical to the invocation of the same name (see *Palladium Fantasy*®, *Second Edition*, page 202), but at the equivalent of being cast by a Wizard at half the Cleric’s level (rounded down). This means a level 9 Cleric will cast the spell at level 4 proficiency, and a level 14 Cleric will cast at level 7 proficiency. Limit: Four times per 24 hours.
- **Damage Bonus:** Add 1D6 damage to the base damage of the weapon (5D6).
- **Heal Wounds (Superior):** A more advanced form of the basic ability learned at level 2. The Cleric can instantly restore 4D6 Hit Points and 4D6 S.D.C. (or M.D.C. in *Rifts*®) simply by touch. This version is capable of healing internal damage to organs and nerves, even helping to heal broken bones. Internal damage and broken bones will heal at the normal rate for treatment by a trained professional. It cannot heal old injuries (must be new), illness, or poison/drugs. Limit: Two times per 24 hours, plus one additional time at levels eleven and thirteen.
- **Exorcism:** 70% chance of success, +5% per level of experience starting at level ten. A successful exorcism will drive out/banish any entity or demon from a possessed person, animal, dwelling, or area. The exorcised creatures cannot return to the place or person for at least six months and are likely to never return (80% chance, +2% per level of experience starting at level ten, of never returning). A successful exorcism performed in an area such as a graveyard, tomb, etc., will destroy all animated skeletons, corpses, and mummies which inhabit the area of the exorcism. Ghouls and zombies will be banished for 10 months, while the greater supernatural creatures, including Lesser Deevils and Demons, vampires, ghosts, Wraiths, and Specters, are banished for 6 months. Limit: Four times per 24 hours.
- **Restore Limb:** A powerful healing magic that enables the Cleric to “restore” (i.e. reattach) a single severed limb (hand, arm, leg) or appendage (nose, ear, finger, etc.) on the suffering victim. The reattached limb or appendage functions exactly as it did before it was severed and the magic leaves no scar. Only the actual limb can be reattached in this fashion, substitutes are not possible. Furthermore, the severed limb cannot have been detached for more than three days, plus 6 hours per level of the Cleric starting at level ten. Limit: Two times per 24 hours. Note: While this ability has the power to reattach a severed head, it *cannot* restore life. The deceased body will merely be restored to one piece.

Greatest; Level 13: This is the peak of the Cleric’s power. A Cleric may select two new powers. These powers may be selected from the list of Lesser, Greater, or Greatest powers.

- **Healing Wounds (Aura):** Similar to the basic version, this ability can heal 2D6 Hit Points *and* 2D6 S.D.C. instantly. It also suffers the same limitations as the basic version. The advantage of this ability is that it allows the Cleric to heal multiple people all at once. A warm light surrounds the Cleric and it will heal everyone (enemies included) within its range. Though the light remains for several seconds, it only heals each individual once. Range: 5 feet (1.5 m), plus 2 feet (0.6 m) at levels fourteen and fifteen. Limit: Once per 24 hours, plus one additional time at level fifteen.
- **Remove Curse:** 01-50% chance of success, +6% at levels fourteen and fifteen. Limit: Twice per 24 hours, but can only be performed once per person per curse regardless of the passage of time (not even years later) until the character increases in level. At each new level of experience, the Cleric may try again. This ability can be used on different people/curses as often as two times per 24 hours.
- **Restore Life:** Similar to Resurrection, the Restore Life ability can bring the recently deceased back to life. However, first all the wounds and cuts must be sewn shut, broken bones set, internal injuries treated, and other damage repaired as if the person were still alive. It will not restore lost limbs or remove scars. If a limb is missing, it must first be tended to (sewn shut, cauterized, bandaged, etc.) before the magic is performed, and the limb will remain missing. The body must be mostly intact. If the body is too badly torn apart, not enough remains, the heart, lungs, brain, or head are missing, the body cannot be restored.

The body must have died within the last week, plus one day at levels fourteen and fifteen. Within this time frame the spell works automatically. It can be attempted after up to twice this amount of time has passed (two weeks, plus), but the chances of success are decreased (45% chance of success, +5% at levels fourteen and fifteen). When successful, the individual will be restored with 10 Hit Points. Other spells, abilities, and natural healing must then be used to restore the remaining health. If the character possesses Bio-Regeneration, that ability will remain dormant for 1D4 days as a result of the trauma to the system. After this time the Bio-Regeneration will kick in again. Limit: Once per 24 hours, and can only be performed once per person per Cleric (this does not prevent a traditional priest from trying, or the use of a Resurrection spell).

Note: Dying and being magically brought back can be a traumatic experience for most, often resulting in the development of an insanity (see *Palladium Fantasy®*, *Second Edition*, page 25). One of the special things about this ability is that it magically prevents the chance for a traditional insanity. Instead of randomly rolling on the insanity table, the revived individual will be converted to the Cleric's religion, having been "blessed" by the god and restored to life. This sudden conversion causes many to suspect this isn't so much restoring life as it is animating and controlling the dead.

Cleric R.C.C.

Attribute Requirements: None, only faith and dedication to his gods. A high M.E. and M.A. are helpful but not necessary.

Alignment: Any; typically reflective of the pantheon the Cleric worships. Due to the strong healing nature of the Cleric type Living Rune Swords, most are good or selfish.

R.C.C. Skills:

Cook (+15%)

Languages: Native tongue at 98% and two languages of choice (+20%).

Literacy: One of choice (+20%).

Lore: Religion (+10%)

Mathematics: Basic (+15%)

Wilderness Survival (+10%)

W.P.: As per type of Rune Weapon.

Hand to Hand: Basic

Hand to Hand: Basic can be changed to Hand to Hand: Expert for the cost of one R.C.C. Related Skill, or Martial Arts for the cost of three R.C.C. Related Skills.

R.C.C. Related Skills: Select six other skills at level one, plus select one additional skill at levels three, six, nine and twelve. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

Communications: None.

Domestic: Any (+10%).

Espionage: None.

Horsemanship: General or Exotic only.

Medical: Any (+15%).

Military: None.

Physical: Any, except Acrobatics, Gymnastics and Wrestling.

Rogue: Any.

Science: Any (+10%).

Scholar/Technical: Any (+10%).

Weapon Proficiencies: Any.

Wilderness: Any.

Secondary Skills: The character also gets to select four Secondary Skills from the previous list at level one, and two additional skills at levels two, five, seven, ten and thirteen. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get the advantage of the bonus listed in the parentheses. All Secondary Skills are limited (any, only, none) as previously indicated in the list.

Psion R.C.C. (a.k.a. Mind Sword)

Psychic

Weapons designed with a powerful psychic presence. While they start off weaker than most psychics, as the spirit becomes stronger they become increasingly powerful, developing many unique talents and greater mastery over its abilities.

Rune Weapon

Type: Swords and daggers are the most common, but any weapon could be used.

Blade Color: Silver.

Damage: 4D6

Special Abilities: Considered a Master Psychic, requiring a 10 or higher to save vs psychic attack. Starting I.S.P. is 1D4x10 plus M.E. attribute, plus 10 I.S.P. per each additional level of experience. The weapon grows more powerful as it increases in experience. I.S.P. recovers at a rate of 10 every three hours. If its physical form is ever destroyed, it can no longer increase in experience. See below for powers.

Basic; Level 3: This is the most basic level of power for a Living Rune Sword. At this level, there is only minor development and limited potential. As they grow in power their powers grow in strength and diversity.

- **Initial Power:** The character may select 10 psychic powers from the Physical or Sensitive category. All powers must be from the same category.

Lesser; Level 6: Increasing in power and development, the Living Rune Sword may select one ability from the list below.

- **Minor Psychic Power:** The character's abilities have continued to manifest. Select an additional 10 psychic powers from the Physical or Sensitive category. All powers must be from the same category.

- **Catatonic Development:** The psychic learns the ability to perform Catatonic Strike, but can only be used with the Rune Weapon. In addition, the psychic may select one additional Super Psionic power of choice. Note: The Rune Weapon must be a bladed weapon to select this option.

- **Mind Booster:** +3 to save vs psychic attack and insanity, +1 to Psi-Strength, and double the duration of all psychic powers. Note: Psi-Strength increases the power of psychic attacks, increasing the difficulty for targets to save. With this bonus a non-psychic must roll 16 or higher, a Minor or Major must roll 13 or higher, and a Master must roll 11 or higher.

- **Inner Strength:** +10 S.D.C. (one time bonus; becomes M.D.C. in a Mega-Damage environment), +1 to save vs Horror Factor, +5% to save vs coma/death, and +1D6 I.S.P. per level of experience (in addition to the 10 standard).

- **Damage Bonus:** Add 1D6 damage to the base damage of the weapon.

- **Energy Conversion:** The psychic is able to convert 1 point of P.P.E. into 1 point of I.S.P. This conversion process takes one action. Several points can be converted at once, but still counts as only one action. In the reverse, the psychic may convert 2 points of I.S.P. into 1 point of P.P.E. These abilities can only be used on the Living Rune Sword and cannot be performed on anyone else (Range: Self). Note: It is important to remember a Living Rune Sword needs P.P.E. to heal. Expending points without keeping this in mind can lead to a destroyed physical form.

- **Psychic Copy:** The Mind Sword is able to mimic the power of any psychic ability currently in the area. In order for this to work, the Living Rune Sword must have seen the power used at least once. This gives the psychic a great deal of flexibility and options, but there are limitations. 1) Only one psychic power can be copied at a time. This means if the psychic

wishes to copy a new power then the current copied power needs to be dropped. 2) While the copy power is in use, the Living Rune Sword may not access *any* of its other psychic powers. 3) The copied power is considered equal to the level of the Living Rune Sword, not the original psychic. This can be a positive or negative, depending on the original source. 4) Regardless of the desire to hold onto it, the copied power can only be held for 1D4 days. After that time, if the Living Rune Sword wishes to regain it, it must be copied again from the original source or another psychic with the same power.

Greater; Level 9: At level nine the character may select two new abilities. These abilities may be selected from the list of Lesser or Greater Powers.

- **Minor Psychic Power:** The character's abilities have continued to manifest. Select an additional 10 psychic powers from the Physical or Sensitive category. All powers must be from the same category.

- **Super Psionics:** Select two Super Psionic powers of choice.

- **Psi-Booster:** +3D6 I.S.P. (one time bonus), +1 to Psi-Strength, and double the range of all psychic powers.

- **Psychic Leech:** A psychic struck by the Living Rune Sword must make a save vs psionic attack. If the attack fails, the Living Rune Sword is able to steal one psychic power. Once stolen, the psychic power will be unavailable to the original psychic, and the Living Rune Sword can use it the same as any of its other psychic powers without restriction or fear of losing it. This power remains for only 1D6 hours, after which the stolen power will return to the original psychic. Even if the original psychic is dead the power is still lost after the time elapses.

Greatest; Level 12: This is the height of the psychic power. Select one new power. This power may be selected from the list of Lesser, Greater, or Greatest powers.

- **Minor Psychic Power:** The character's abilities have continued to manifest. Select an additional 10 psychic powers from the Physical or Sensitive categories. Powers may be selected from both categories, but are still limited to 10 total powers.

- **Master Psychic:** Select four Super Psionic powers of choice.

- **Damage Bonus:** Add 2D6 damage to the base damage of the weapon.

- **Power Booster:** +1D4x10 I.S.P. (one time bonus) and double damage to all psionic attacks.

- **Psychic Null Zone:** The Living Rune Sword is able to create a 10 foot (3 m) radius around it. Any psychic abilities entering into the zone are automatically nullified. It's constant and doesn't need to be activated, nor can it be shut off. This effectively makes the Psion immune to all psionics, both hostile and friendly. Only the Mind Sword's powers are unaffected, giving it a considerable advantage. The null zone has no effect on natural or magical abilities, only those of a psychic nature, including physical psionic effects such as Psi-Sword and Psi-Shield.

Psion R.C.C.

Attribute Requirements: None, a high I.Q. and M.E. (10 or higher) are strongly recommended.

Alignment: Any.

R.C.C. Skills:

Astronomy & Navigation (+10%)

Languages: Native tongue at 98% and two languages of choice (+20%).

Literacy: One of choice (+15%).

Lore: One of choice (+10%).

Mathematics: Basic (+15%)

Streetwise (+6%)

W.P.: Type of Rune Weapon.

Hand to Hand: Basic

Hand to Hand: Basic can be changed to Hand to Hand: Expert for the cost of one R.C.C. Related Skill, or Martial Arts for the cost of three R.C.C. Related Skills.

R.C.C. Related Skills: Select seven other skills at level one, plus select one additional skill at levels three, six, nine and twelve. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

Communications: Any.

Domestic: Any.

Espionage: Intelligence (+5%) or Escape Artist only.

Horseanship: General or Exotic only.

Medical: First Aid only.

Military: None.

Physical: Any, except Acrobatics, Gymnastics and Wrestling.

Rogue: Any.

Science: Any (+10% on Mathematics skills only).

Scholar/Technical: Any (+10% on Language, Literacy, or Lore).

Weapon Proficiencies: Any.

Wilderness Survival: Land Navigation and Wilderness Survival only.

Secondary Skills: The character also gets to select four Secondary Skills from the previous list at level one, and one additional skill at levels four, eight and twelve. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get the advantage of the bonus listed in the parentheses. All Secondary Skills are limited (any, only, none) as previously indicated in the list.

Warper R.C.C. (a.k.a. Dimension Sword)

Men of Arms

These are powerful Living Rune Weapons that possess dimensional powers capable of warping space. Most of their powers are directed towards combat, creating fields that can alter the space around the Warper, granting unnatural speed, strength, combat prowess, and other benefits. In straight combat, these Living Rune Swords are potentially the strongest of all the Living Rune

Swords. This often causes others to refer to them as "Swords of War." For the typical Warper, this is fine as they were created to fight a war so it's fitting. The Warper Living Rune Swords, more so than any other type, view their purpose as to fight, and have trouble finding a purpose beyond it. While not all will believe in senseless fighting or needless bloodshed, most will seek a cause that makes sense to them and they think is worth fighting for.

Rune Weapon

Type: Swords, axes, and war hammers are the most common weapons, but any weapon could be used.

Blade Color: Gold.

Damage: 6D6

Special Abilities: None to start. The weapon grows more powerful as it increases in experience. If its physical form is ever destroyed it can no longer increase in experience. See below for powers.

Basic; Level 3: The Living Rune Sword gains the most basic of its powers. This early stage power is common among all Warper types, but as it increases in experience it will develop more powerful and varied abilities.

- **Combat Bonuses:** +3 on initiative, +1 to strike, +1 to parry, +4 to dodge, +4 to pull punch, +2 to roll with punch/fall/impact, and +2 to disarm.

Lesser; Level 6: Increasing in power and potential, it's reached a stage of development to learn new powers. Select two abilities of choice from the list below.

- **Deflect Attack:** This allows the Warper to parry and deflect incoming ranged attacks such as arrows, fireballs, lightning, etc. The Warper gets to roll a normal D20 with a +4 bonus (plus any P.P. attribute bonus; no other bonuses apply). If successful, the attack is deflected harmlessly away from the Warper. Unfortunately, where the attack is deflected cannot be controlled. If the successful roll was 8 or lower (with bonuses) it hits a nearby ally. 12 or lower (with bonuses) will hit innocent bystanders. Anything higher will hit the ground 1D4x10 yards/meters away. **Limit:** Six times per 24 hour period.
- **Lesser Damage:** Add 2D6 damage to the base damage of the weapon.
- **Super Swift:** Add 1D4 to P.P. attribute and 4D4 to Spd attribute.
- **Super Strong:** Add 1D6 to P.S. attribute and +5 to all combat damage.
- **Return to Wielder When Thrown:** The Rune Weapon can be thrown like a missile weapon regardless of weapon type. It will return to the host body's (or wielder's) hand immediately after striking its target. Throwing the weapon and having it return counts as only one melee attack. **Range:** 40 feet (12.2 m). **Bonuses:** +1 to strike thrown. **Penalties:** Loses the ability to automatic parry for that turn.
- **Teleport Weapon:** It is difficult to separate the Rune Weapon from the host body, but this ability allows the weapon to be teleported to a different location for a short time. With this ability, the Rune Weapon can remain separated for one melee

round per level of experience (e.g. a level 8 Warper can remain separated for up to 8 melee rounds). Combined with Return to Wielder When Thrown, the weapon will return to the wielder (mentally commanded or at the end of the duration, whichever comes first), striking anything in its path. It takes one melee attack to teleport the item, and then a second attack to have it return. This can be an excellent tactic for sneak attacks or attacking multiple opponents in a row. **Range:** 120 feet (36.5 m). **Limit:** Twice per 24 hour period, plus one additional use at levels ten and fourteen. **Requires:** Return to Wielder When Thrown.

Greater; Level 9: At level nine, select one new ability. This ability may be selected from the list of Lesser or Greater powers.

- **Redirect Attack:** An advanced version of Deflect Attack that allows the Warper to actually control where the incoming attack is redirected. Roll a normal D20 with a +3 bonus (plus any P.P. attribute bonus; no other bonuses apply). If successful, it is possible to reflect the attack back at its source. A successful parry roll of 13 or higher (bonuses included) will send it back at the attacker (must dodge or take the hit). A successful parry of 12 or lower is simply deflected out of harm's way without fear of hitting unintended targets. **Limit:** Three times per 24 hour period, plus one additional use at level thirteen. **Requires:** Deflect Attack.
- **Null Space:** Once hit by a linked attack, the victim must make a roll save vs magic (12 or higher) or be temporarily removed into null space. Null space is an area where nothing exists, other than its victim. Within 2D4 actions the victim will return within a 10 foot (3 m) radius of where he/she disappeared. Unfortunately, not even the Warper can determine how long the victim will be gone nor the exact location he/she will reappear, making it impossible to attack the victim upon the moment of return.

This can still be useful if fighting multiple opponents by removing one or more to help even up the odds, to give time to think, or even a chance to run and/or hide. The way time passes in the null space cannot be determined. The victim in the null space may experience time in minutes, melee rounds, or melee actions. Only the victim knows that part. This can give a victim time to meditate, heal, or prepare an attack. **Limit:** Four times per 24 hour period.
- **Greater Damage:** Add 4D6 damage to the base damage of the weapon.
- **Indirect Attack:** When thrown, the Rune Weapon can move around obstacles, turn corners, go around shields, or otherwise twist, curve, and move in an unnatural manner to hit its target. This ability to move and turn in midair makes it difficult to avoid. **Range:** 80 feet (24.4 m). **Bonuses:** +4 to strike. **Penalties:** Loses the ability to automatic parry for that turn. **Limit:** Three times per 24 hour period. **Requires:** Return to Wielder When Thrown.
- **Blink:** The ability to warp the space between two points, allowing the Warper to move so fast it seems like teleportation. To bend the space between the two points, the final destination must be in line of sight. Since this is rapid movement and not true teleportation, the character cannot travel through walls or

sealed doors, even if able to see on the other side. It can only be used once per melee round, but does not cost a melee attack. This allows it to be immediately followed by a normal attack. With the character effectively disappearing and reappearing a second later, possibly behind the opponent, this is considered a surprise attack, unless the opponent is aware of this type of movement and prepared for it. **Range:** 60 feet (18.3 m). **Limit:** Three times per 24 hour period. Only once per melee round. **Bonuses:** +4 to dodge. **Requires:** Super Swift.

Greatest; Level 12: The height of their power, the Warper may now select two new abilities. These abilities may be selected from the list of Lesser, Greater, or Greatest powers.

- **Dimensional Damage:** The weapon doesn't just deal physical damage, but its dimensional nature allows it to inflict damage to its victims on a far deeper level. Any damage dealt from the Warper cannot be healed by Bio-Regeneration for 1D4 hours! This can be extremely deadly for fighting magical and supernatural beings. Additionally, the weapon is capable of dealing damage to Astral Beings, incorporeal beings, and those slightly out of phase. **Note:** To damage Astral Beings, incorporeal beings, those out of phase, etc., the target must first be seen or located by other methods. This ability does not allow the user to see otherwise undetectable targets, only to damage them.
- **Greatest Damage:** All weapon damage is doubled.
- **Animate Weapon:** The ability for the weapon to become completely animated and fight alongside the host body (or wielder). It functions as if being used by an invisible warrior. While fighting separately, the weapon has three attacks per melee round, +2 on initiative, and +4 to strike and parry. Using Teleport Weapon and then animating it can be a great strategy for surprise attacks and flanking opponents. **Range:** Can fight up to 200 feet (61 m) away. **Penalties:** While animated, the weapon can only fight, and is incapable of using any of its other Warper abilities. **Limit:** Twice per 24 hour period, can fight independently for up to five minutes. **Requires:** Indirect Attack.
- **Blur Attack:** This is the ability to actually warp time to such an extent it appears the Warper moves with a sudden burst of lightning fast speed. The Warper can unleash all of its attacks per melee round in one blinding blur of movement, using all of its actions before anyone else gets to act. In order to use this ability, the character must have initiative. The problem is that after the attacks are delivered, the character cannot dodge and is -4 to parry for the remainder of the melee round. **Limit:** Once per 24 hour period, plus one additional use at level fifteen. **Requires:** Super Swift.
- **Teleport: Superior:** Identical to the invocation of the same name (see Palladium Fantasy; Second Edition on page 216). **Limit:** Once per 24 hour period, plus one additional use at level fourteen.

Warper R.C.C.

Attribute Requirements: I.Q. and M.E. 12 or higher.

Alignment: Any.

R.C.C. Skills:

Climb/Scale Walls (+10%)

Gymnastics (+5%)

Languages: Native tongue at 98% and two languages of choice (+20%).

Literacy: One of choice (+15%).

Mathematics: Basic (+10%)

Military Etiquette (+15%)

W.P.: Type of Rune Weapon.

Hand to Hand: Martial Arts

R.C.C. Related Skills: Select two additional skills from the category of Military or Espionage, and five other skills at level one, plus select one additional skill at levels four, eight and twelve. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

Communications: Sign Language only (+5%).

Domestic: Any.

Espionage: Any (+5%).

Horsemanship: General or Exotic only (+5%).

Medical: First Aid only.

Military: Any (+10%).

Physical: Any.

Rogue: Streetwise only.

Science: Mathematics only (+5%).

Scholar/Technical: Any (+5%).

Weapon Proficiencies: Any.

Wilderness Survival: Carpentry and Wilderness Survival only.

Secondary Skills: The character also gets to select four Secondary Skills from the previous list at level one, and two additional skills at levels five, ten and fifteen. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get the advantage of the bonus listed in the parentheses. All Secondary Skills are limited (any, only, none) as previously indicated in the list.

Lightbringer R.C.C. (a.k.a. Holy Swords)

Men of Arms

Weapons designed with the purpose of combating supernatural evil. Many consider this type to be one of the weakest weapons because they start off dealing with the least amount of damage. However, as they grow in power their damage capabilities increase, but most importantly, their abilities to combat evil can be invaluable. As champions fighting supernatural evil they often meet their fate at an early stage, rarely surviving passed third or fourth level. While a supernatural foe may not worry much about a mortal hero after they escape, Lightbringers are considered a major threat and will be tracked with extreme prejudice. Not only are their powers keyed to fight the supernatural, but there are powerful supernatural forces with a weakness to Rune Weapons.

Rune Weapon

Type: Swords and pole arms are the most common weapons, but any weapon could be used.

Blade Color: White.

Damage: 2D6+6

Special Abilities: None to start. The weapon grows more powerful as it increases in experience. If its physical form is ever destroyed, it can no longer increase in experience. See below for powers.

Basic; Level 1: Even from a very early start the Lightbringers possess some talents. Without even such basic abilities they would meet their end much sooner. This early level power is basic among all the Lightbringers, but the powers grow more diverse and powerful as they increase in power.

- **Sense Evil:** The character (and sword) naturally senses the presence of evil in the area. Any supernatural evil entering into the territory of a Lightbringer can be sensed whether it is a god, Godling, Greater Elemental, demon or Devil, dragon, or even a high level practitioner of magic (level 10 or higher). It triggers automatically and without cost. This is a fairly unrefined ability and can only sense general proximity (within striking of the weapon or further away) and general number: one, few (2-6), several (7-14), or many (15 or more). **Range:** 5 foot (1.5 m) radius at first level, plus 5 feet (1.5 m) at levels two, three, four, five, six, eight, ten, twelve and fourteen.

Lesser; Level 3: Lightbringers advance quickly compared to most other Living Rune Weapons. This is because of the types of foes they are traditionally forced to face. Select one ability of choice from the list below.

- **Radius of Protection (Simple):** Basically the same as the Protection Circle: Simple invocation. The weapon must be raised above the head and then struck to the ground. Magical forces will hold the weapon upright in place unless the owner willingly removes it. If removed the spell is instantly broken. **Duration:** Five minutes per level of experience. **Range:** A circular area covering a six foot (1.8 m) radius around the weapon glows with magic energy and protection. **Limit:** One use per 24 hour period, plus one additional use at levels four, eight and twelve.

- **Turn Undead:** When the weapon is held over the head for all to see it is capable of turning 1D6 animated dead, plus 1D6 additional undead at levels two, three, four, five, six, eight, ten, twelve and fourteen. Those "turned" will not return for one hour per level of experience. This magic only affects skeletons, mummies, and corpses that are magically animated like marionettes; it will *not* affect vampires, zombies, Ghouls, ghosts, or any corpse or skeleton possessed by a living entity. Its range is line of sight. **Limit:** Once per 24 hour period, plus one additional use at levels six, nine and twelve.

- **Damage Bonus:** Weapon form inflicts 1D6 extra damage.

- **Globe of Daylight:** Effectively the same as the invocation with minor differences to range and duration. **Duration:** 10 minutes. **Range:** Emitted by the weapon, but lights up a 20 foot (6 m) area. It can go anywhere the weapon goes. **Limit:** Once per 24

hour period, plus one additional use at levels five and ten. Beyond that, this ability may be used at a cost of 8 P.P.E. **Note:** A wielder, other than the Living Rune Sword itself, must possess an understanding of magic, such as Paladins, Warrior Monks, and practitioners of magic, in order to channel from personal reserves (not the weapon's) of P.P.E. to use this power beyond the standard limit.

Greater; Level 6: Select two new abilities at level six. These abilities may be selected from the list of Lesser or Greater powers.

- **Protection Bonus:** +6 to save vs magic cast by supernatural evil. This bonus does not apply to traditional magic from a Wizard or other spell caster, even if evil. +4 to save vs Horror Factor and +1 to all other saving throws.
- **Monster Bane:** Deals double damage to supernatural beings and creatures of magic (including dragons).
- **Damage Bonus:** Weapon form inflicts 1D6+2 extra damage.
- **Radius of Protection (Superior):** Same as the lower level version, but range is doubled and it affects all supernatural creatures, even greater beings. **Range:** A circular area covering a 12 foot (3.6 m) radius around the weapon glows with magic energy and protection. **Limit:** Once per 24 hour period.

Greatest; Level 10: This is at one of the strongest points in the Lightbringer's power. It may now select one new power. This ability may be selected from the list of Lesser, Greater, or Greatest powers.

- **Combat Bonus:** One additional attack per melee round, +2 on initiative, +1 to strike and parry, and +4 to dodge. All bonuses only apply when fighting against supernatural evil directly and does not count if both are simply in the same battle. The weapon actually feeds off the strength of the supernatural aura.
- **Beacon of Light:** The character can emit an intensely powerful supernatural light from his body. This light will affect vampires and any other beings affected by sunlight, inflicting equal damage if they come within range. Not even Werebeasts reliant upon night may enter this area without being forced back into humanoid form. While this ability is in effect, the character's speed is reduced by half due to focus. **Duration:** Five minutes. **Range:** Illuminates up to a 10 foot (3 m) area. **P.P.E. Cost:** 12 per use. **Note:** A wielder, other than the Living Rune Sword itself, must possess an understanding of magic, such as Paladins, Warrior Monks, and practitioners of magic, in order to channel from personal reserves (not the weapon's) of P.P.E. to use this power.
- **Damage Bonus:** Weapon form inflicts 1D6+4 extra damage.
- **Monster Slayer:** Deals triple damage to supernatural beings and creatures of magic (including dragons). If Monster Bane is also selected, when Monster Slayer is activated it will inflict quadruple damage (x4). **P.P.E. Cost:** 1 per attack, whether it hits or not. **Note:** A wielder, other than the Living Rune Sword itself, must possess an understanding of magic, such as Paladins, Warrior Monks, and practitioners of magic, in order to channel from personal reserves (not the weapon's) of P.P.E. to use this power.

Legendary; Level 15: Unlike other Living Rune Swords, the Lightbringer does not reach its peak after becoming a Greatest Rune Sword. Because so few Lightbringers ever survive to see it, it is a little known fact that a Lightbringer is capable of becoming a Legendary Rune Weapon at the height of its power. Select one new ability at level fifteen. This ability may be selected from the list of Lesser, Greater, Greatest, or Legendary powers.

- **Disincorporate:** This is the most powerful ability of the Lightbringer. When it has reached this level of mastery it is capable of killing a demon, Deevil, or any supernatural being. Some such creatures can only be killed in their home dimension, but this weapon can sever that tie, allowing them to be killed in any dimension, as long as the Lightbringer deals the finishing blow. A truly smart demon may even take its own life just to be spared the lethal blow from this weapon.
- **Damage Bonus:** Weapon form inflicts 2D6+6 extra damage.

Lightbringer R.C.C.

Attribute Requirements: I.Q. 10, P.S. 12; a high P.P. and P.E. are also recommended but not required.

Alignment: Good only.

R.C.C. Skills:

Languages: Native tongue at 98% and two languages of choice (+20%).

Literacy: One of choice (+10%).

Lore: Demon & Monster (+15%)

Lore: One of choice (+10%).

Mathematics: Basic (+10%)

W.P.: Type of Rune Weapon.

Hand to Hand: Martial Arts

R.C.C. Related Skills: Select five other skills at level one, plus select two additional skills at levels four, eight and twelve. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

Communications: Any (+10%).

Domestic: Any.

Espionage: Any (+5%).

Horsemanship: General (+10%) or Exotic only.

Medical: First Aid only.

Military: Any (+5%).

Physical: Any, except Acrobatics.

Rogue: None.

Science: Mathematics only.

Scholar/Technical: Any (+10%).

Weapon Proficiencies: Any.

Wilderness: Any.

Secondary Skills: The character also gets to select four Secondary Skills from the previous list at level one, and one additional skill at levels two, five, seven, ten and thirteen. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get the advantage of the bonus listed in the parentheses. All Secondary Skills are limited (any, only, none) as previously indicated in the list.

Soul Drinker R.C.C.

(a.k.a. Vampire Sword)

Men of Arms

One of the most powerful types of Rune Weapons, Soul Drinkers have the ability to actually devour the souls of their victims. No matter what race they may appear as, they almost always appear vampiric in nature. They are among the most powerful types of Rune Weapons, and also one of the fiercest. Due to the dark nature of their powers, they are almost always evil. Killing and devouring souls is not something a good character can do lightly, and Soul Drinkers tend to not only thrive upon it but even enjoy it. Soul Drinkers are the natural enemies of Lightbringers.

In order to maintain its host body, a Soul Drinker must drink the life essence (blood) of others or its body will start to decay. It must feed once per week. If it does not, it will suffer 2D6 damage per day beyond one week, and cannot heal from any damage until it feeds. While feeding can come from multiple people to avoid killing, most will simply go for the kill. Not only is it easier, but it's also more satisfying. Some will even feed more often just for the thrill of it.

Feeding on a single victim, in increments spread throughout a week, will not be sufficient without killing the victim. Having only two victims will leave both victims and the Soul Drinker feeling weak. To operate at full strength but avoid killing, three or more victims fed on slowly throughout the week is required. Ideally, after feeding on a victim the Soul Drinker should wait at least one month before feeding on the same victim again, twice as long for victims not in an ideal condition, such as weakness due to excessive blood loss, or being already unhealthy, elderly, etc. Magic or psychic healing can help reduce this recovery time significantly, effectively allowing the same victims to be fed on week after week.

Rune Weapon

Type: Swords and daggers are the most common weapons, but any blade weapon could be used.

Blade Color: Black.

Damage: 5D6

Special Abilities: None to start. The weapon grows more powerful as it increases in experience. If its physical form is ever destroyed, it can no longer increase in experience. See below for powers.

Basic; Level 1: Soul Drinkers begin with their most infamous ability. It is a major part of who they are, and why they are so feared. This early level power is standard among all Soul Drinkers, but as they grow in power and strength, the range and diversity of their abilities grows with them.

- **Soul Drinking:** The most notable ability of the Soul Drinker is the ability to absorb and imprison a person's life essence. Before this can be used, the victim's blood must first be drawn by the weapon (cut, stabbed, or impaled). It may be done slowly or in a spectacular flash. A victim devoured by a Vampire

Sword is forever lost. Victims of a Soul Drinking attack get to save vs magic, but must roll a 12 or higher. A successful save means the victim's essence is saved. **Limit:** Once per 24 hour period (whether the victim saves or not).

Lesser; Level 4: The first major plateau in the Soul Drinker's power. It has now grown strong enough to develop new and improved techniques. Select one new ability of choice from the list below.

- **Advanced Soul Drinking:** The same as the basic ability, only more powerful. Victims must make a save vs magic, but must roll a 14 or higher. A successful save means the victim's essence is saved, but still suffers double damage. **Limit:** Four times per 24 hour period (whether the victims save or not).
- **Soul Channeling:** Instead of taking the time to actually study and learn new skills, the Soul Drinker can simply channel the knowledge of the souls it has consumed. One skill can be channeled from each soul consumed in the last 24 hours. This knowledge remains for 24 hours from the time the soul was consumed. Soul Drinkers often stalk a particular target with the intention of drinking their soul to obtain a skill. For example, if the Soul Drinker wishes to play the piano, it will likely stalk a notable pianist to consume the soul and learn by that means. **Duration:** 24 hours. **Limit:** The only limit is the number of souls that can be consumed (see Soul Drinking abilities for this limit).
- **Animate & Control Dead:** Using the souls it has stolen, the Soul Drinker can animate nearby dead bodies and then control them as minions. Up to 2D6 dead can be controlled at a time. **Duration:** 4 hours per use. **Limit:** Twice per 24 hour period.
- **Horror Factor:** Its dark, unnatural nature has grown to such an extent that it radiates an aura of supernatural evil. **Base Horror Factor:** 12, plus one at levels five, eight, eleven and fourteen. **Bonuses:** +2 to save vs Horror Factor.
- **Damage Bonus:** Add 1D6 damage to the base damage of the weapon.

Greater; Level 7: Select two new abilities at level seven. These abilities may be selected from the list of Lesser or Greater powers.

- **Superior Soul Drinking:** Same as the basic ability, but considerably more powerful. Victims must make a save vs magic, but must roll a 16 or higher. A successful save means the victim's essence is saved, but still suffers double damage; triple damage if a creature of magic or supernatural being (or in *Rifts*®, a Mega-Damage creature). **Limit:** The Soul Drinker can attempt to consume one soul per level of experience per 24 hour period (e.g. a level 8 Soul Drinker can consume 8 souls, a level 12 Soul Drinker can consume 12 souls, etc.). **Requires:** Advanced Soul Drinking.
- **Transfixing Gaze:** Anyone who meets the eyes of the Soul Drinker risks becoming entranced in its gaze. Looking directly into the eyes of a Soul Drinker can elicit a response to Horror/Awe Factor. Victims must roll a save vs Horror Factor 12 or higher. If the Horror Factor power is also selected, then that number is used instead. A failed save means the victim becomes temporarily "lost" in the Soul Drinker's eyes, mesmerized by its inhuman nature, power, and agelessness.

Unlike traditional Horror Factor, victims lose all sense of time and what else is happening. This spell is not broken until the Soul Drinker breaks contact, someone else pulls the victim away, or the victim is attacked. In the case of an attack, the first attack cannot be defended. Roll only to make sure it connects and passes any Armor Rating. A Soul Drinker will often use this to lure an unsuspecting victim into its clutches. Only one victim may be caught in the gaze of the Soul Drinker's eyes at a time.

- **Damage Bonus:** Add 2D6 damage to the base damage of the weapon.
- **Consuming Darkness:** A cloud of inky blackness that consumes the area and all those in it. It's so dark that a person caught in it cannot see beyond two feet (0.6 m) ahead. Those with the ability to See in Total Darkness and *magical* nightvision can see through this darkness at half their normal range. The creator of the darkness (Soul Drinker or wielder) can see through the darkness as if it wasn't there, completely unaffected by it. Very intense light (such as the Lightbringer's ability to create a Beacon of Light) or abilities capable of canceling magic, can dispel the darkness. Characters without some other means of accurately moving around are -8 to strike, parry and dodge, making them vulnerable to attacks from those who can see. Duration: 3 minutes. Range: 20 foot (6.1 m) radius. Limit: Once per 24 hour period. Beyond that, 12 P.P.E. may be spent for each additional use. Note: A wielder, other than the Living Rune Sword itself, must possess an understanding of magic, such as Paladins, Warrior Monks, and practitioners of magic, in order to channel from personal reserves (not the weapon's) of P.P.E. to use this power beyond the standard limit.

Greatest; Level 11: At this point, the Soul Drinker is considered one of the most powerful Rune Weapons in the world. The power of a Greatest Rune Weapon is highly coveted, and a Soul Drinker is considered by man to be greater in power than any other Rune Weapon. It may now select one new power. This ability may be selected from the list of Lesser, Greater, or Greatest powers.

- **Soul Strike:** This is the ability for the Soul Drinker to channel all the souls it has consumed in the last 24 hours into a powerful, destructive force unleashed in a single attack. This works best when combined with a large number of consumed souls. If Soul Channeling is also known, any skills acquired through this means will be lost/forgotten when the soul is used as an attack.

Soul Slash (melee): The full power of the sword is unleashed in one explosive attack. This attack can be dodged or parried as normal. Damage: Weapon damage, plus an additional 2D6 damage per soul consumed in the last 24 hours.

Soul Blast (ranged): In the alternative, an energy blast is emitted from the blade of the weapon. While not as powerful, this attack provides the benefit of a ranged assault. Damage: 5D6. Range: 100 feet (30.5 m) per soul consumed in the last 24 hours. Bonuses: +4 to strike.

- **Restorative Energies:** Instead of using P.P.E. to heal, the Vampire Sword is capable of healing by stealing the life energy (souls) of others. The stolen soul must be fresh, and taken with the sole intent of healing. A freshly absorbed soul can

restore a Soul Drinker to full health! This is can be extremely useful when used on a battlefield, but is still restricted by the normal limit of souls consumed in a day. Note: This soul cannot have been taken earlier in the day, nor can it be used in combination with Soul Channeling or Soul Strike, but still counts against the character's 24 hour limit.

- **Damage Bonus:** Add 3D6 damage to the base damage of the weapon.

Legendary; Level 15: Unlike most other Living Rune Swords, the Soul Drinker can develop to unheard of potential and become a Legendary Rune Weapon. Select one new ability at level fifteen. This ability may be selected from the list of Lesser, Greater, Greatest, or Legendary powers.

- **Soul Wave:** Instead of taking one soul at a time, the Vampire Sword can emit a wave of energy, consuming all nearby souls! With this attack, the Soul Drinker doesn't even need to draw blood from its victims and there is no limit to how many souls can be consumed, as long as they're within range of the attack. Souls consumed in this manner do not count against the Soul Drinker's 24 hour limit. This technique, combined with Soul Strike, can be an absolutely devastating combination.

Supernatural beings and creatures of magic are immune to this attack, as is the wielder of the Soul Drinker (if applicable). Everyone else in range, ally and foe alike, must make a save vs magic, the target number being equal to the character's Soul Drinking ability (Basic, Advanced, or Superior). Range: 5 foot (1.5 m) radius. For every 10 P.P.E. expended, the radius can be increased by an additional 5 feet (1.5 m). Limit: Once per 72 hours. Note: A wielder, other than the Living Rune Sword itself, must possess an understanding of magic, such as Paladins, Warrior Monks, and practitioners of magic, in order to channel from personal reserves (not the weapon's) of P.P.E. to use this power beyond the standard range.

- **Damage Bonus:** Add 4D6 damage to the base damage of the weapon.

Soul Drinker R.C.C.

Attribute Requirements: M.E. 12, P.E. 14 or higher, and an evil spirit. A high I.Q., P.S., and P.P. are also useful but not required.

Alignment: Evil only.

R.C.C. Skills:

Languages: Native tongue at 98% and two languages of choice (+20%).

Literacy: One of choice (+10%).

Mathematics: Basic (+10%)

Prowl (+15%)

Surveillance (+10%)

Track Humanoids (+15%)

W.P.: Type of Rune Weapon.

Hand to Hand: Expert

Hand to Hand: Expert can be changed to Hand to Hand: Martial Arts for the cost of one R.C.C. Related Skill.

R.C.C. Related Skills: Select five other skills at level one, plus select one additional skill at levels three, six, nine, eleven and fifteen. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

Communications: Any (+5%).

Domestic: Any.

Espionage: Any (+10%).

Horsemanship: General or Exotic only.

Medical: Any.

Military: None.

Physical: Any, except Acrobatics and Boxing.

Rogue: Any.

Science: Any (+10%).

Scholar/Technical: Any.

Weapon Proficiencies: Any.

Wilderness Survival: Any.

Secondary Skills: The character also gets to select two Secondary Skills from the previous list at levels one, four, eight and twelve. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get the advantage of the bonus listed in the parentheses. All Secondary Skills are limited (any, only, none) as previously indicated in the list.

Runed Personalities

What makes a person a person? Is it an age and a body? Is it the sum of experiences? Is it the choices made in life? Is it the presence of a soul? Or is it something else? This is an important question for many people, and when it applies to Rune Weapons it can be all the more complicated. Rune Weapons are clearly intelligent. They have personalities, goals, motivations, and alignments just like people, but are they really living beings? Their original bodies are long since dead. If the measurement of living is the body, then a Rune Weapon is not truly living and merely an echo of a man. If what makes a man a man is any other definition, then the issue gets even more clouded.

Rune Weapons are forged using souls as components. Even though the soul continues to exist, what made these people who they were is often lost. Being stripped from the body and fused with a weapon is not an easy task, neither for the Rune Master forging the item nor for the soul being forged into something else. More often than not, memories and past experiences would be wiped away in the process. Only the most skilled Rune Smiths could perform the process in a way that allowed the soul to retain its memories, but it was rare that these smiths would actually do it.

Remembering a past life while being trapped within an inanimate object can be absolute torture. If a memory was kept, it was usually only for two reasons. First, it could be done to honor the request of a dying ally. This could allow the soul to continue its fight even after its body grew cold and died. The second reason was to intentionally torture the soul, allowing it to witness things it would be powerless to stop directly, letting the soul's sanity slowly slip away in despair and/or isolation. However, this tactic could be dangerous. If the Rune Weapon ever fell into enemy

hands, then all that knowledge and power could be at their disposal. This is a risk few will haphazardly take.

As a result, few Rune Weapons or items truly remember their past lives. If the sum of a person is memories and experiences, then again one must face the fact a Rune Weapon is not truly a living being. While they possess the power to choose a wielder and they can restrict their powers if they so desire, there is little other they can do to change a situation. They can gain experiences, but never as an individual, only those shared with their wielder. There are those who consider a Rune Weapon as less than a sentient being, more the equivalent of a pet (or even a slave for some narrowminded people). It can warm up to a master, help in certain ways, but in the end it can do little more than serve.

All Rune Weapons have a soul fused into their very core. If having a soul is enough to be considered a person, then all Rune items should be considered people. However, how much is truly left of a person isn't as clear. When everything else is stripped away, the soul within the weapon is left bare. Despite that fact, Rune Weapons almost always keep the same alignment they had in life, tend to pick the same type of wielders as they once called friends, and even despise the same types of foes. Even with their memories lost, these aspects remain.

Whether it is an imprinting on the soul predetermining their leanings from birth, or if some fragment of their past life survives to help form a new, similar personality isn't known. Few care enough to debate the matter. Rune Weapons are powerful items, and it does not matter what makes them powerful as long as they can be used. For Living Rune Swords, the question can be far more meaningful. The answers they find vary from individual to individual, often helping to shape their lives and who they become.

Darklight

Non-Player Character

A Rune Sword that contradicts his very creation, Darklight is a Soul Drinker sword with no desire to kill. Though he feeds when necessary, he avoids killing in the process. Only in the most extreme situations will he kill to feed, and even then only against an evil enemy in the midst of a fight. The exact reason for this unusual morality for a Vampire Sword is unknown, but at least one scholar who has met him suspects that the process of being bound to a Rune Sword was so traumatic that it drove him insane, resulting in a completely different personality. Of all the Living Rune Swords, he is probably the most tormented. His instincts drive him to grow stronger, but he also knows that if he does this it will only cause the darkness within him to grow as well.

Physical Appearance (Weapon): Darklight is a flamberge sword. It is pure black, from the hilt, handle and blade, to the runes that line it. The only signs of color on the entire sword are two emeralds and two rubies built into the bottom of the handle.

Physical Appearance (Body): A human with his skin a pale white from lack of blood. One iris is bright green, while the other is dark red. His silky black hair is short and wavy. He is donned in

all black armor. Due to his tormented soul, he rarely smiles, but when he does it shows off his vampire fangs.

Race: Living Rune Sword; Soul Drinker. He takes the appearance of a human.

Alignment: Principled. Even though he must feed to survive, he will only feed from willing victims or in the heat of battle. He would rather die than betray his principles, for death of his soul is far worse than any physical pain or death.

Hit Points: 79, **S.D.C.:** 36, **or M.D.C.:** 88.

Natural A.R.: 14.

Weight: 180 lbs (81 kg).

Height: 6 feet, 1 inch (1.85 m).

P.P.E.: 56, **I.S.P.:** Zero.

Attributes: I.Q. 9, M.E. 12, M.A. 13, P.S. 9, P.P. 14, P.E. 19, P.B. 16, Spd 8. All attributes are considered supernatural.

Experience Level: 3rd level Soul Drinker.

Skills of Note: Language: Dwarven (98%), Elven (70%) and Western (70%), Literacy: Elven (50%), Mathematics: Basic (65%), Prowl (50%), Surveillance (45%), Track Humanoids (50%), Detect Ambush (50%), Detect Concealment & Traps (45%), Intelligence (48%), Biology (40%), Surgeon/Medical Doctor (40%/30%), Land Navigation (38%), Breed Dogs (50%/30%), and Writing (25%).

Special Abilities: Soul Drinking (basic).

Combat Training: Hand to Hand: Expert.

Attacks per Melee: Four.

Combat Bonuses: +1 on initiative, +2 to strike, +4 to parry/dodge, +2 to roll with punch/fall/impact, +2 to pull punch, +3 to save vs magic and poisons, and W.P. Sword (+2 to strike, +1 to parry, +1 to strike thrown).

Psionics: None.

Spells: None.

Weapon: The Rune Sword deals 5D6 damage.

Dalv

Non-Player Character

Also known as the Impaler, Dalv is a Warper. Unlike most of the other Living Rune Swords, Dalv is not a traditional melee weapon. Instead he is in the form of a Rune Bow. With the combination of the bow and arrows, he is able to attack his opponents with lethal ranged accuracy. He has a particular hatred of vampires, and will hunt them obsessively whenever one is suspected to be in the area. Unfortunately for Dalv, when he awoke from his slumber he found himself in a dragon's lair. She's a Fire Dragon who calls herself Hell's Song, and claims his bow as part of her horde. The meeting did not go well for Dalv, resulting in the death of his host body.

He remains in the form of a traditional Rune Weapon, able to be wielded by others who claim him. As of yet, none have

done so. When he is claimed, he will insist the wielder hunt down vampires whenever possible as well, or at the very least when one is in the area. Should the wielder not cooperate, he would refuse to lend any of his abilities and support. If given the chance, he'd prefer to be wielded by a skilled Bowman. His abilities, combined with Archery Proficiencies (see *The Rifter*® #45, Of Bows & Arrows, for more details on Archery Proficiencies), can prove an exceptionally formidable force.

Note: Arrows not included. During the Elf-Dwarf War he was awarded a single Rune Weapon, as an honored soldier may be awarded a Rune Weapon for exceptional skill. This Rune Arrow was not a part of him, however. What happened to it after his hibernation is a mystery to him, and he has no way of finding it, likely separated from him when Hell's Song found him.

Physical Appearance (Weapon): Dalv is a Rune Short Bow. It is golden with silver runes that line it. The bowstring is composed of finely crafted silver threads with concealed silver runes along it. Bow and string are considered part of the same Rune Weapon and indestructible. Despite this fact, they are magically able to flex and bend, allowing for arrows to still be fired.

Race: Living Rune Sword; Warper. He no longer has a host body.

Alignment: Unprincipled.

Hit Points/S.D.C./M.D.C.: Indestructible (host body already destroyed).

Natural A.R.: Not applicable.

P.P.E.: 102 (cannot be drawn on by wielder), **I.S.P.:** Zero.

Attributes: I.Q. 14, M.E. 16, M.A. 6, physical stats were lost with the body.

Experience Level: 12th level Warper.

Skills of Note: With lack of a host body to practice, his skills have dulled.

Special Abilities: Super Swift (adds 1D4 to wielder's P.P., adds 4D4 to wielder's Spd), Return to Wielder When Thrown (applies to arrows fired from Dalv; +1 to strike and can return to the wielder's quiver after hitting target, though broken arrows remain broken), Indirect Attack (applies to arrows fired from Dalv; +4 to strike, can turn corners and avoid obstacles in mid-air, up to 3 times per 24 hour period), Blink (the wielder can instantly move up to 60 feet/18.3 m in a single action, up to 3 times per 24 hour period/1 time per melee round), and Dimensional Damage (applies to arrows fired from Dalv; damage dealt by these arrows cannot be Bio-Regenerated for 1D4 hours!).

Combat Training: Not applicable.

Attacks per Melee: Equal to the wielder's Rate of Fire.

Combat Bonuses (applied to wielder while using Dalv): +3 on initiative, +1 to strike, +1 to parry, +4 to dodge, +4 to pull punch, +2 to roll with punch/fall/impact, and +2 to disarm.

Psionics: None.

Spells: None.

Seraphend

Non-Player Character

Also known as the One Winged Angel, Seraphend takes the appearance of a female Spirit of Light with only one silver wing. It is believed the soul used in her creation was from a Spirit of Light, a Seraph type in particular. A Spirit of Light is a powerful soul naturally and capable of making a Greater Rune Weapon or stronger. Since the experiment using lesser souls worked so well for making Lesser Rune Weapons stronger, it was decided to try and make a Greater Rune Sword even stronger as well.

To do this, a Seraph was found and bound to the runes, making a Living Rune Sword. But something went wrong during the process and the unthinkable happened, a Rune Sword broke! Not even Seraphend knows exactly how this happened. When she first awoke, everyone was dead and the Living Rune Sword was damaged, its blade cracked and one of the decorative wings that made the crosspiece broken off. Despite its damaged state, the experiment worked and a Greater Living Rune Sword was born, the only one of her kind.

At first, Seraphend served her duties loyally, fighting the enemies as told, and became one of the greatest warriors for the Dwarven Empire. Everywhere she went, though, she heard the rumors, whispered behind her back from those she fought alongside. Some believed the Elves had launched an attack the day she was created, damaging her before she was finished, and now she was somehow unstable. Others rumored that her soul was too powerful for the standard method and that a surge of magic is what caused the explosion. For her, the most horrible of all the rumors suggested that she herself murdered all of them and then, in a moment of grief for what she had done, attempted to take her life by trying to destroy her vessel, but instead only cracked it, resulting in her memory loss.

Even worse for Seraphend, she did not know if these rumors may hold some truth. They anguished her soul, and then she began to have memories. Not from the day of her birth, but from before that, from a previous life and incarnation. She had the fragmented memories of a Spirit of Light named Nova. The more she remembered, the more she worried about the rumors she heard, the more she came to one conclusion: she hated this world and everything in it. In her eyes, this world is evil and deserves to be destroyed.

Physical Appearance (Weapon): Seraphend is an extremely long Rune Sword with a large and heavy design. It is so heavy that it requires a minimum P.S. of 24 to lift and wield, and so long that it takes a minimum P.P. of 16 to wield effectively (otherwise the wielder suffers a -4 penalty to all movements with the sword). The handle is decorative, with a crosspiece designed to look like a pair of angel wings spreading wide. Unfortunately it is damaged, with one of the wings broken off, and there are cracks along the blade looking as if it may shatter with one careless swing. It is only the magic which holds this sword together and prevents it from shattering on impact.

Physical Appearance (Body): She appears as a tall, thin, delicately built female with long, fire red hair that stretches down her entire back and looks as if it may ignite in flames at any moment. From her back stretches one long silver wing, with only a

stump of a wing and a scar where it looks like the other has been ripped off.

Race: Greater Living Rune Sword; Fire Elementalist and Soul Drinker.

Alignment: Diabolic.

Hit Points: 81, **S.D.C.:** 104, **M.D.C.:** 185 (when applicable).

Natural A.R.: 16

Weight: 50 lbs (22.5 kg).

Height: 7 feet tall (2.1 m).

P.P.E.: 106 (recovers 10 P.P.E. every 3 hours), **I.S.P.:** Zero.

Horror/Awe Factor: 15

Attributes: I.Q. 15, M.E. 20, M.A. 11, P.S. 30, P.P. 26, P.E. 31, P.B. 27, Spd 10. All attributes are considered supernatural.

Experience Level: Fire Elementalist and Soul Drinker; both at level 8. As a Greater Living Rune Sword she has two classes of powers simultaneously! Despite her powers, she only has the skill set of a Fire Elementalist.

Skills of Note: Dowsing (65%), Land Navigation (68%), Language: Elven (98%), Dwarven (95%), and Elemental (95%, she is a Seraph by nature), Literacy: Elven (80%) and Dwarven (75%), Lore: Faerie Folk (80%), Lore: Demons & Monsters (70%), Mathematics: Advanced (90%), Prowl (60%), Dance (65%), Public Speaking (65%), Sign Language (55%), Masonry (55%), and Archeology (35%).

Special Abilities: (Fire Elementalist): Elemental Magic (Basic & Greater), Magic Bonus (Lesser), True Elemental. (Soul Drinker): Advanced Soul Drinking, Animate & Control Dead, and Transfixing Gaze.

Combat Training: Hand to Hand: Raigangi Blayse (Elongated Blade; see below for details).

Attacks per Melee: Six hand to hand attacks per melee, or three by magic.

Combat Bonuses: +3 on initiative, +8 to strike, +11 to parry/dodge, +15 to hand to hand combat damage, +4 to roll with punch/fall/impact, +3 to save vs Horror Factor (+7 against Elemental Beings), +10 to save vs magic (+15 if it's magical mind control), +4 to save vs psionic attack (+9 if it's psychic mind control), +4 to save vs insanity, Boxing, Wrestling (body block/tackle, pin/incapacitate, and crush/squeeze), W.P. Sword (+3 to strike and parry, +2 to strike thrown), and Over-sized Weapons (+1 to strike, +1D6 damage, her Rune Weapon included).

Psionics: None.

Spells: Blinding Flash (1), Fiery Touch (5), Impervious to Fire (6), Blue Flame (30), Circle of Flame (10), and Flame Friend (20).

Weapons: Her giant-sized Rune Sword deals 6D6 damage (7D6+15 when wielded by Seraphend).

Note: Seraphend's stats and abilities are beyond the limits of a traditional Living Rune Sword. It is important to remember that she started off as a Greater Living Rune Sword, not a Lesser Living Rune Sword like all the others, with fragmented

memories of her former life as a Spirit of Light. She is one of a kind.

Hand to Hand: Elongated Blade

The true name of this fighting style is Raigangi Blayse. It is more commonly referred to as "the Way of the Elongated Blade," loosely translated from Dwarven. This is a specialized fighting style designed to handle and fight with oversized (giant-sized) weaponry. While fighting with such a large weapon does lose some maneuverability, many still favor it for its increased damage capabilities. A master of this art can be a truly fearsome opponent on the battlefield, cutting down enemies in a single swing of these massive weapons once they get moving.

Restrictions: All special bonuses (including those that offset penalties) for oversized weapons are only after the weapon is moving. This can only be used *after* the first melee attack when the character has truly committed to fighting. Once moving, the weapon cannot come to a stop or it will lose all special bonuses (including those that offset penalties) for oversized weapons. Example: A character spends the first action to draw the oversized weapon. The second action is an attack (the first) against the opponent, using the normal penalties for oversized weapons. Then, on the third action, the weapon is in full motion/momentum and can be used with full bonuses/penalty modifiers gained from the hand to hand.

Limitations: A majority of this art is based upon using oversized weapons, leaving their training in unarmed combat and with standard sized weapons lacking. This can be a vulnerable spot when in closed in spaces where oversized weapons are not usable.

Skill Cost: Restricted to Men of Arms O.C.C.s that focus on melee combat only. Archers and others that specialize in magical or psychic type attacks are not allowable. Those applicable may select this fighting style at the cost of one O.C.C. Related Skill *in addition* to the cost for Hand to Hand: Martial Arts. This means if the O.C.C. starts with Martial Arts, it costs one O.C.C. Related Skill, but if the O.C.C. needs to spend three skills to obtain Martial Arts, then the Elongated Blade will cost four skills.

Basic Combat Moves: Initiative, strike, automatic parry, dodge, entangle, pull punch, body block/tackle, and roll with impact. All are granted at first level. Advanced moves will be learned later in levels.

- 1:** Starts with two attacks per melee round. When using an oversized weapon the character is able to fight with full weapon proficiency bonuses.
- 2:** +2 to strike with an oversized weapon, +1 to strike (normal), and +3 to roll with punch.
- 3:** Disarm and +2 to parry and dodge.
- 4:** Plus one die of damage to an oversized weapon (momentum).
- 5:** One additional attack per melee round.
- 6:** Reduce all penalties to using oversized weapons by half.
- 7:** Kick attacks: Karate style kick does 2D4 damage and any two kicks of choice, except jump kicks.
- 8:** +2 to initiative. If the character wins initiative it is possible to get the weapon moving for full bonuses for the first attack!

9: Critical Strike on an unmodified roll of 19 or 20.

10: One additional attack per melee round.

11: +2 to strike with an oversized weapon and +1 to strike (normal).

12: Body throw/flip.

13: Plus one die of damage to an oversized weapon (momentum).

14: All penalties to using oversized weapons are removed.

15: One additional attack per melee round.

Hex

Non-Player Character

Perhaps one of the most unusual Rune Weapons ever created, Hex is typically classified as an insane weapon with multiple personalities. However, this is not the case, and his condition is far more serious than most realize. Hex is actually an experiment by a Rune Smith. Instead of finding a soul strong enough to be used for a Lesser Rune Weapon, the smith decided to take several weaker souls and try to bind them into one single weapon. The results have been mixed. While the success is quite wondrous, it also comes with downfalls.

Six souls were used in the creation of Hex, and all six have varying control of the weapon. Each soul has a different personality and powers, and which soul is in control of the weapon varies and cannot be controlled. While this gives the weapon a greater range of overall power, it makes it impossible to control which powers are available. A soul switching control at the wrong moment can have deadly results, not only for Hex but for those relying upon that power. Those who don't know of its condition may believe Hex merely has six different wielders, but never know where the others have gone (at least, not at first).

Physical Appearance (Weapon): Hex is a silver, six-sided sword. It resembles a large, six-sided shuriken. In the center is a ring that works as a handle and a base for the protruding blades. The ring can be held by a wielder, used to spin and rotate the blades during combat or to hold when thrown and caught. It is an unusual weapon, and difficult to master.

W.P. Six-Sided Sword: The ability to skillfully wield a six-sided sword is different enough from traditional swords to require its own Weapon Proficiency. This is a skill all six personas of Hex possess. **Bonuses:** +1 to strike at levels 1, 3, 7, 10 and 13. +1 to parry at levels 2, 5, 8, 11 and 15. +1 to strike when thrown at levels 3, 6, 9 and 12.

Alpha (Persona)

This is the lead persona of Hex. He is a Psion type, and the only one that truly knows what's going on. At first, like the others, he was unwilling to accept the seemingly impossible. But he knew too well that something was wrong and finally performed a psychometric reading (Object Read) on the Rune Weapon. When he did, he saw the lives of all the others trapped inside as well and knew they were now as much a part of his life as he was going to be theirs. For though they never met, they all shared one vessel.

His mind opened, and he could sense their feelings and desires as strongly as his own.

Since this incident, Alpha has learned to never discount the impossible as he's living proof anything can happen. When he can, he'll help the others carry out their hopes and goals even though their consciousness lies dormant. In his mind all the others are like younger brothers and sisters, and it's his duty as the eldest to look after them and help them out. Alpha is the personality and Rune Weapon type the original creator attempted to design. This fact, along with his knowledge of the situation, allows him to be in control nearly half of the time.

Physical Appearance (Body): Alpha appears as a male Dwarf whose hair and beard have already gone silver. He has a noticeably slimmer build than most Dwarves, looking as if he may be unhealthy. It's likely that before his soul was implanted into a Living Rune Sword the original body of Alpha had been dying, or at least this is the conclusion he's come to. He believes the same may be true for all the others as well; terminally ill or wounded, rescued from death by being placed into a Rune Weapon.

Race: Living Rune Sword; Psion.

Alignment: Scrupulous.

Hit Points: 34, **S.D.C.:** 60, *or* **M.D.C.:** 112 (when applicable).

Natural A.R.: 14

Weight: 100 lbs (45 kg).

Height: 4 feet (1.2 m).

P.P.E.: 57, **I.S.P.:** 96.

Attributes: I.Q. 11, M.E. 16, M.A. 10, P.S. 8, P.P. 12, P.E. 14, P.B. 14, Spd 6.

Experience Level: 6th level Psion.

Skills of Note: Astronomy & Navigation (65%), Language: Dwarven (98%), Elven (85%), Western (85%), and Eastern (50%), Literacy: Dwarven (70%), Lore: Magic (60%/50%/45%), Mathematics: Basic (85%), Streetwise (46%), Cryptography (40%), Anthropology (45%), Archeology (45%), Advanced Mathematics (80%), Juggling (60%), Palming (45%), Pick Pockets (55%), General Repair/Maintenance (60%), Masonry (55%), Sculpting & Whittling (55%), Cook (55%), Ventriloquism (28%), and Sew (35%).

Special Abilities: Initial Power (Sensitive) and Psychic Copy.

Combat Training: Hand to Hand: Basic.

Attacks per Melee: Five.

Combat Bonuses: +2 on initiative, +2 to strike, +3 to parry/dodge, +2 to roll with punch/fall/impact, +2 to pull punch, +2 to save vs psychic attack (requires 10 or higher), +2 to save vs insanity, snap kick (1D6), Critical Strike on a Natural 19 or 20, W.P. Six-Sided Sword (+2 to strike and parry, +2 thrown), and bonuses from Sixth Sense (when applicable).

Psionics: (Sensitive) Clairvoyance (4), Empathy (4), Meditation (0), Mind Block (4), Object Read (6), See Aura (6), Sixth Sense (2), Speed Reading (2), Telepathy (4), and Total Recall (2).

Spells: None.

Weapon: Hex does 4D6 damage as a Rune Sword, regardless of persona.

Night's Edge (Persona)

The "champion" of Hex is a Lightbringer type named Night's Edge. She's smart and cunning, favoring intelligence over brute strength. While she'll always attempt to do the right thing and bring evil to justice when possible, she's not stupid. Despite people's common impression of a Lightbringer jumping into battle against impossible odds regardless of consequences, that's not how it works in real life. Night's Edge knows that if she gets herself killed in a hopeless battle trying to futilely protect someone who is going to die shortly after she does anyways, then her death serves no purpose.

By no means is she a coward and afraid of death, but she picks her battles intelligently. If her death will protect someone, or actually stop a greater evil, she'll gladly accept that fate with a smile on her lips. But she won't throw her life away without a good reason. Though it would pain her to do so, she'd watch innocents get slaughtered if she knew she couldn't save them, or let a supernatural evil pass without attack if she knew she couldn't possibly win and it posed no immediate threat. Instead, she'd much rather form a strategy, set a trap, and/or get reinforcements to take the problem on in an intelligent manner.

Physical Appearance (Body): Night's Edge is a female Elven warrior still in her prime. She's donned in brilliant shining silver armor and a white cape, looking like a true Knight or Paladin. Her hair is dark black, but her eyes are tinted white as if she were blind. This is not the case though, as she can see as clearly as any other, but possibly a sign she was blind before her rebirth as a Rune Weapon.

Race: Living Rune Sword; Lightbringer.

Alignment: Scrupulous.

Hit Points: 87, **S.D.C.:** 57, *or* **M.D.C.:** 93 (when applicable).

Natural A.R.: 14

Weight: 160 lbs (72 kg).

Height: 6 feet, 8 inches (1.9 m).

P.P.E.: 49, **I.S.P.:** Zero.

Attributes: I.Q. 19, M.E. 12, M.A. 7, P.S. 12, P.P. 15, P.E. 17, P.B. 20, Spd 5.

Experience Level: 3rd level Lightbringer.

Skills of Note: Language: Elven (98%), Dwarven (75%), and Faerie Speak (75%), Literacy: Elven (55%), Lore: Demon & Monster (55%), Lore: Magic (50%/40%/35%), Mathematics: Basic (70%), Horsemanship: General (60%/45%), Detect Ambush (50%), Detect Concealment & Traps (45%), Intelligence (48%), Play Musical Instrument: Harmonica (50%), Horsemanship: Exotic (45%/35%), Land Navigation (43%), First Aid (45%), Camouflage (35%), and Gemology (35%).

Special Abilities: Sense Evil and Radius of Protection (simple).

Combat Training: Hand to Hand: Martial Arts.

Attacks per Melee: Four.

Combat Bonuses: +1 on initiative, +3 to strike, +4 to parry/dodge, +3 to roll with punch/fall/impact, +3 to pull punch, +2 to save vs magic, +2 to save vs poison, kick attack (2D4), axe kick (2D6), crescent kick (2D4+2), backward sweep (knockdown), tripping/leg hook (knockdown), and W.P. Six-Sided Sword (+2 to strike, +1 to parry, +1 thrown).

Psionics: None.

Spells: None.

Weapon: Hex does 4D6 damage as a Rune Sword, regardless of persona.

Crystal the Clear (Persona)

According to rumors, Crystal the Clear was once a Wizard's apprentice who got caught in some horrible experiment gone awry. Tales are unclear if she or her mentor caused it, but all the stories agree it involved a Crystal Ball in some way and left her on death's door. The truth of the matter is that her mentor had been attempting to use a Crystal Ball to scry the possibilities of using the Enchanted Cauldron so that he could find a way to use it with guaranteed success and/or eliminate the side effect of insanities. Crystal, or whatever her name was at the time, attempted to rush the procedure in an attempt to speed up her arcane studies. Her interference and inability caused it to explode in her face, nearly killing her.

In her current form, she's developing as an Invoked Rune Weapon type. However, she is growing impatient with her current rate of progress and wants to develop faster. She is contemplating studying under a traditional Wizard just long enough to learn how to cast magic using traditional methods, then returning to trying to develop as a Living Rune Sword. This can end up causing only more problems for her, though, as it is her impatience that caused her current condition in the first place. Sadly, without a memory of her past life, she is unable to learn from her previous mistakes.

Physical Appearance (Body): Crystal the Clear takes the form of a Dwarven female with a shaven head. Her eyes are blue grey. She wears a hooded cloak that matches her eyes.

Race: Living Rune Sword; Invoked.

Alignment: Unprincipled.

Hit Points: 61, **S.D.C.:** 44, *or* **M.D.C.:** 105 (when applicable).

Natural A.R.: 14

Weight: 120 lbs (54 kg).

Height: 3 feet, 4 inches (1 m).

P.P.E.: 98 (recovers 10 P.P.E. every 3 hours), **I.S.P.:** Zero.

Attributes: I.Q. 14, M.E. 9, M.A. 7, P.S. 12, P.P. 13, P.E. 21, P.B. 13, Spd 4.

Experience Level: 3rd level Invoked.

Skills of Note: Language: Dwarven (98%), Elven (70%), and Gobblely (70%), Literacy: Dwarven (55%) and Elven (55%), Lore: Magic (55%/45%/40%), Mathematics: Basic (65%), Sign Language (40%), Lore: Geomancy & Ley Lines (45%), Cryptography (35%), Forgery (40%), Intelligence (43%), Public Speaking (45%), Writing (40%), Locate Secret Com-

partments/Doors (25%), Horsemanship: Exotic (40%/30%), Brewing (35%/40%), Pick Locks (40%), Prowl (35%), History (40%), and Climb/Scale Walls (40%/35%).

Special Abilities: Magic Bonus.

Combat Training: Hand to Hand: Basic.

Attacks per Melee: Four.

Combat Bonuses: +1 on initiative, +1 to strike, +3 to parry/dodge, +2 to roll with punch/fall/impact, +2 to pull punch, +6 to save vs magic, +4 to save vs poison, +2 to save vs Horror Factor, kick attack (2D4), and W.P. Six-Sided Sword (+2 to strike, +1 to parry, +1 thrown).

Psionics: None.

Spells: None (as of yet).

Weapon: Hex does 4D6 damage as a Rune Sword, regardless of persona.

Nightingale (Persona)

Nightingale is one of the six personalities of Hex. He is a Cleric who wants to save everyone. Even when he can't save someone's life, he attempts to soothe them with song, typically religious. For the most part he's easygoing, except for when it comes to preaching his religion, at which times he spreads the word of his gods with extreme zeal. His personality is fairly docile, rarely vying for control.

Physical Appearance (Body): Nightingale takes the appearance of a male Gnome wearing dark red priest's robes.

Race: Living Rune Sword; Cleric.

Alignment: Principled.

Hit Points: 65, **S.D.C.:** 70, *or* **M.D.C.:** 74 (when applicable).

Natural A.R.: 14

Weight: 20 lbs (3 kg).

Height: 2 feet (0.6 m).

P.P.E.: 42, **I.S.P.:** Zero.

Attributes: I.Q. 9, M.E. 13, M.A. 11, P.S. 14, P.P. 17, P.E. 15, P.B. 14, Spd 8.

Experience Level: 2nd level Cleric.

Skills of Note: Cook (50%), Language: Dwarven (98%), Elven (65%), and Faerie Speak (65%), Literacy: Dwarven (55%), Lore: Religion (45%), Mathematics: Basic (65%), Wilderness Survival (45%), Brewing (55%/60%), Sing (45%), Holistic Medicine (50%/40%), Animal Husbandry (55%), Botany (40%), Art (50%), Preserve Food (45%), Swimming (45%), Use & Recognize Poison (32%/24%; for diagnosis & treatment), Land Navigation (34%), Lore: Demon & Monster (25%), and Wilderness Survival (30%).

Special Abilities: Heal Wounds (Basic).

Combat Training: Hand to Hand: Basic.

Attacks per Melee: Four.

Combat Bonuses: +1 on initiative, +2 to strike, +4 to parry/dodge, +2 to roll with punch/fall/impact, +2 to pull punch, and W.P. Six-Sided Sword (+1 to strike and parry).

Psionics: None.

Spells: None.

Weapon: Hex does 4D6 damage as a Rune Sword, regardless of persona.

Azure of the Wind (Persona)

One of the lesser personas of Hex, Azure is an Air Elementalist. Of all the personalities, he takes control the least often, giving him the least experience and power. While he knows something is wrong, he doesn't know what. He does know that his time being awake is all too brief, and doesn't waste time trying to figure it out. When he's awake, he simply tries to enjoy life as much as possible, taking the world on with a childish glee. Even when something horrible or tragic happens, he can go into it with a smile, not because he's cold hearted, but because he believes feeling anything at all, even the bad stuff, is precious.

Physical Appearance (Body): Azure takes the shape of a young human in his mid-teens. He has long, spiky blonde hair and sapphire blue eyes. Instead of armor he's usually dressed in fine white clothes with silver highlights that make him look as if he could belong to some noble family.

Race: Living Rune Sword; Air Elementalist.

Alignment: Principled.

Hit Points: 32, **S.D.C.:** 38, *or* **M.D.C.:** 66 (when applicable).

Natural A.R.: 14

Weight: 128 lbs (58 kg).

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

P.P.E.: 58, **I.S.P.:** Zero.

Attributes: I.Q. 12, M.E. 22, M.A. 11, P.S. 8, P.P. 16, P.E. 14, P.B. 14, Spd 25.

Experience Level: 2nd level Air Elementalist.

Skills of Note: Dowsing (35%), Land Navigation (44%), Language: Western (98%), Dwarven (65%), and Elven (65%), Literacy: Dwarven (50%), Lore: Faerie Folk (50%), Cook (45%), Dance (45%), Play Musical Instrument: Red Bay Flute (40%), Juggling (40%), Running, Tumbling (Back Flip: 45%; Pole Vault: 55%; Stilt Walk: 55%), and Rope Works (30%).

Special Abilities: Elemental Magic (Basic).

Combat Training: Hand to Hand: Martial Arts. When combat arises, he likes to use no weapons other than his hands, feet, and elemental powers. Even using the Rune Weapon Hex will be only as a last resort.

Attacks per Melee: Four.

Combat Bonuses: +2 on initiative, +4 to strike, +5 to parry/dodge, +9 back flip dodge (45% chance of success), +5 to roll with punch/fall/impact, +3 to pull punch, +5 vs psionic attack, +6 vs insanity, Body Throw (1D6), and W.P. Six-Sided Sword (+1 to strike and parry).

Psionics: None.

Spells: Cloud of Slumber (4), Thunder Clap (2), and Silence (10).

Weapon: Hex does 4D6 damage as a Rune Sword, regardless of persona.

Mimic (Persona)

Mimic is one of the more usual personas of Hex. The amount of control he exerts is second only to Alpha. One of the things that make him so unusual is the fact that he's actually rejected his life as a Living Rune Sword. More than anything, he wants to fight! Some believe this to mean he was a Warper type, but the truth is no one knows for sure. He never advanced at all as a Living Rune Sword, so even his most basic abilities never developed. Instead, he decided to train to become a Weapons Expert (see O.C.C. details below).

The challenge of the fight is more important than the outcome. For that reason, he always attempts to face his opponents on a level playing field. When fighting one on one, he will transform the Hex Rune Weapon into a copy of the opponent's weapon! This allows him to fight using the same weapon. The fight must be decided by skill, not who has the superior weapon, allowing him to prove his mastery over any weapon. Fair fights decided by skill are the reason Mimic was created, at least in his mind.

Exactly how this works, not even Alpha truly understands. It is not a technique any of the other personas can employ. It's possible it has something to do with the fact he has the image of a Changeling, but Mimic is likely not the first Changeling Rune Weapon, and no other has displayed such a talent. Others speculate that it must be because of his Weapons Expert training, though no Weapons Expert can perform this feat either. It's possible that Mimic is actually an entirely original type of Living Rune Weapon with unique abilities.

When fighting multiple opponents, Mimic will usually favor one of two forms. The first is the standard Hex Rune Weapon which he skillfully uses as a thrown weapon when range is needed. Otherwise, he'll use a personalized second form. It turns into a long, two-handed sword, completely black. The handle forms into a dragon, with wings as the crosspiece and a dragon head on the pommel. Along the blade runs a design of a dragon's tail. When added all together it looks like a dragon in mid-flight. Its all black nature makes some suspect he was meant to be a Soul Drinker, but he has no need to feed, making this unlikely.

Physical Appearance (Body): Mimic takes the shape of a Changeling, but retains his shape shifting powers. He will only (or maybe can only) use these powers to mirror the form of the one he is facing. This is a tactic he likes to use because he finds it fun. Unfortunately for him, it has a tendency to unnerve his opponents and he considers that an unfair advantage, so despite his enjoyment of it he only uses it sparingly.

Race: Living Rune Sword; Unknown type (multi-classed as a Weapons Expert).

Alignment: Unprincipled.

Hit Points: 77, **S.D.C.:** 50, *or* **M.D.C.:** 90 (when applicable).

Natural A.R.: 14

Weight: 180 lbs (81 kg).

Height: 7 feet (1.2 m).

P.P.E.: 60, **I.S.P.:** Zero.

Horror/Awe Factor: 10 (11 against ordinary citizens).

Attributes: I.Q. 14, M.E. 10, M.A. 6, P.S. 11, P.P. 18, P.E. 17, P.B. 15, Spd 6.

Experience Level: 5th level Weapons Expert.

Skills of Note: Make & Modify Weapons (92%), Field Armorer (70%), Language: Elven (98%) and Dwarven (70%), Literacy: Elven (55%), Recognize Weapon Quality (70%), Detect Ambush (55%), Detect Concealment & Traps (50%), Track Humanoids (50%), Lore: Demon & Monster (55%), Lore: Magic (45%/35%/30%), Climb/Scale Walls (60%/55%), Swimming (60%), Track & Trap Animals (40%/50%), First Aid (45%), Streetwise (32%), Heraldry (30%/35%), Fishing (30%), and Card Shark (24%).

Special Abilities: None.

Combat Training: Hand to Hand: Weapons.

Attacks per Melee: Five.

Combat Bonuses: +1 on initiative, +3 to strike (+4 with any weapon), +3 to parry/dodge (+6 with any weapon), +2 to save vs magic, +2 to save vs poison, Critical Strike on a Natural 19 or 20, Sniper (+3 to strike), small objects (1D6 melee, 1D4 thrown), flexible objects (1D4 choke attack), W.P. Six-Sided Sword (+2 to strike and parry, +1 thrown), W.P. Sword (+2 to strike and parry, +1 thrown), and *all* Weapon Proficiencies (at level 5).

Psionics: None.

Spells: None.

Weapon: Hex does 4D6 damage as a Rune Sword, regardless of persona.

Weapons Expert O.C.C.

Men of Arms

Designer Note: This concept is originally from *Heroes Unlimited*TM, *Second Edition*, the Hardware power category, written by Wayne Breaux Jr. & Kevin Siembieda. I felt it would be fitting for *Palladium Fantasy*® as well, so it is included here with minor adjustments such as skills and a new hand to hand style.

This character is an expert with virtually all aspects of weapons – their design, maintenance, repair, construction, modification, and use. These characters love weapons of all kinds. Although they prefer hand to hand weapons, they are also skilled with bows and make good snipers. Weapons Experts prefer to have customized weapons and armor. For this reason, they often craft these items themselves. All Weapons Experts love to fight, and usually fight to kill. For this reason, they usually die young. Enemies rarely show mercy toward an opponent who has none. However, a few Weapons Experts have lived to an old age. These rare few (12th level or higher) have become known as Weapons Masters.

Special Abilities of the Weapons Expert:

1. Make & Modify Weapons Skill: The ability to craft, modify, and repair any type of handheld weapon. **Base Skill:** 84% +2% per level of experience.

The following penalties apply whenever any weapon is built or modified. After the weapon is constructed, the player must roll to see if it is flawed. The character must subtract all the appropriate penalties from the base skill. Penalties are cumulative, so there are likely to be several combined penalties, especially when working with a new type of weapon.

-10% Improve balance for throwing or parrying on an existing weapon (somebody else made it). +1 to parry.

-10% Improve sharpness of a blade (superior). +1 to damage.

-25% Forge one's own weapon from scratch (good quality). +1 to parry.

-35% Forge one's own weapon from scratch with superior balance, damage, and/or sharpness (add +1 to strike, +2 to parry, and +4 to damage).

-10% One's own design.

-20% New type of weapon (design and shape created by the character and not listed in any of the books).

-20% Rush job, takes half the time, but may be flawed.

Time Restrictions: The amount of time needed to work on a weapon varies with the complexity of the task. The player and Game Master will have to work out, together, how much time will be needed to do the work properly. Also, the hours of work may have to be spread out over a few days or even weeks. Don't forget, even characters need to sleep and rest. This is precision work and requires a person's full attention.

A fair formula for determining time is one hour for every one penalty point. Two hours per penalty point if it is the character's own design, and add 10 hours for giant-sized or Gnome-sized weapons. This is the time for the specific work. Additional time may be spent on research, travel, and getting money for parts and materials.

2. Reputation & Horror Factor: The occupation comes with a certain stigma and creates an element of fear, particularly among ordinary citizens (+1 to Horror Factor). This aura of fear and violence gives the known Weapons Expert a Horror Factor of 8, +1 at levels 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13 and 15.

Weapons Expert O.C.C.

Alignment: None.

Race Restrictions: None. However, 50% are Dwarves, 40% are Kobolds, and 10% are other races (less than 1% are Goblins, Hob-Goblins, and Orcs).

O.C.C. Skills:

Field Armorer (+20%)

Languages: Native Tongue at 98% plus one of choice (+10%).

Literacy: One of choice (usually native or Elven; +5%).

Recognize Weapon Quality (+25%)

Sniper (with an additional +1 to strike)

W.P.: Archery, Blunt, Chain, Crossbow, Forked Weapons/Trident, Grappling Hook, Knife, Mouth Weapons/Blowguns, Net, Paired Weapons, Pole Arm, Battle Axe, Lance, Shield, Spear, Staff, Sword, Targeting/Missile Weapons, and Whip.

Hand to Hand: Weapons (Special! Cannot be changed.)

O.C.C. Related Skills: Select four other skills at level one, plus select one additional skill at levels three, six, nine and twelve. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

Communications: Sign Language only (+5%).

Domestic: Any.

Espionage: Any (+5%).

Horsemanship: General or Exotic only (+5%).

Medical: First Aid only.

Military: Any (+5%).

Physical: Any, except Acrobatics, Boxing, Gymnastics, and Wrestling.

Rogue: Any (+4% for Streetwise only).

Science: Mathematics only.

Scholar/Technical: Any (+10% on Language, Literacy and Lore only).

Weapon Proficiencies: Any.

Wilderness: Any.

Secondary Skills: The character also gets to select four Secondary Skills from the previous list at level one, and two additional skills at levels two, five, ten and thirteen. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get the advantage of the bonus listed in the parentheses. All Secondary Skills start at the base skill level. Also, skills are limited (any, only, none) as previously indicated in the list.

Starting Equipment: Two sets of clothing, boots, a pair of leather gloves, belt, bedroll, backpack, two large sacks, two small sacks, a water skin, and a tinder box.

Armor: Starts with a customized suit of Chain Mail (A.R. 14, S.D.C. 44), or customized Studded Leather (A.R. 13, 38 S.D.C.); player's choice.

Weapons: Starts with four weapons of choice and one customized weapon, all are basic S.D.C. weapons of good quality. Magic weapons and other equipment must be acquired later. *Note:* Weapons experts will rarely carry more than one type of the same weapon. Instead, they carry several different types of weapons (e.g. chained, blunt, sword, axe and bow). This is done so that they can be prepared for a variety of situations.

Money: The character starts off with 180 in gold, which can be used immediately to purchase more equipment or saved. Additional money will come from payment for jobs (often hire themselves as mercenaries) and/or booty.

Hand to Hand: Weapons

In the right hands, virtually anything can become a lethal weapon. This style takes that concept to heart. While it lacks traditional hand to hand moves, when wielding a weapon there is little that can stand against it. **Note:** This style is largely based off of Moo Gi Gong from *Ninjas & Superspies*™ by Erick Wujick. In my opinion, the concepts fit each other well. Again, I made a few adjustments to help it fit in with the *Palladium Fantasy*® setting, such as removing the martial arts techniques for simplicity.

Limitations: This martial art focuses solely on weapon combat. Its major disadvantage is its dependency on a weapon to be effective, completely lacking any form of hand and kick attacks.

Skill Cost: It is limited to the Weapons Expert O.C.C., which gets it automatically.

Basic Combat Moves: Initiative, strike, automatic parry, dodge, entangle, pull punch, and roll with impact. All are granted at first level. Advanced moves will be learned later in levels.

1: Starts with two attacks per melee round. Also, any small found object not usually considered a weapon (anything from quill pens, to bottles, to a slate board) becomes a 1D6 damage weapon when used in hand to hand. Throwing one of these found objects does 1D4 damage. Critical Strike with any weapon on a Natural 19 or 20.

2: +3 to parry with any weapon.

3: +1 to strike with any weapon, +1 to damage with any object.

4: One additional attack per melee round, +2 to entangle with any weapon or object.

5: Found flexible objects (like clothing and bags) can be used for choke attacks, doing 1D4 damage per attack directly to Hit Points. Both hands must be used to perform a choke attack, making parries, dodges, and rolls with impact impossible for the attacker.

6: Critical Strike on a Natural 18, 19 or 20 with any weapon.

7: +1 to damage with any object.

8: +2 to strike and parry with any weapon.

9: One additional attack per melee round.

10: +2 to entangle with any weapon or object.

11: +4 to damage with any weapon.

12: +2 to strike and parry with any weapon.

13: Critical Strike (triple damage) or Knockout from behind.

14: One additional attack per melee round.

15: Death Blow on a Natural 20 (if desired) with any weapon.

From Ruins to Runes: Q & A

After reading the rest of the article, people may have some questions which I will try to answer here. I've intended to compile some questions and answers to clarify a few things.

Q: The advancements for some of the classes, like the Invoked, appear weaker than the standard Wizard O.C.C. Why bother playing one at all?

A: Palladium has always been a system about playing anything your imagination can think of. Well, now you get to play a Rune Sword! How cool is that? Also, keep in mind that these are creatures of magic with supernatural powers, and start off with a magical, indestructible weapon that deals more damage than most standard weapons.

Q: Why not make some of the R.C.C.s more powerful?

A: First, it is far more difficult to strengthen the soul of a Rune Weapon than it is to simply learn a few spells or sword techniques. This fact cannot be stressed enough. It's strengthening the soul of a magical, indestructible being. Not easy. Second, when making a class it's important to keep in mind what's already in the books. After leveling, a Living Rune Weapon can have more powers than a normal Greater Rune Weapon. Some of the classes I let my imagination run away with, while others I tried to keep based off of currently existing Rune Weapons. When making something new, I try not to eclipse what came before.

Q: Can a Living Rune Sword multi-class?

A: Yes, a Living Rune Sword can learn a new O.C.C. Like the case with Hex and its Mimic persona, he learned to become

a Weapons Expert. However, when multi-classing, the Living Rune Sword does not increase in power. It can learn new skills and O.C.C. abilities, but these apply only to the host body and not the Rune Weapon. Part of their nature drives them to increase their overall power, not just one half of itself. For this reason, very rarely will one ever multi-class. Note: A Living Rune Sword cannot switch to a new R.C.C. For example, a Cleric cannot later become a Lightbringer. This is something that must be part of their design and built into their very being.

Q: The NPCs listed don't seem to follow the same rules as the classes listed. Shouldn't the NPCs have to follow the same restrictions listed?

A: Rules and restrictions are good guidelines, but shouldn't be taken as absolute. With a good story or idea, exceptions can be made. I had ideas for at least twice as many NPCs, but instead chose those listed as examples for the very reason that they are the exceptions, not just some carbon copies. If a G.M. feels the rules should be followed as law then that is his or her right, but I included the NPCs to encourage creativity.

Q: In the description of Dalv, it states his skills have dulled from lack of practice. Do the skills of a Living Rune Weapon dull while they sleep?

A: No. While they slept, they were in a state of "hibernation." This helped to protect their minds, bodies, and skills. In the case of Dalv, he lost his body after waking up. He is now awake, but unable to act, allowing his skill proficiency to degrade. His inclusion is a good example of what happens to Living Rune Swords after they lose their bodies, and how powers may apply to future wielders.

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The Hammer of the Forge

Chapter Fifty-Two

“Death Comes to Town”

By James M. G. Cannon

Sand skittered across the roadway, scattered by the wind. The sun beat down, scorching the barren, rocky earth.

A tired, dirt packed road wound listlessly across the desert plain. Marked by thick tires and blasted by antigrav generators, it looked as though it might once have been a streambed. Yet on Koola, the only naturally occurring water existed at the equator, where the native insectoid Gojirans carefully monitored the use of the mighty Koola River. On most of the planet's desert surface, inhabitants depended upon the work of moisture farmers, who sucked hydrogen and oxygen atoms out of the air in order to produce potable water.

A lone traveler walked along the edge of the roadway, his heavy black cloak stained by dust. His boots crunched the rocks and gravel underfoot as he strode confidently on his way. He seemed not to notice the oppressive heat, despite being clad entirely in black. A careful observer might have noticed the gleam of megasteel armor plates beneath the folds of his cloak, but even with the sun high overhead, his face remained shadowed within the recesses of his hood.

In the middle distance rose a red sandstone bluff. Atop it stood the rounded towers of a shining white edifice, a remote retreat of some kind, located far from what passed for civilization on Koola. However, the gun ports and flicker of force

screen energy, all but lost in the sun's powerful glare, suggested less monastic concerns were pursued within the confines of the structure.

Yet no one challenged the black clad traveler as he made his careful way along the road, and off to a barely visible side track that he followed up the side of the bluff. The shadow of the hill surely cooled him, after his long walk across the open, empty desert, and yet he made no sign of relief. Nor did he take any respite in that shade, but continued on, never tiring, never faltering. And yet his movements lacked the ordered precision of the purely mechanical, suggesting that he must have been some manner of organic being.

Atop the bluff, a sere wind whipped the traveler's cloak around his armored form, revealing a slim, compact musculature encased in close-fitting megasteel armor, matte black in color. Neither weapons nor substantial survival gear seemed evident, although the few pouches on his web belt appeared full. The traveler followed the track across the uneven surface of the bluff's crown, to the massive door incised into the fortress's face. A slight bubble formed around him as he stepped through the flickering force screen. The screen was designed to reflect back energy blasts or to interfere with the guidance and detonation systems of propelled warheads. A short humanoid glided almost effortlessly through it.

The traveler paused before the blank expanse of the door. The sunlight, fading now as the sun settled behind the horizon, still reflected brightly off the whitewashed exterior. The traveler raised a gauntleted hand and rapped megasteel clad knuckles against the megasteel of the door. The sound clicked emptily in the heavy desert air. It was doubtful that anyone inside heard a thing.

Yet two panels on the door slid upward, and heavy automated energy cannons sprang out, training their muzzles on the traveler. A loud voice emanated from the speaker in the door's access panel, which the traveler had ignored. "State your name and business. Prepare to be atomized."

The traveler reached up and folded the hood of his cloak down onto his shoulders, revealing the thin, pinched face of an Elf. He had a narrow jaw, elongated and pointed ears, a thin nose, and a black skullcap. His eyes were so pale as to be white, and he wore heavy black makeup around them, emphasizing their pale alienness. He smiled humorlessly, a cold smile, the smile of a predator. "I am Elias Harkonnen. I wish to speak to the sapient in charge here. And shouldn't there be an 'or' in there somewhere?"

Perhaps the voice on the other side of the speaker did not care for the Elf's criticism of his grammar. More likely, he simply recognized the Elf. In either case, the heavy automated energy cannons erupted in a burst of crimson light. Lances of energy speared the Elf. Beneath his feet, the sand fused to glass as the barrage of burning light hammered into him. Finally, the firing stopped.

Elias Harkonnen stood unharmed. His cloak caught fire, and he casually ripped it from his shoulders and tossed it behind him. Even his armor was unharmed, close-fitting enough to be protected by the unnatural invulnerability imparted to him by Kreeghor Science-Wizards. Harkonnen's predatory grin widened.

He aimed two-handed blows at the door, and his supernatural strength forced the heavy megasteel plates to buckle. The guns discharged again and again, but they neither slowed nor marked Harkonnen in any way. As cracks appeared in the door, the Elf slid his slim fingers into them, forcing them wider. He wrenched the plates, powerful muscles churning, and tore them free. He sank his arms shoulder deep into the door and forced it apart, creating a hole wide enough for him to slip through. The door was half a meter thick and solidly built, but it could not hold him back.

The cannons retreated and the panels slid back into place. As Harkonnen wedged himself into the space he had torn open, he heard the hiss of hydraulics, and the heavy rumbling of a blast door descending. Harkonnen forced himself forward. His armor scraped against the megasteel and interior components of the heavy front door, but he just managed to force his hands through as the blast door descended. He got his palms under it as it sealed against the floor, forcing Harkonnen to hunch uncomfortably within the passage he had created.

Harkonnen shifted his invulnerable body left and right, slamming into the edges of the hole, widening it. In moments, he had cleared a space that enabled him to use his shoulders. With a grunt, Harkonnen set himself, feet as wide as he could

space them, and began to pull against the bottom of the blast door. He heard hydraulics groaning. The backs of his gauntlets scraped against the floor. Harkonnen snarled an ancient Elvish oath and strained his supernaturally enhanced muscles.

At last, with a shuddering groan, the blast door began to lift. The immovable object gave ground against the irresistible force. Harkonnen raised the blast door high enough to give him clearance to pass under it, stepped through, and let it drop back down behind him. It crashed to the floor with a resounding boom.

A high arched tunnel led into the fortress. Already Harkonnen heard defenders running towards him, including the servo whine of mechs and power armor. Chuckling to himself, Harkonnen strode forward confidently to meet them.

He barely got six meters before the first mini-missiles swirled down the hallway and exploded near him. He walked through fire, unharmed, still chuckling, as the defenders came into view. They were a motley bunch, representing several different strains of CCW sapient species, armed to the teeth and heavily armored. Grenades. Laser rifles. Naruni plasma ejectors. Mini-missile launchers. A refitted suit of Kittani Serpent Armor, and some Naruni power armor knock-offs.

They all slid to a halt and opened up, unleashing a barrage of devastation that would have felled a squad of TGE marines.

Harkonnen strode through the fire fearlessly. Here and there a chunk of armor burned as an energy blast scored it, or a bit of black paint chipped off as shrapnel caromed from a plate, but through it all Harkonnen moved economically, unperturbed. He started to whistle, although the sound was completely lost to anyone but him.

When the flood subsided, the defenders pausing to survey their handiwork, Harkonnen sprang forward. He lifted up off the ground and slammed into the first rank of gunmen at subsonic speeds. Three of them were knocked from their feet, most of them were disarmed, bruised, and stunned. Harkonnen gave them no chance to recover. Fists and feet flashed outward, smashing helmed heads with enough force to snap the neck beneath, or shattering chest plates hard enough to pulp the soft tissues underneath. Men and women fell as Harkonnen brutally killed them, one by one.

In seconds, only those protected by the heavier power armor remained. They backed away from Harkonnen slowly, weapons pointed ineffectually at him. Harkonnen wiped a smear of blood off his chin, still whistling. One of the suits of armor broke and ran, and the others would have a moment later, if Harkonnen gave them a chance. He body slammed the Kittani Serpent Armor, flying all out at the speed of sound. Megasteel plates shattered, electronic systems failed, and servos crunched. The Serpent fell backward, tail writhing. Harkonnen grabbed the helmet and ripped it free with one jerk, while the other power armored defender emptied another E-Clip into Harkonnen's back. The defender in the Kittani armor died whimpering, then Harkonnen whirled, grabbed the gun arm of the remaining defender, planted his delicate Elven foot on his chest, and ripped the arm free from its mooring. Blood sprayed, and the defender went down.

Harkonnen felt charged with preternatural energy. He always felt this way when killing. It was the closest thing to happiness – wholeness – he ever got. And he was just beginning. Still, they would be ready now, or running for their lives, and he couldn't afford to let any of them escape. No longer deigning to walk, Harkonnen lifted off the ground and blasted down the corridor.

He found pockets of resistance, but less than he had expected. This was a small operation, headed by a quartet of Gun Brothers, and they lacked the discipline that even the bedraggled "Freedom Fighters" of the TGE possessed. Some of the tattooed sapients he found were asleep in bed, or confounded by drugs and other alchemical mixtures. Some were lounging around, playing cards, only just alerted to Harkonnen's presence by the screams sounding a few doors down the hall. They should have had some kind of alarm installed, along with all their exterior guns and force screens and what-not, but somebody had skimped on what was really needed. They were pathetic, and deserved to die. Well, *everyone* but Elias Harkonnen deserved to die, in his considerable estimation, and he derived a fierce and unholy joy by ushering so many off to their just rewards, as brutally and efficiently as possible.

When he found the main chamber, Harkonnen's armor was in tatters and his slight Elven frame was coated in blood and gore and offal. He wore it with pride, his demonic smile never faltering once.

The leaders of this poorly organized rabble waited for him in the main chamber, the four Gun Brothers, the only beings in the entire fortress who might conceivably give Harkonnen a fight. Shaped by Bio-Wizardry just as he was, they possessed extraordinary gifts and abilities, in addition to wielding several large and wicked looking weapons. Two of them were actually Gun Sisters, a hulking Seljuk with implanted armor plates, and a waifish human whose chest had been replaced by some kind of grinning demon's head. One of the males sported spiky bio-armor and enormous, retractable claws, while the last one had delicate but impressive draconic wings and a massive horn in the middle of his face.

No one spoke. Perhaps the Gun Brothers recognized Harkonnen; he had been busy since escaping the prison world of Hala, bolstering his reputation across the Three Galaxies by murdering anyone and anything with a substantial enough price on it. Maybe the Gun Brothers even thought he was cutting in on their action; supposedly, they were some kind of assassin cult or something. In all honesty, Harkonnen figured there were enough trillions and trillions of sapients in the Three Galaxies for hardened killers to appreciate one another's work and respect their space, but somebody else with deep pockets wanted these silly sods deader than dead. So Harkonnen had come, to do what he did best.

The one with the horn unleashed a bolt of lightning that Harkonnen, at the last possible second, actually dodged. It sizzled past him close enough for him to feel the heat of the bolt, and the muscles in his thigh bunched up as the electricity skimmed them. Magic, then. No point in fooling around, taking his time, and enjoying this. There was a very real chance that he might get hurt here, and that simply was not allowed. While the other Gun Brothers aimed weapons and prepared to

unleash hell, Harkonnen blasted into the winged one, nearly bouncing off the magical force field he possessed, and dealt a rain of hammering blows on him. The clawed Gun Brother sprang across the room, landing where Harkonnen *had* been a fraction of a second before. Demon-Torso opened the demon's mouth and a roar of flame washed across Harkonnen's back; he felt the heat, but it wasn't enough to actually burn him. The armored Seljuk got her big meaty hands around Harkonnen's waist just as the Elf popped the winged Brother's force field with a squelching sound and grabbed the horn.

The Seljuk wrenched Harkonnen away from the winged Brother, but Harkonnen maintained a death grip on the horn, and it came free with a cracking sound. Green ichor sprayed everywhere. The winged Brother's face went slack and his body crashed to the floor. A second later, Harkonnen met him there, with the considerable bulk of the Seljuk on top of him. She panted heavily, as if simply moving were a considerable effort, but smashed Harkonnen again and again into the floor. He buried the horn in her throat, and when that wasn't enough, hammered it home with the edge of his hand. Finally, gurgling and coughing, she released him.

The Claw pounced, taking Harkonnen once more to the floor. The claws skittered harmlessly off the invulnerable hex protecting Harkonnen. The Elf punched his attacker in the throat, shattered a row of claws with one sweep of his arm, and then rose up into the air with the Claw between him and the ceiling. The ceiling held, and so did the Claw's spiky armor. Harkonnen kept him pinned against the wall and pulled him apart, limb by limb.

Only Demon-Torso remained, and she was running for the door. Harkonnen caught up to her easily, and decapitated her with a contemptuous blow.

Then there was only mopping up to do. Harkonnen discovered that quite a few of the Gun Brothers' followers had escaped. A few land vehicles tore across the desert floor, while a similar number of aerial craft lifted off from the roof. By then, Starkad and the rest of the crew in Harkonnen's modified K-7 Starscream, now more heavily armed than the original manufacturers had intended, had joined the operation. Starkad picked off the escapees one by one from the safety of the starship.

Harkonnen walked sprightly back to the front entrance. His invulnerable body didn't produce fatigue toxins, and he felt refreshed and relaxed after the slaughter. Now he needed a shower – a real shower, not one of those sonic washes that were all that was available on the Starscream – and a seven course meal. He had a hankering for red meat.

As he wedged himself through the rent in the front door, back out on the bluff, night had fallen. A huge mass obscured the stars, hovering just off the edge of the cliff. It was not the Starscream. Too big, too oddly shaped, with different markings and running lights.

Instantly Harkonnen tensed, but secure and unflappable in his invulnerability, he waited to see what would develop.

As the lights from the ship caught his presence and he was momentarily blinded, he heard the grinding rasp of a docking ramp descending, then a light crackle as it set down on the

surface of the bluff. A heavy tread came down the ramp and resolved itself into a familiar and hated shape.

A Kreeghor. And from the lights reflecting off the ship, Harkonnen could make out the Royal black of his scales. A foreign, unfamiliar tingle began at the base of Harkonnen's spine. A lesser sapient would have called it fear, but Harkonnen had no prior experience with the emotion, and dismissed it. He braced himself for an attack that never came.

Instead, Harkonnen heard the bass rumble of a Kreeghor chuckling. "You have outdone yourself, Guardsman."

"I'm not one of your pets anymore, Kreeghor," Harkonnen said.

The gigantic reptilian humanoid stepped closer, blocking some of the light blinding Harkonnen. His Elven eyes adjusted quickly, and he noted with some curiosity that the Kreeghor wore ordinary clothes and light armor, not the trappings of a military or royal expedition.

"No, you are not," the Kreeghor agreed. "You've gone into freelance mayhem. We weren't letting you off your leash enough, were we? You got sick of sitting around the Invincible Guard chapterhouse, playing cards and reminiscing about battles, and decided to go out and find your own targets to decimate. I admire your zeal for your profession." The Kreeghor gestured at Harkonnen's disheveled and gore-caked state.

"So you're not here to drag me back to the Tribunal. What do you want?"

The Kreeghor smiled. It was not a pleasant expression. "I hired you to wipe out this band of Gun Brothers because I wanted to see you in action. See if the reality matched the reputation. Besides the accolades and medals and riches you acquired in service to the Emperor, you've also made a name for yourself as a pirate, a terrorist, and an assassin. You have only faced defeat once in your long career, from a Cosmo-Knight."

"Vulcan," Harkonnen said, unable to help himself. It came out as a hiss.

"Indeed. That particular Consortium puppet has managed to foil my ambitions as well. I'm looking to get some revenge, and I thought you might be interested in joining me."

Harkonnen looked at the Kreeghor for several long moments, sizing him up. "What have you got planned? And what the grun is your name, anyway? I'm not calling you 'prince.'"

"Geryon," the Kreeghor said. "You may address me as Geryon."

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